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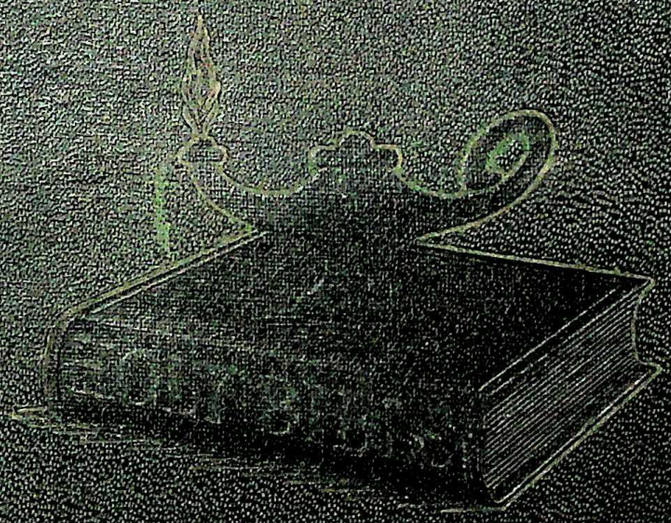
THE STORY OF The Bible



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LITERARY CONTENTS

	PAGE
EDITOR'S FOREWORD	3
THE BOOK OF BOOKS Rev. W. H. Elliott	4
HOW WE GOT OUR BIBLE Sir Frederic G. Kenyon	7
THE BOOKS OF THE BIBLE A Summary	14

	PAGE
GENESIS	
I. Rev. F. Townley Lord	27
II. Rev. Stephen L. Caiger	49
III. Sir Charles Marston	67
IV. Rev. Stephen L. Caiger	79
EXODUS	
I. Rev. Alexander J. Grieve	85
II. Rev. J. W. Jack	107
III. Rev. R. S. Cripps	119
LEVITICUS	
I. Rev. G. R. Harding Wood	139
II. Rev. J. N. Schofield	145
NUMBERS	
I. Rev. Hugh Martin	157
II. Rev. L. Elliott-Binns	173
III. Rev. A. E. Goodman	179
DEUTERONOMY	
I. Rev. C. R. North	189
II. Rev. Stephen L. Caiger	207
JOSHUA	
I. Rev. F. E. England	225
II. Rev. C. Shepherd Gibbs	247
III. Rev. James Stewart	253
JUDGES	
I. Rt. Rev. Bertram F. Simpson	281
II. Rev. Canon S. L. Brown	290
III. Rev. J. C. Ormerod	301
RUTH	
Rev. J. R. Coates	315
SAMUEL	
I. Rev. J. D. Jones	320
II. Rev. James Reid	340
III. Rev. A. R. S. Kennedy	357
IV. Rev. F. J. Hollis	367
KINGS & CHRONICLES	
I. Rev. C. Shepherd Gibbs	378
II. Rev. Canon S. N. Sedgwick	403
III. Rev. J. A. Findlay	423
IV. Rev. Canon S. N. Sedgwick	439
V. Rev. E. O. James	445
EZRA & NEHEMIAH	
I. Very Rev. S. C. Carpenter	477
II. Rev. Canon P. W. H. Kettlewell	485
III. Rev. A. Morton Price	496
ESTHER	
Rev. A. C. Bouquet	515
JOB	
I. Rev. James Colville	533
II. Rev. C. Shepherd Gibbs	542
III. Rev. J. R. Coates	553
PSALMS	
I. Rev. F. Townley Lord	557
II. Rev. Thomas Walker	585
PROVERBS	
Rev. Preb. W. O. E. Oesterley	607
ECCLESIASTES	
I. Rev. F. E. England	625
II. Rev. D. Russell Scott	630
SONG OF SOLOMON	
Rev. N. H. Snaith	646
ISAIAH	
I. Rev. F. Townley Lord	649
II. Rev. Preb. W. O. E. Oesterley	676
JEREMIAH	
I. Rev. Albert Peel	695
II. Prof. T. H. Robinson	719
LAMENTATIONS	
Rev. C. Shepherd Gibbs	731
EZEKIEL	
I. Rev. W. F. Lofthouse	735
II. Rev. A. E. Goodman	757
DANIEL	
I. Rev. J. D. Jones	767
II. Rev. H. H. Rowley	773

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LITERARY BEAUTY OF THE BIBLE

	PAGE
I, II. Genesis	25, 47
III. Exodus ..	84
IV. Leviticus ..	138
V. Numbers ..	156
VI. Deuteronomy	188
VII. Joshua ..	224
VIII. Judges ..	280
IX. Ruth ..	318
X. I. Samuel ..	356
XI. II. Samuel ..	362
XII. I. Kings ..	414
XIII. II. Kings ..	432
XIV. Chronicles ..	475
XV. Ezra and Nehemiah	506
XVI. Esther ..	514
XVII. Job ..	552
XVIII. Psalms	583-4
XIX. Proverbs ..	606
XX. Ecclesiastes	624
XXI. Song of Songs	643-5
XXII. Isaiah ..	675
XXIII. Jeremiah ..	718
XXIV. Ezekiel ..	756
XXV. Daniel ..	766

NATURAL HISTORY OF THE BIBLE

	PAGE
I. A B C of Plants and Trees	66, 106, 118
II. Animal Life in the Scriptures	172, 306
III. 'The Birds of the Heavens'	434
IV. 'Every Thing that Creepeth'	717

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLES

	PAGE
The Pentateuch	79
Moses to Solomon: Five Hundred Years of Hebrew History ..	244–245
The Hebrew Kingdoms from Solomon to the Exile	396–398
The Exile to Alexander	531

WHAT GREAT MEN HAVE SAID ABOUT THE BIBLE .. 5, 146, 231, 338, 461, 589, 734

MAPS AND PLANS

	PAGE
Lands of the Old Testament ..	2
Migration of Abraham	32
The Fertile Crescent	80
Land of Goshen	120
From Goshen to Mount Sinai ..	123
From Sinai to Jordan	180
Asia Minor to North Palestine ..	182
Holy Land from the Air	192
Plains of Moab	210
Hebrew Settlement of the Promised Land	222
Homeland of Samson and Delilah	303
Plain of Esdraelon	304
Valley of the Kidron	355
Hebrew Kingdom of David and Solomon	366
Judah and Israel	438
Boundaries of the Assyrian Empire	466
Judah After the Exile	502
Jerusalem in Nehemiah's Time ..	502
Central Babylonia	758
The Persian Empire	762
Homeland of Ezekiel	765

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CAMERA PICTURES OF BIBLE LANDS

Art Plates in Colours and Full Page Illustrations in Text

	PAGE
Nets Drying by the Euphrates	17
Sunrise on the Euphrates ..	17
Good Measure of Corn ..	20
Churning Milk into Butter ..	21
Shepherd with his Flock ..	24
A Tiller of the Ground ..	26
Dead Sea	30
Women Carrying Pitchers ..	34
Rachael's Tomb	39
Camels at Joseph's Well ..	40
Shepherd Lad and Goats ..	41
Beduin Saluting Each Other	42
Beduin Carrying Staff ..	55
Ishmaelites with their Camels	58–59
Village of Beitin (Bethel) ..	62
Cattle Market at Cairo ..	75
Egyptian Farmer Sifting Corn	76
On the Road to the City of On	77
Market Place of Bethlehem ..	78
Temple of Ammon at Karnak	86
Peasant Woman with Distaff	91
The Sphinx	94
Temple of Queen Hatshepsut	95
Egyptian Shepherd	98
Women Carrying Papyrus ..	101
Swarm of Locusts	102
Woodworker of Jerusalem ..	111
Eating the Passover	112
Buying Bitter Herbs.. ..	113
Threshing in Wady Tumilat	114
Oasis in Sinai Desert	127
Sheep Beneath Mt. Horeb ..	130
Cross on Road to Sinai ..	131
Builders Mixing Mortar ..	134
Harvesting Barley	143
Feast of Tabernacles	147
Pruning the Vineyard ..	148
The Wailing Wall, Jerusalem	149
Pilgrims on Mt. Gerizim ..	150
Model of the Tabernacle ..	158
Girls Grinding Corn	163
Site of Petra	166
Jebel Musa's Granite Mass ..	167
Shepherd Anointing Sheep ..	170
Drawing Water	183
Daily Bread on Mt. Sinai ..	184
Site of Ezion-Gaber	185
Oxen treading out Corn ..	186
Holy Land from the Air ..	192
Gathering the Olive Harvest	197
Elder Studying the Law ..	199
Samaritans on Mt. Gerizim ..	202
Sunset Prayer on Mt. Gerizim	203
Jebel Usdum's Ridge ..	206
Snowclad Peaks of Hermon	208
Aerial View of Land of Moab	209
Pilgrims at Neby Musa ..	219
Village Beauty	220
City of Hebron	221
In the Valley of Ajalon ..	230
By a Well in Judea	235
Tomb of Joseph at Shechem	238
Source of the Jordan	239
Mouth of the Arnon	242
Ruined Walls of Jericho ..	246
Valley of Jezreel	252
Water-Seller near Hebron ..	255
Sea of Chinnereth (Galilee) ..	256
Goats by the River Kishon ..	257
Weaving like Delilah ..	258
Passage in Caves of Gezer ..	262
Walled Citadel of Jericho ..	266
Tower of David in Jerusalem	271
Ruined Walls of Biblical Gaza	274
Present Town of Gaza ..	274
Arab Soldiers at Gilboa ..	275
Tilling with Ox Plough ..	278
Pottery Making at Syria ..	291
Palestine Ware	292
"Fellah" of Palestine ..	293
View of Road to Mt. Tabor ..	294
Philistine Captives	300
Shrine from Megiddo ..	307
Harvest near Bethlehem ..	310
Returning to Bethlehem ..	311
Woman Collecting Straw ..	314
Modern Town of Bethlehem..	316
Circuit of Samuel	321
Maidens Going to Draw Water	323
A Meal in the Harvest Field	327
Kirjath-Jearim	328
On the Hill of En-Dor ..	329
Returning to Jerusalem ..	330
The Square at Bethlehem ..	335
Shepherd-boy Using his Sling	343
Water-Carriers by David's Pool	346
By the Well of David ..	347
Threshing-Sledge	350
Shunemite Gardens	363
Agricultural Feast in Canaan	364
Figure of a Hittite Priest-King	365
Dome of the Rock	370
Virgin's Fountain	374
Enjoying Noon-day Rest ..	379
By the Orontes at Hamath	382
Rock Associated with Elijah	383
Unloading Spices	386
The Gorge of Wady Kelt ..	392
Leper Hospital at Damascus	395
Shepherd Boy Piping ..	399
Elisha's Fountain	400
Washing-day in the East ..	401
Pool of Hezekiah, Jerusalem	402
So-called Tower of Jezebel ..	407
Camel Caravan	408
Site of Elijah's Contest ..	412
Sarcophagus of Queen Helena	415
Vale of Hinnom	418
Stone-Squarers at Work .	419
Taking Produce to Market ..	422
Sennacherib's Assault ..	433
Pool of Siloam	435
Palestine Date Sellers ..	436
The Upper Pool at Hebron ..	437
Solomon's Stone Quarries ..	446
Model of Solomon's Temple..	448
Samaria Set on a Hill ..	451
Aerial View of Jerusalem ..	454–5
A Byway in Jerusalem ..	458
Damascus Gate, Jerusalem ..	471
The Site of Ahab's Palace ..	472
Towers of the Ishtar Gate ..	473
Frieze from Palace of Susa ..	474
Assembly of Pilgrims ..	476
Building Jerusalem's Wall ..	487
Caravanserai in Iraq ..	490
On the Way to Jerusalem ..	491
Peasants with Pack Animal	494
Entrance to Esther's Palace	507
Street of David in Jerusalem	508
Moslem Pilgrims at Jerusalem	509
Tyrian Pedlar and His Pack	510
Court in Palace of Susa ..	523
Headman of Arab Village ..	526
Patriarchal Chief	527
Weaver at His Loom ..	530
Hippopotami	532
Arabs of Pastoral Community	543
Sheikh with His Falcons ..	544
Palestinian Peasant Spinning	545
Blind Beggars of Aleppo ..	546
The Kidron Valley	556
Aged Jew at the Wailing Wall	559
Shepherd Leading His Flocks	562
Sheep Amid Green Pastures	562
Guiding Sheep at Dusk ..	563
Temple Area, Jerusalem ..	566
Swarm of Locusts	573
Cloisters of Temple Area ..	579
Beduin Family near Jericho	580
Blind Syrian Beggar	581
Dawn on the Sea of Galilee ..	582
Oasis of the Arabian Desert	595
Tomb of Rabbi Simeon ..	598
Peasant Women of Palestine	599
Children with Their Goat. ..	602
Bargaining at Beersheba ..	612
Gentlewoman of Bethlehem	615
Beduin Watering His Camels	616
Beduin Traders in Beersheba	617
In David's Street, Jerusalem	618
Solomon's Pool	631
Water Wheel at Beersheba	634
Wrinkled Jewish Trader ..	635
Harvesting the Olives ..	638
Peasant Girl of Ephraim ..	651
Grading Jaffa Oranges ..	652
Shoemaker of Jerusalem ..	653
Seaport of Modern Sidon ..	654
Shepherd with a Stray Lamb	667
Litter Borne by Mule ..	670
Veteran Cedars of Lebanon	671
Hospice of Stella Maris ..	674
Festive Bridal Gathering ..	687
Farmers with Oxen Plough ..	688
Shaded Street in Hebron ..	689
Vessels in the Harbour of Tyre	690
Jeremiah's Birthplace ..	703
Palestinian Smith	706
Primitive Flour Mill ..	707
Wild Asses in Arabian Desert	710
Sheep Passing under the Rod	715
Typical Bethlehem Girl ..	723
Mosque on Nebi Samwil ..	724
Beggars in Jerusalem ..	725
Market at Bethlehem ..	726
Palestinian Arab Bride ..	739
Wool Washing by the Tigris	742
Collecting Salt by Dead Sea	743
Shepherd in Tekoa	746
Ezekiel's Tomb	759
A Street in Damascus ..	760
A Jewish Rabbi	761
Synagogue at Nablus ..	775
Nebuchadnezzar's Palace ..	778
Hanging Gardens of Babylon	779
Stone "Lion of Mesopotamia"	782
Arab Playing His Bagpipe ..	795

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FAMOUS MASTERPIECES OF RELIGIOUS ART

	PAGE
The Six Days of Creation — Sir Edward Burne-Jones	18
The Expulsion from Eden — A. T. Nowell	19
Cain and Abel — Titian	19
The Flood — Nicolas Poussin	22
Return of the Dove — Gustave Brion	22
Abraham's Sacrifice — Andrea del Sarto	23
Jacob's Dream — Murillo	56
Rebekah at the Well — Murillo	57
Jacob with Laban's Sheep — Ribera	57
Joseph and Simeon — William Blake	60
The Coat of Many Colours — Ford Madox Brown	60
Joseph and Benjamin — J. J. Tissot	61
The Cup in Benjamin's Sack — Jan Victoors	61
The Burning Bush — Hippolyte Flandrin	92
Moses and Aaron — J. J. Tissot	92
Pharaoh's Firstborn — Ernest Normand	93
The Last Plague — J. M. W. Turner	93
Pharaoh Overwhelmed — John Martin	96
Manna in the Wilderness — Tintoretto	96
Victory, O Lord! — Sir John Everett Millais	97
The Cloudy Pillar — Raphael	128
The Molten Calf — J. J. Tissot	128
Moses Breaking the Tables — Daniele da Volterra	129
The Scapegoat — Holman Hunt	132
Descent of Moses — John Roger Herbert	133
Korah, Dathan & Abiram — Botticelli	133
Captive Women of Midian — J. J. Tissot	164
Moses Presenting the Law — Raphael	165
Moses Breaking the Tables — Rembrandt	165
The Taking of Heshbon — J. J. Tissot	168
Balaam Prophesying — Hippolyte Flandrin	168
Balaam and the Ass — Rembrandt	169
The Brazen Serpent — Rubens	200
Escape of the Spies — J. J. Tissot	201
The Walls of Jericho — J. J. Tissot	204
The Kings of the Amorites — J. J. Tissot	204
Joshua's Valediction — Arthur Kampf	205
The Battle of Ajalon — Gustave Doré	236
Jephthah's Daughter — Sir John Everett Millais	237
Death of Sisera — Edwin A. Abbey	237
Jephthah the Gileadite — Jessie Macgregor	240
Sacrifice of Manoah — Jean Paul Laurens	241
Samson and the Lion — Gustave Doré	272
Samson at Gaza — J. J. Tissot	273
Samson with Gaza's Gates — Frederick, Lord Leighton	273
Samson and Delilah — Solomon J. Solomon	276
Death of Samson — Gustave Doré	277
Ruth and Naomi — Philip H. Calderon	308
Elimelech and Naomi — Alexandre Bida	309
Ruth and Boaz — Charles Gleyre	309
The Dedication of Samuel — Frank W. W. Topham	312
Saul and David — Julius Kronberg	313
Triumph of David — Nicolas Poussin	344
David's Flight over Jordan — G. Rochegrosse	345
David and Goliath — Titian	345
David and Nathan — Benjamin West	348
David Dancing — J. J. Tissot	348
The Witch of En-dor — Salvator Rosa	349
Rizpah — Frederick, Lord Leighton	380
Elijah in the Wilderness — Frederick, Lord Leighton	381
Judgement of Solomon — Nicolas Poussin	384
Jeroboam's Wife — G. Grenville Manton	385
Solomon & Queen of Sheba — Sir E. J. Poynter	416
Elijah & the Widow's Son — Ford Madox Brown	417
Elijah before Ahab — A. C. Gow	420
Ahab and Naboth — T. M. Rooke	420
The Death of Ahab — V. de Brozik	421
Elijah in the Wilderness — Domenico Feti	452
Naaman's Wife — F. W. W. Topham	453
Rab-Shakeh — José Villegas	453
Destruction of Jerusalem — Edward Bendemann	456
"The Arrow of the Lord" — Sir Frank Dicksee	457
Mordecai — Ernest Normand	488
Vashti Deposed — Ernest Normand	489
Mordecai Proclaimed — José Villegas	489
Carrying the Law — Sir William Rothenstein	492
Esther before Ahasuerus — Nicolas Poussin	493
Haman Denounced — Edward Armitage	493
Job — J. J. Tissot	524
Job's Prosperity — J. J. Tissot	524
Job and His Friends — Luca Giordano	525
Job and His Wife — José Martinez	528
Job — Léon Bonnat	528
The Just Upright Man — William Blake	529
Job and His Family — William Blake	529
Guardian Angel — Guercino	560
The Guardian Angel — Il Domenichino	560
The Good Shepherd — Madame Bouguereau	561
By the Rivers of Babylon — Herbert Schmalz	564
The King's Daughter — Herbert Schmalz	565
David — Lord Leighton	596
David and Solomon — Sir E. Burne-Jones	597
"As the Hart Panteth" — J. J. Tissot	600
The Beloved — D. G. Rossetti	601
A Garden Inclosed — Sir E. Burne-Jones	632
The Dream — Sir E. Burne-Jones	632
The Mother's Love — G. Lawrence Bulleid	633
The Fall of Babylon — John Martin	636
Isaiah — J. J. Tissot	637
The Hebrew Prophets — John S. Sargent	668-9, 780-1
Jeremiah — Edward Bendemann	672
The Vision of Ezekiel — Raphael	673
The Vision of Ezekiel — Paul Falconer Poole	704
Ezekiel and the Pot — Sir Edward Burne-Jones	705
Ezekiel — Frederic Shields	705
Daniel & Nebuchadnezzar — d'Andrea	708
The Writing on the Wall — John Martin	709
Daniel's Vision — Rembrandt	740
Daniel and Jeremiah — Frederic Shields	741
Daniel's Answer — Briton Riviere	744
Daniel in the Lion's Den — H. Vernet	745
The Children of Judah — Arthur A. Dixon	776
In the Fiery Furnace — Gustave Doré	777

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The Story of the Bible

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MODERN CAMERA PICTURES FROM
THE LANDS OF THE BIBLE

I

THE BOOKS OF THE
OLD TESTAMENT

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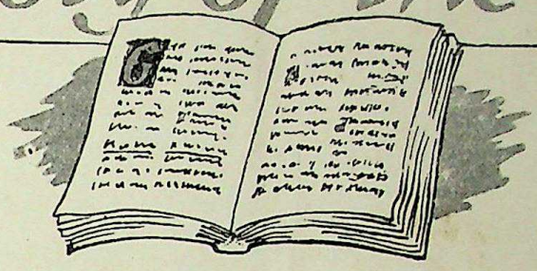

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The writers of THE STORY OF THE BIBLE may profess various creeds and even entertain different shades of belief within the Christian pale; but in our pages they are in no way concerned with the polity of this Church or that Church, with this or that trend of critical opinion. Nothing that appertains to one particular sect of Christendom is allowed to colour any chapter of THE STORY OF THE BIBLE.

The purpose of our work is to provide in popular form an entirely new presentation and review of the Biblical narratives, and especially of "the story that transformed the world." Our offering we believe to be unique for reasons indicated below.

Much thought has been given to the method of treatment and also to the material form of our work. Indeed, more than ten years have elapsed from its first planning until its final preparation for the press. Yet, in the end, we are persuaded as to the efficiency of our scheme. We adhere strictly to the traditional sequence of the books and writings that constitute the Old and New Testaments. Various alternative groupings readily suggest themselves, and in a work whose aim was primarily critical, these could not be ignored, but the modern critic's view of the Scriptures we seek neither to illustrate nor to emulate. We are content to deal with each book in its familiar sequence, though, in order to avoid what else would prove needless duplication, the minor Prophets of the Old Testament and the four Gospels of the New will not each receive precisely the same treatment. Subject to occasional modification, which will be self-evident, our editorial scheme for the treatment of each of the Books of the Old and New Testaments proceeds thus:

I. THE BOOK IN OUTLINE. This is the first of the three sections in which most of the books of the Bible are described, explained and historically reviewed by our contributors. It offers a concise yet comprehensive description of the contents of the book. It is at times in the nature of a commentary, and where the Biblical text calls for exposition or explanation, that is furnished by the writers entrusted with this section.

II. THE STORY OF THE BOOK. Other writers seek in this division of our work to present in simple language, free from critical subtleties, the known history of each book, how and when it came to be written, with such explanatory comment as may seem necessary and helpful to the ordinary reader. The message, the meaning, or the teaching of the book, will here be found stated with scholarly brevity and clarity.

III. THE LAND OF THE BOOK. This important section of "The Story of the Bible" is contributed by Bible authorities and religious writers most of whom have visited the lands of the Bible and travelled through those regions where the great and moving scenes in its spiritual and emotional drama, from the Garden of Eden to the journeys of St. Paul, have been enacted. We might describe this section as reconstituting the natural background of the Bible Story, and particularly in illustrating New Testament events the pictorial richness given to it by modern photographic methods cannot fail to call forth the admiration of our readers.

OBVIOUSLY this elaborate and entirely unprecedented method of treatment—hence our claim to uniqueness—cannot in the case of every book of the Bible be carried out in its entirety. The presentation of Genesis must differ greatly from that of the Song of Solomon or Ruth, and in dealing with some of the minor books we "portmanteau" certain sections, a single article sufficing in some cases. There is also a certain amount of interchange between divisions I and II where the treatment of the particular Book may call for a departure from the strict adherence to our general plan.

Especially do we believe that our method of illustration will find wide acceptance. No efforts have been spared to secure an unrivalled collection of the most recent photography of Bible lands wherewith to illustrate Sections I and III, and the Editor believes that no comparable collection has ever before been made available to Bible students. Our numerous maps will also be esteemed by teachers and instructors of the young.

What is really a fourth section of our work, save that it involves no considerable letterpress, might be termed the Book in Religious Art. For we present, in the strict sequence of the Books of the Bible, a selection of fine art reproductions from the most esteemed works of the Old Masters and also from those of famous modern painters. Accompanied by instructive literary descriptions, this beautiful Gallery of Religious Art will, we hope, still further commend THE STORY OF THE BIBLE to the good opinion of the seriously-minded reading public.

THE STORY OF THE BIBLE makes its appeal not merely to any one class of religious worker, but to all readers who have pretension to the name of Christian—to everyone, indeed, who has a genuine interest in the Bible, either as the Fount of Wisdom and Monitor of his daily life, or as our most precious treasury of Inspirational Literature.

The Editor

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The BOOK *of* BOOKS

Why Should I Study It?

by REV. W. H. ELLIOTT, M.A.

Vicar of St. Michael's, Chester Square, London; Chaplain to H.M. the King; Conductor of the Mid-week Broadcast Service; Author of "The Christian in His Blindness," etc.

THERE is a sense in which it might be thought that I am not the person to write this introductory chapter to THE STORY OF THE BIBLE. It should be written by a scholar, some may say, and I do not claim to be that. But should it? The Bible itself was not written for scholars, but for instruction and guidance for the common people. And the comprehensive new work for which I am penning this opening study makes its appeal, if I understand it rightly, not primarily to the scholarly, but to the earnest, serious-minded readers of today who are seeking enlightenment concerning the life of the spirit.

For that reason at least, and without undue confidence, I can respond to the editorial invitation to set down some thoughts by way of reply to the question assumed to be asked by the ordinary reader: "Why Should I Study the Bible?" Although disclaiming for myself the title of scholar in its ampler significance, I am surrounded by books most days of the week, books to which I owe many a debt. Yet I study people more closely than I study my books.

That is a parson's job, and I think indeed that it is the main task of the Churches today to bring this Book of Books into close touch with modern life. By that I mean that we have so to translate it into the language of our time and so to interpret it as to make it clear that the Bible is relevant to our every need. It is not enough to say that the Bible contains the answers to all our big questions and that it points to the only way of life that is worthy of God or man. We have to explain it all, sometimes to explain away some of the teaching of past generations, and to give the man in the pew "something to take home with him," something that will help him in the anxieties of his work, something that will give to that work and to him as he does it a sense of worth and meaning which otherwise he can hardly hope to have.

Daily Draughts from the Divine Well

IT is becoming rather old-fashioned nowadays to read the Bible. Not so long ago our fathers and grandfathers read it daily. To them it was without question the "Word of God," and as they opened in family prayers those heavy old volumes in which the Bible was then printed a look of awe was on their faces. It was God Who was about to speak to them. What could they do but listen in the most reverent silence and humbleness of mind?

I would not say that they understood all that they read. The science of theology, like every other science, is moving continually ahead. We have lived and thought and learnt since the years of which I am speaking. Nevertheless, to those who read the Bible in the right frame of mind, the authentic voice of God always comes through. Is it not one of the surprising certainties of Bible reading that so often the old woman in the cottage hears that voice, in its full comfort and assurance, while at times the scholar, who has studied the text carefully in various languages, is uncertain as to what he has heard at all? The wisdom of the Bible is revealed not always to the wise and prudent, but continually to those who are babes, whose minds, that is, are open and reverent and receptive, whose hearts feel the wonder of it all before their eyes read the words.

Modern Necessity and Old Habit

ALL this tradition of Bible reading has gone for the moment, but it will come back. It has gone partly because the times have changed and our habits with them, partly because there are many who suppose that the truths of the Bible have been rudely shaken —by science, for example, and by the shocks of war —and partly because we are all too busy just now to find the quiet minutes wherein the Bible may have its place.

This is a fidgety age, almost a neurotic age. We are rushing about hither and thither at a great speed, trying to crowd into each day twice as much as our fathers did, and coming out into a woeful disillusionment, because with all our speeding up we do not know where we are going and what life is about, because also we find the world in such a tragic and dangerous muddle that we ask ourselves what is really worth while, what can be expected to last, and what sort of fools we are to live as we do, in spite of all our boasted cleverness and ingenuity.

The world will never get back its nerve, unless, among other things, it can learn to be still. There is plenty of music left in life, but only in the quiet can we hear it. I am thinking of an old story which tells of a man who very much wanted to hear a nightingale sing. He was told by his host in a country place that nightingales were to be heard singing every night in a wood not far away. So, with some eagerness, this man set off to hear them. He went rushing and roaring through the wood in a high-powered car, and came back in a bad temper to tell his friend that it was all a stupid mistake. There were no nightingales there. He had not heard one. Yet the nightingales were there and they were singing

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very sweetly that night. It is very much like that with the voice of God. God speaks as He spoke of old. It is we who in the clamour of our restless lives will not pause to listen.

I think that a change will come and indeed is coming now. A reaction must set in sooner or later. Probably we have almost reached the limit of our speeding up, and must soon face all the problems that are connected with slowing down.

When I say that, I am reviewing in my mind certain of our economic problems, including such things as mass production and unemployment, which, as experts tell us, must put a severe limit before long on a man's working hours. Almost certainly our children will be bothered much less with the rush hour than with the leisure hour. That is why educationalists are always saying that we must prepare our boys and girls for leisure.

To them, as to us, leisure must needs be a dangerous thing, unless they are ready for it and know how to use it. Used rightly, leisure must mean a richer and fuller life, as well as healthier minds and bodies. It is the business of the community to make ready for this, to open gates of art and science and craftmanship through which men and women may pass happily to spend their unaccustomed hours. But may this not mean also that once again the old Bible may have its chance with us? We shall have time for it. It is the task of the Churches to show clearly to this very independent generation the wide human interest of the Bible, its challenge, its romance, and its appeal, and to make very evident just how and where the Bible touches the intimate problems of a man's life.

IT is vastly to the good that such improvements are being made in the printing of the Bible. Those old Bibles were badly printed. Chapters and verses were crowded together with little regard to sense or context. There was no attempt even to show what was poetry and what was prose. All of it was printed alike.

Moreover, the attractiveness of the Bible as a book to be handled and read was very lacking. Give a child a Bible printed well and with pictures and photographs that help him the more easily to realize in his imagination what he reads, and you will see at once the difference that it makes to him.

Well, tremendous progress has been made, and much more progress has yet to be made. Cheapness has been the main consideration for very many years. That should not be. There is something wrong if we cannot turn out Bibles that are reasonably cheap and at the same time well and attractively printed and presented. However, we are getting on.

Old Stories in a New Form

THE Story of the Bible, whose scope and purpose has been explained in a preceding page by the Editor, is designed as a larger book than even the old-fashioned Family Bible. But its great value, as I judge it, resides in its new presentation of Bible scenes skilfully photographed in recent years, its simple outlines of all the books of the Old and New Testament, its historical and topographical accounts, and (not least I think) its picture gallery of incidents and characters drawn from the Bible narratives by the great artists of all ages, and especially "the ages of faith." I welcome the appearance of such a publication. It can do nothing but good. For it approaches the Holy Bible in a reverential sense by its grandeur, its enduring beauty, its changeless moral values; and while it will surely prove a household treasure of the first order, it will also in many a home prove a valuable aid to the continual task of us parsons, the increase of spiritual enthusiasm in our congregations.

I have hinted already that, so far as I am able to judge, something is happening in the minds of modern folk. They are very unhappy about themselves and the world that they live in. Cultured paganism has not been a success. The idea of progress has been exploded. The possibility of a return to barbarism has been very much in the thoughts not only of public men, but also of ordinary men and women, who think about life much more than we sometimes imagine. They see the chaos around them. They are conscious of the danger. They know that

WHAT GREAT MEN HAVE SAID ABOUT THE BIBLE

George Herbert (1593–1633).

The Bible? That's the Book. The Book indeed,
The Book of Books,
Of which who looks,
As he should do, aright, shall never need
Wish for a better light
To guide him in the night.

John Milton (1608–1674). There are no songs to be compared with the songs of Zion, no orations equal to those of the Prophets, and no politics equal to those the Scriptures can teach us.

Isaac Newton (1642–1727). We account the Scriptures of God to be the most sublime philosophy.

Sir Walter Scott (1771–1832). "He expressed a wish that I should read to him, and when I asked him from what book, he said, 'Need you ask? There is but one.' I chose the 14th chapter of St. John's Gospel; he listened with mild devotion, and said when I had done: 'Well, this is a great comfort—I have followed you distinctly, and I feel as if I were yet to be myself again.'"—*Lockhart's Life.*

William Ewart Gladstone (1809–1898). Amid the crowds of the court, or the forum, or the street, or the market-place, where every thought of every soul seems to be set upon the excitements of ambition, or of business, or of pleasure, there too, even there, the still small voice of the Holy Bible will be heard, and the soul, aided by some blessed word, may find wings like a dove, may fly away and be at rest.

Robert Louis Stevenson (1850–1894). Written in the East, these characters live for ever in the West; written in one province, they pervade the world; penned in rude times, they are prized more and more as civilization advances; product of antiquity, they come home to the business and bosoms of men, women, and children in modern days. Then is it an exaggeration to say that the "characters of Scripture are a marvel of the mind"?

King George V (1865–1936). The circulation of the Holy Scriptures has done more, perhaps, than anything else on earth to promote moral and religious welfare among old and young.

Earl Baldwin. The Bible is a high explosive. It works in strange ways, and no living man can tell or know how that Book in its journey through the world has startled the individual soul in ten thousand different places into a new life, a new belief, a new conception, a new faith.

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science is not necessarily the chief benefactor of the human race. For these reasons and many others there are millions whose thoughts are turning back to Him Who was and is the Christ, wondering if, after all, He was right about life, wondering also whether He asked too much and gave an ideal that human nature could never reach.

Religion Throws down the Gauntlet

IN the midst of this wondering there is forming a new resolve. I have never believed that an easy Christianity could help or hold anybody. Christianity is not easy, and human nature at its best does not ask for the easy way. The challenge of the Bible rings out clear and strong. We cannot have it otherwise and we would not. In fact, I think that the very sternness of this challenge may be its first appeal. We may be losing our nerve about life, but we may regain it in sheer desperation when we see before us only one other way.

People talk of the failure of Christianity. That is downright nonsense. Christianity, as so many have said, has never yet been given a chance. We have organized our lives in our own little silly and selfish ways. Too often religion has been a casual recognition of God on Sundays, but Monday has found us in the same old mood, seeking the same sordid ends, treating life as a sort of fun fair, meant to provide us with entertainment and little else.

In the mass we often behave in a fashion that is simply pagan. There seems to be little principle, little regard for right or wrong, little concern for speaking the truth. Everything is expediency. What we do depends upon what our neighbours do. We will give as good as we get. And what we have we hold. If that should appear to you an exaggerated picture, just think it out for yourself. Millions do see that picture rather clearly, and their weary minds are wandering home to God.

Whatever may be said of this generation, it is more inclined to be sincere and honest than any that has gone before it. It has little respect for tradition or for convention or for custom—perhaps too little. But it does try to think for itself. Those thoughts quite often are long, long thoughts, and out of them, with all their gloom and disillusionment, may come great hope.

Towards a Proper Understanding

NATURALLY enough, the Bible is a book that requires explanation. For instance, it is not every man who understands that the Bible is not a book at all but a small library, representing the slow and painful spiritual development of a people who had what we should call a genius for religion.

In tracing that development we must keep in mind the period during which each book was written, and we must realize that certain ancient ideas of God and of godliness which seem to us crude and childish were but the beginning of a religious education and were replaced later by ideas that were purer and nobler.

All these ideas led up to the Christ, in Whose life and teaching we see the Divine Will as clearly as we can ever see it in this world. Putting it in a colloquial way, there is nothing in the teaching of Jesus Christ that dates. It is all as vivid, as relevant, and as true today as it was 1900 years ago. The trouble is, as every intelligent man will admit, that we cannot live up to it. And for that, in our stupid way, we blame God.

The Bible also is an Eastern book, and it does not speak in its full tones to a Western mind unless we can know something of what the East was like and is like. We must be able to read the Bible in our own language, and that is not only a matter of words but of thought.

Am I wrong in saying for the most part we only remember that the Bible is an Eastern book when we imagine that Christ continually exaggerated the duty of man to his neighbour? It is easy enough to excuse ourselves in this way, but we may take it that in the New Testament there is no exaggeration. Christ meant what He said. Only when we listen to Him with that conviction and try to work out in practical life what He enjoined can we come to know the power and the peace that He promised.

It is not more scholarship that we want, but a much simpler faith. To take Christ at His word is the first and last secret of Christianity. Anything else is of the nature of unconscious humbug or conscious compromise, and these have results that we well know.

Making Friends with the Bible

EXACTLY how or when we read the Bible perhaps matters rather less than we think. In these times we are not likely to cling quite so much as our forefathers to certain daily texts. It may be that the reading of a whole Gospel at one sitting—a task no more difficult than an evening with the newspaper—will be of much more help than a portion of a chapter read with a reluctant regularity. Anyhow, the important thing is that we should read it.

If on this day or on that it seems to have no message for us, even when we have closed the book and given ourselves a little time, as we should, to realize what we have read in terms of our own lives, we need not worry. By this reading we are feeding our minds and souls on the Bible. The Bible will get into us much more than we think. The unconscious mind will be dealing always with Bible ideas. So we may come to look at life as the Bible looks at life, without quite knowing why we do it. Our point of view may become the Bible's point of view. We shall face life in the spirit of the Christ, even though we do not always remember that the Christ Himself is with us. We shall choose as Christ would choose, because His words and His way of living have become part of ourselves and our minds have accepted them. What better thing could we desire?

Of making books there is no end, but the Bible is the Book of Books. How much do they miss who neglect to read it!

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How We Got OUR BIBLE

by SIR FREDERIC G. KENYON, G.B.E., LL.D., F.B.A., P.S.A.

President of British School of Archaeology at Jerusalem; Author of "The Story of the Bible," "The Text of the Greek Bible," "The Chester Beatty Biblical Papyri," etc.

IF the study of the Bible is to rest on a secure foundation, the student must be satisfied with regard to its origin and its history. He must know when and how the several books composing what we know collectively as the Bible were written, and how we come to possess them. He must be able to answer the questions: "How do you know that these books are authentic, and that we have them substantially in the form in which their authors wrote them, without being corrupted either deliberately or by accident?" and "What is the evidence on which our knowledge of the text of the Bible rests?" The origins and authorship of the several books will be dealt with in other chapters. The present chapter will try to explain how they have come down to us, and to show that beyond all reasonable doubt we possess them in substantial integrity.

The Bible known to all of us, and the only Bible known to most of us, is the English Bible. But we all know that English was not the language in which it was written. Broadly speaking, we know that the Old Testament books (except a few of the Apocrypha) were written in Hebrew, and the New Testament books in Greek. What the student needs to know, therefore, is how these Hebrew and Greek texts have been handed down to us, whether they have reached us in an authentic shape, and how they have been translated into English.

Bibles from the Pens of Scribes

THE fundamental fact that has to be borne in mind, because it is at the root of the whole of this inquiry, is that before the invention of printing in the middle of the fifteenth century, every copy of every book had to be written by hand. Not only, therefore, was there no security that all copies would be identical, as there is when a whole edition is printed off from the same set of plates, but, on the contrary, it was certain that no two copies would be exactly alike. Any scribe copying a large quantity of matter is bound to make mistakes; and from these errors of scribes, copied by subsequent scribes, or variously corrected by various editors, and also from the deliberate alterations of editors in the supposed interests of greater clearness or uniformity, come the variations which are found in all the manuscripts extant today. For periods varying in the case of different books between 2,300 and 1,400 years, the text of the Bible books was transmitted by manuscripts; and it is on the manuscripts that have survived to the present day that we have to depend for our knowledge. It is important, therefore, to know how well we are supplied with such manuscripts, how near they come in date to the times in which the original books were written, and what opinion we can form as to their quality and trustworthiness.

First Copies of the Old Testament

TO take first the Old Testament. We know, in fact, very little as to the form in which these books were originally written. Modern discoveries have made it quite certain that the art of writing was known long before the age of Moses, and that the materials in use in the lands adjoining Palestine were clay tablets (especially in Mesopotamia), papyrus (especially in Egypt), and probably leather. Since, in later days, the established tradition was that the books of the Law should be written on rolls of leather, it is likely that this was the material chiefly in use in Palestine from the times of the kings and the prophets. From the third century B.C. (and perhaps earlier) papyrus, manufactured in Egypt, became the common material for writing, and this was no doubt the material used for the translation of the Hebrew Scriptures into Greek (known as the Septuagint, or version of the Seventy) which was made in that century and in that country; and papyrus continued in common use until, in the fourth century of our era, it was superseded by vellum or parchment.

NOW of these early copies of the Old Testament books, not one has come down to us. There is no extant Hebrew manuscript earlier than the ninth century of our era. Partly this may be due to the fact that copies were never very numerous, since the use of Hebrew was probably confined to the synagogues and a few scholars; partly to the devastation of Palestine, involving the destruction of many synagogues, by the Romans; but especially to the habit, which we find later well established among the Jews, of destroying an old copy when a new one had been made from it. It seems, also, that a decisive epoch in the history of the Hebrew Bible occurred soon after A.D. 100, when the official list of books accepted as canonical (to the exclusion of those which now appear in our Apocrypha) was drawn up, and an official form of the text approved. Thenceforward, the text was copied with scrupulous care; and among all the Hebrew manuscripts that we possess, ranging from the ninth century to the fifteenth, the differences of reading are trivial. From all the evidence available we can affirm with confidence that there has been no change in the Hebrew text from the beginning

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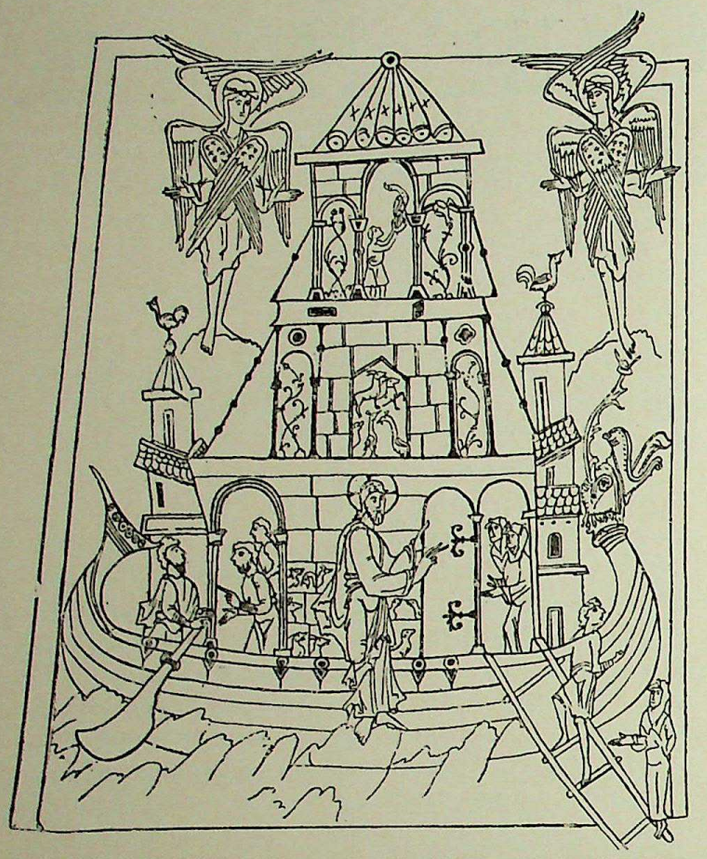

SAXON CONCEPTION OF NOAH'S ARK. To the earliest English Christian poet is attributed the first partial translation of the Bible. The Venerable Bede records that in the seventh century Cædmon, a herdsman, received the divine call in a dream to sing "of the beginning of created things." This illustration comes from a MS. of about the year 1000.

of the second century to the present day; and this text, which was first printed in 1488, appears in all printed editions, and is the text that was translated into English.

HOW far this text accurately represents the original form of the several books is a question of much obscurity, as to which the evidence is very insufficient. The Hebrew Scriptures were translated into Greek in Egypt in the course of the third and second centuries before Christ, and of this version we have many manuscripts earlier than the earliest Hebrew MSS. The differences are not inconsiderable, and in a good many instances it is probable that the Greek preserves the more correct form; but it is impossible to say how often this is the case, since it is clear that the Greek translators often misunderstood the Hebrew, and also that they sometimes took considerable liberties with their text. Also scholars are of opinion that most of the books underwent much rehandling by editors from the time of the Captivity onwards, the details of which are very uncertain.

With regard to the Old Testament, therefore, what we can say is that we have the text as it was fixed by the Jews themselves about the beginning of the second century, but that for the period before that date there is considerable uncertainty.

With regard to the New Testament—where, for the Christian, accuracy is of far greater importance—we are in a much better position. Thanks to recent discoveries, we are well informed as to the way in which books were written in those times; the interval between the dates at which the books were written and the dates of the earliest extant manuscripts of them is much smaller; and the total number of extant manuscripts is far greater. Of no ancient book are we so fully informed as we are of the books of the New Testament.

THE following facts may be taken as established, with a very small margin of doubt. In the first century, when the books of the New Testament were written, the regular form of book was a roll of papyrus, formed by fastening together side by side a number of sheets of papyrus, on which the text was written in a series of narrow columns. For reasons of convenience, a roll rarely exceeded the length of 30 to 35 feet, which was enough to contain a single Gospel, but no more. For shorter books, or for letters, smaller rolls would suffice. At first, therefore, each book of the Christian Scriptures circulated as a separate roll. There was no such thing as a complete New Testament, or even a complete set of the four Gospels, or of the Epistles, in a single volume. But early in the second century the Christian community seems to have realized the advantage of making up papyrus in what is known as the *codex* form, that is, in the modern form of leaves and pages. In this way much more matter could be contained in a single volume; and within the last few years several examples of such volumes have been found, notably an early second-century copy of Numbers and Deuteronomy (in Greek), a copy of the Epistles of St. Paul written about A.D. 200, and a copy of the four Gospels and Acts written not much later.

In this form we may therefore regard the New Testament books as having circulated in the second and third centuries. Save for the few imperfect copies which have been recovered of recent years from the sands of Egypt, all of these papyrus books have perished, because papyrus is a very perishable material, which becomes very brittle when dry and is rotted by damp. In the first half of the fourth century, however, papyrus was superseded as the principal material for books by vellum, which is the most durable book-material known. To that very time belong the two greatest of our Bible manuscripts, the *Codex Vaticanus* at Rome, and the *Codex Sinaiticus* which lately passed from the Government of Soviet Russia to the British Museum; and from that time onwards we have a continuous stream of manuscripts, amounting in all to more than 2,500.

Variations in Verbal Form

BUT of these manuscripts it cannot be said, as it can be said of the Hebrew MSS., that all contain almost identically the same text. In substance they do, but verbally and in detail they do not. In the earliest times, when the Second Coming of Christ was regarded as imminent, little stress was laid upon verbal accuracy; all that mattered was the general substance of the message. Also, there was no centre for the issue of official copies; copies were made when and how they

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could be; and there was no provision, or even possibility of providing, for the comparison and correction of the copies circulating in different parts of the Christian world. Consequently, in the early centuries, a very large number of variations of text came into existence; and when, eventually, efforts were made to reduce the confusion to order, different editors arrived at different results. Hence we find somewhat different types of text in different groups of manuscripts. Eventually, however, from about the latter part of the fourth century onwards a standard type of text was gradually evolved, which became dominant throughout the Greek Church. It is a text differing in many verbal details from that which we find in the earlier manuscripts. Its authors seem to have aimed at producing an easy text, by removing obscurities, inserting names and pronouns, harmonizing differences, and substituting familiar phrases for those less familiar. The substance remains the same, but in the details there are many variations. But this is the form which was in use everywhere in the Middle Ages, and it is this form which eventually found its way into print in 1516, when Erasmus produced the first printed Greek New Testament.

The Bible Comes to England

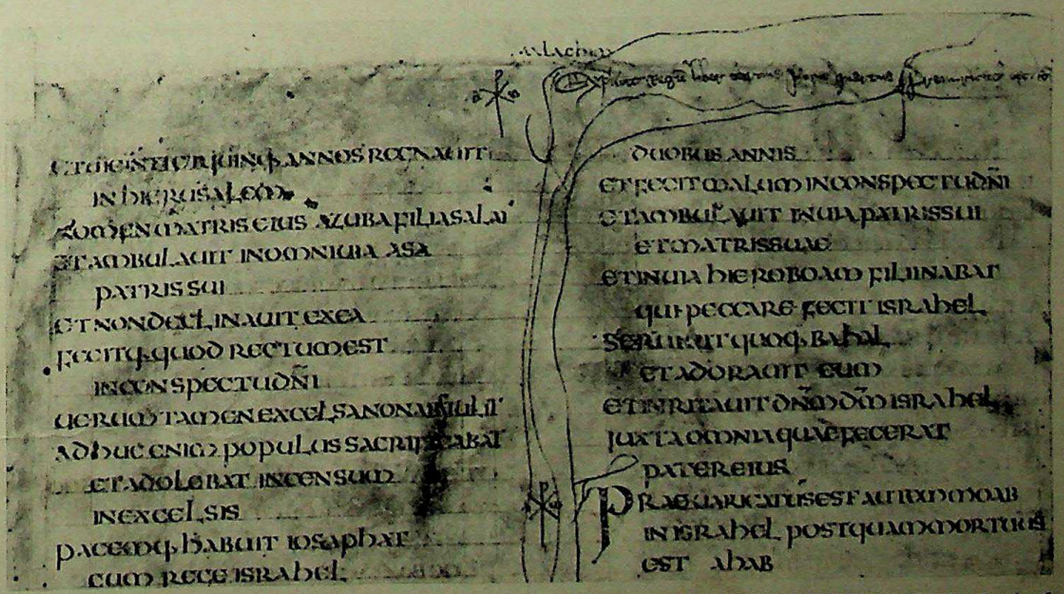
SUCH, then, was, in outline, the history of the Hebrew and Greek texts of the two Testaments up to the time when they were fixed in print. But in what form did they reach us in English? To answer this question we must take a long step backwards. Christianity was brought to England by two channels—from Rome by the mission of Augustine to Kent, and from Ireland by way of southern Scotland to Northumbria, by the hands of Aidan and his companions. In both cases the Bible which the missionaries brought with them was the Latin Bible. Latin was the language of the Western Roman Empire, and the Bible was translated into this tongue probably by the end of the second century. The manuscripts of the Latin Bible came, however, to differ so much among themselves that in A.D. 382 Pope Damasus commissioned Jerome, the foremost scholar of the day, to prepare an authoritative revision of both Testaments.

Jerome produced first a revision of the Gospels, based on the best Greek manuscripts at his disposal, and then a more superficial revision of the rest of the New Testament. The existing Latin version of the Old Testament was translated from the Greek Septuagint, not from the original Hebrew, and Jerome at first intended simply to revise this; but, having become convinced of the superiority of the Hebrew, he eventually decided to make a fresh translation direct from it. In this way Jerome's Latin Bible, which eventually became known as the Vulgate, was produced by about A.D. 404; and this became the Bible of the Western World, and remains the Bible of the Roman Catholic Church to this day.

Gospels Penned by English Scribes

IT is not without interest for British readers that the best extant manuscript of the Latin Vulgate was written in England. In the early years of the eighth century, Northumbria led the whole of Western Europe in scholarship. At Lindisfarne a magnificent copy of the Gospels was written and illuminated in honour of St. Cuthbert (d. 687), which now under the name of the *Lindisfarne Gospels* is one of the glories of the British Museum. At the twin monasteries of Wearmouth and Jarrow, Abbot Ceolfrid caused to be written three great copies of the Bible. One of these he took with him as a gift to the Pope in 716; now in the Laurentian Library at Florence, it is known as the *Codex Amiatinus*, and is generally recognized as the best extant MS. of the Vulgate. The other two MSS. remained in England and seemed to have perished; but in 1909 a single leaf came to light in Newcastle, which was recognized as belonging to one of the sister MSS.; and quite recently eleven more leaves were identified in a private library, where they had served as flyleaves to estate accounts.

This, then, was the Bible which was brought into England. At first there was no demand for a Bible in English. Very few of the English could read, and most of their instruction must have been given orally. It was only in the form of paraphrases, or of partial



RECENTLY DISCOVERED RELIC OF ANCIENT ENGLISH VULGATE. A single leaf, now in the British Museum, identified in 1909 as part of a sister-codex to the Amiatinus, forestalled the recent discovery of eleven other similar eighth-century Bible leaves, part of one of which is shown. All contain passages from Kings in the Latin Vulgate version. The smaller writing, at the top of the photographed portion, is a chapter-heading added in the fifteenth century. The pages, fragments of a manuscript once handled by Bede, measure 19 inches by 13 inches.

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FIRST COMPLETE BIBLE IN ENGLISH. From the Latin Vulgate John Wycliffe and his co-adjutors made the first English translation of the whole Bible. A portion of one of the pages from the Earlier Version, completed in 1382, is reproduced above. The great reformer died in 1384 and the Later Version appeared posthumously. Wycliffe's part in the work is uncertain, but he made the Bible accessible to the people in accordance with his view that it was the supreme spiritual authority.

translations, that the Bible story reached the English in their own tongue. The earliest of which we hear is the verse paraphrase of the narrative of both Testaments by Cædmon of Whitby, which is one of the fountain heads of English literature, and was produced about 670. Aldhelm of Sherborne, who died in 709, made a translation of the Psalms, which perhaps survives in an altered form. Bede is recorded to have completed a translation of the Gospel of St. John on his death-bed in 735; but this has not come down to us, and the same is the case with the translations of various parts of the Bible which Alfred is said to have made, or to have caused to be made. From the tenth century we have some interlinear word-for-word versions inserted in Latin Bibles; the earliest form in which the Gospels exist in English is such an interlinear translation in the great Lindisfarne Gospels. Not much later is a continuous translation of the Gospels, produced in the south of England about the end of the tenth century, of which six manuscripts exist; and at about the same time Ælfric, Archbishop of Canterbury, made a version, part translation and part abbreviation, of the principal narrative books of the Old Testament.

The Norman Conquest caused a great set-back to English literature of all kinds; and when, in the thirteenth century, the latter began to revive, it was only in the form of metrical paraphrases that the Bible made any showing. In the fourteenth century prose translations of the Psalms made their appearance, but it was not until the end of the century, as a result of the great religious upheaval which we connect with the name of Wycliffe, that the English people at last received a complete Bible in their own tongue.

Bibles under Wycliffe's Name

THE Bible which goes by the name of Wycliffe's was not wholly, and possibly not at all, his own work, but it was produced under his influence and by his followers. It was deliberately intended as an engine for promoting reform in the Church by disseminating the knowledge of the Scriptures. In its earliest form it appeared in or about 1382. The greater part of the Old Testament in this version was the work of one of Wycliffe's Oxford supporters, Nicholas Hereford; but his style was so stiff and pedantic that revision was immediately demanded, and soon after Wycliffe's death in 1384 a second Wycliffe Bible appeared, which is connected with the name of John Purvey. This version was, it is evident, very popular, and about 150 copies of it still survive, many of them being small volumes in minute script, evidently intended for private use. A complete English Bible was thus in existence by the end of the fourteenth century, but it had as yet but a precarious hold on the English people. The authorities of the Church disapproved of it, and copies of it were destroyed, and their owners punished with death or imprisonment. Moreover, it was not in itself a satisfactory translation. It was not translated from the original Hebrew or Greek, but (like all the partial translations that had preceded it) from the Latin, and from a very imperfect Latin text; and the English language had not yet acquired either the flexibility or the command of style required for a Bible which should reach the hearts of the people. For this it was necessary to wait for another century and a half, and for another religious upheaval; and by then the new invention of printing was ready to spread broadcast a new and far greater translation.

Tyndale's Work as Translator

AS has been stated above, the New Testament was first printed in Greek by Erasmus in 1516; and hardly had this edition become known before William Tyndale, a native of Gloucestershire and a student at both Oxford and Cambridge, set himself to translate it into English. As with Wycliffe, his object was controversial; his wish was, as he said, that the boy that drove the plough might know the Scriptures, and that thereby the truths of Christianity might be freed from the incrustations of tradition, and that each individual might be able to judge for himself. He could get no encouragement for his enterprise in England, so he betook himself to Hamburg. There he finished his translation, and at Cologne he began to print it; but being interrupted there he fled to Worms, where the printing was completed by the end of 1525, and by the beginning of 1526 copies of two editions, in small quarto and octavo, reached England.

Tyndale's work was not likely to be well received in official circles. Henry had not yet quarrelled with

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Rome, while Tyndale was a Reformer, a follower of Luther. His translation, being made from the Greek and not from the familiar Latin, seemed strange, and his novelties were regarded as errors. The Bishop of London set himself to buy up and destroy as many copies as he could get at; but the money received from such sales enabled Tyndale to continue his work. In 1530 he published the Pentateuch, translated from the Hebrew, and in 1531 the book of Jonah; and in 1534, provoked by the appearance of editions of his New Testament with unauthorized alterations, he produced a revised translation, with very controversial notes. In 1535 he was treacherously arrested by agents of the Emperor, and in 1536 he was burned at the stake, at Vilvorde, near Brussels, leaving behind him in manuscript a translation of the historical books of the Old Testament, from Joshua to Chronicles.

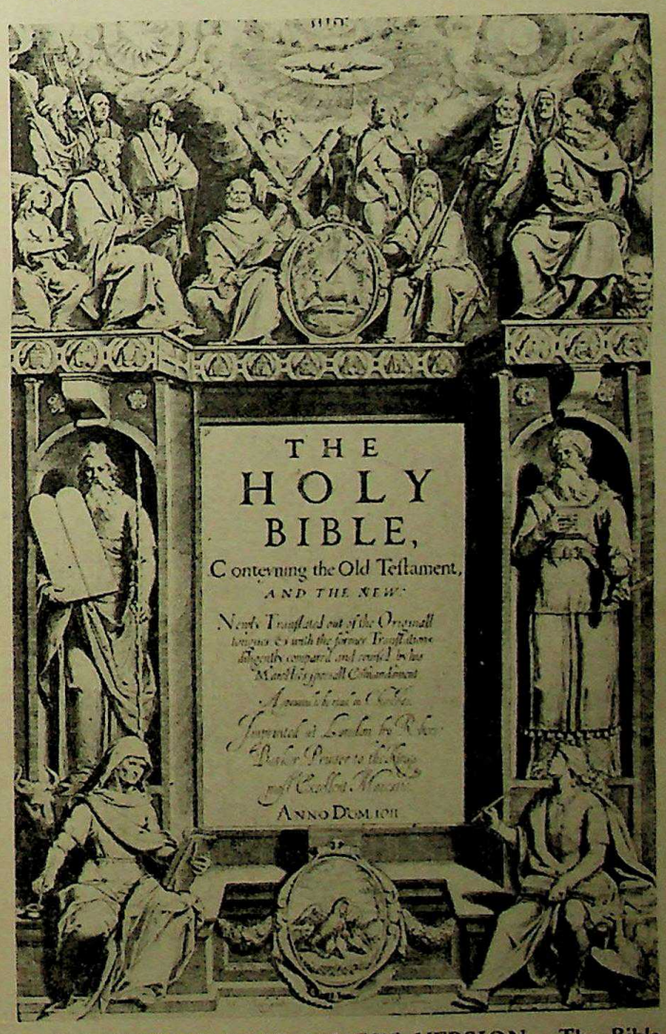
Rich Legacy of the Tudor Age

TYNDALE should always be held in honour as the father of our English Bible. Not only was his the first translation from the original languages, but he set the pattern which all his successors have followed. Through all the revisions which occupied the next ninety years, the strong texture and colour of his language governed the whole; and when we read our Authorized Version today, we are to a very great extent reading the rhythms and the very words of Tyndale. He was one of the great masters of Tudor prose; and to the genius of that generation for dignified and rhythmical language we owe the inestimable advantage of having a vernacular Bible which is also a masterpiece of literature.

Tyndale's last words were, "Lord, open the King of England's eyes." Henry's eyes were indeed opened, if not by the most creditable means; and before Tyndale's death a complete English Bible which was largely his work was already in unhindered circulation. After the breach with Rome, Convocation in 1534 petitioned for an authorized translation; and, on the prompting of Thomas Cromwell, Miles Coverdale completed a version which he had in hand, and published it in 1535, with a dedication to Henry. The first edition was printed abroad, apparently at Marburg; but in 1537 a second edition was printed at Southwark, and this bore on its title page the licence of the King. The battle was won, and England had now its own translation, produced and printed at home, and circulating with official authority.

What Henry probably did not know was that Coverdale's Bible was largely the work of the condemned Tyndale. Coverdale had worked with Tyndale, and in the New Testament and Pentateuch his version is based on Tyndale's. For the rest, being no Greek or Hebrew scholar, he made use of Latin and German texts; but, having a fine command of English, the result was worthy to be attached to that of his predecessor. It is to Coverdale that we owe the segregation of the books of the Apocrypha. In the Latin Vulgate, as in the Greek Septuagint, they are intermixed with the books of the Old Testament; but Luther, following the opinion of Jerome, who himself accepted the decision of the Jewish scholars who fixed the Canon about A.D. 100, secluded them, and Coverdale followed Luther.

THE rest of the story is one of successive revisions, always on the basis of Tyndale. In 1537, along with Coverdale's second edition, another Bible appeared for which Thomas Cromwell, at Cranmer's request, procured the King's licence. It bore the name of Thomas Matthew, which is believed to be a pseudonym for John Rogers, a very prominent Reformer; and it is notable as containing, not only Tyndale's New Testament and Pentateuch, but also his hitherto unprinted version of the historical books. The rest is taken from Coverdale. A revision of Matthew's Bible was prepared at the instigation of some London printers by Richard Taverner, and published in 1539; but far more important was the revision which Thomas Cromwell commissioned Coverdale to make and which appeared in the same year, with a title page by Holbein depicting Henry as receiving the Scriptures from Heaven and handing them to the Archbishop and Chief Minister for distribution to a rejoicing people, and with an injunction from Cromwell requiring that a copy of it should be set up in every parish church.



TITLE PAGE OF KING JAMES'S VERSION. The Bible in current use among English-speaking peoples is the Authorized Version completed in 1611. Rendered into the superb diction of Elizabethan and early Jacobean writers, it is the greatest of national treasures in spiritual content and literary form.

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This was the Great Bible, to which Cranmer supplied a preface in the second and subsequent editions. From its circulation in every parish dates the familiarity of the English people with the Bible, and its translation of the Psalms continues in use in our Prayer Book to this day.

Forerunners of the Authorized Version

SEVEN editions of the Great Bible appeared in two years, though Cromwell's coat of arms had to disappear from the title-page after his execution in 1540, but then Henry's reaction against Protestantism checked its circulation. Under Edward VI editions of Tyndale, Coverdale, Matthew, and the Great Bible poured from the press. Under Mary they were naturally prohibited; but the English Protestant refugees at Geneva continued the work. In 1557, William Whittingham, of All Souls, Oxford, produced a revised New Testament, in small format, in Roman type, and with the verse-division made by Stephanus for his Greek-Latin Bible of 1551. It was thus the first Bible for individual use, for the home and the pocket rather than for the church; and when it was revised and the Old Testament added to it by a group of Puritan scholars, the Geneva Bible (1560) became the Bible of the English people until it was superseded by the Authorized Version. The Bishops' Bible, produced under the direction of Archbishop Parker in 1568, superseded the Great Bible for lectern purposes in church, but did not seriously compete with the Geneva in the home; while a Roman Catholic translation from the Latin, of which the New Testament was published at Rheims in 1582 and the Old Testament at Douai in 1609, had no success.

THE final stage in the evolution of the English Bible was the result of the Hampton Court Conference in 1604 between representatives of the various parties in the Church. The suggestion of a new revision was warmly taken up by King James, and under his guidance it was decided that the work should be entrusted to committees of the best scholars in the kingdom, and that no notes should be attached to it, so that any suspicion of partisanship might be avoided. Six companies were accordingly set up, two at Oxford, two at Cambridge, and two in London; the first draft was revised by a committee of two members from each company; and the work was seen through the press by Bishop Bilson and Dr. Miles Smith, the latter of whom wrote the preface, "The Translators to the Reader." So in 1611 appeared the Authorized Version, which has become the personal treasure and the national glory of the English people. It was based essentially on Tyndale and Coverdale, whose work through all revisions retained both its dignity and its vitality unimpaired and even enhanced. It is an incomparable product of the Tudor genius for vivid and dignified prose, working on the great documents of the Jewish and Christian religions.

One fundamental weakness, however, the Authorized Version has, namely, the Greek text from which the New Testament was translated. Tyndale and Coverdale were dependent on the editions published by Erasmus between 1516 and 1522, and these were based on a small handful of late manuscripts which happened to be accessible. In 1550, however, an edition was issued by the French printer Stephanus, which became the standard text in general use for the next three centuries and is still known as the "Received Text." But for this also only a small number of late manuscripts were used, and it represents essentially the latest form of the ecclesiastical type of text current in the Greek Church. As with many of the Greek classics which were recalled to life at the Renaissance, the first editions were printed from the first manuscripts that came to hand, without waiting to search for more ancient and presumably better authorities.

IT has been the work of the last three centuries to discover and examine a vast number of other manuscripts, and in particular to bring to light several of much earlier date, which had not undergone the process of editorial revision that produced the ecclesiastical text of the later Middle Ages. But all this was after the appearance of the Authorized Version, which accordingly is a translation of the "Received Text" of 1550.

The first impulse towards the search for early manuscripts was given in 1627, when the great fifth-century *Codex Alexandrinus* (now in the British Museum) arrived in England as a gift from the Patriarch of Constantinople to King Charles I; and the first important collection of various readings was that contained in the edition of Dr. John Mill in 1707. All through the eighteenth and the first third of the nineteenth century manuscripts continued to be sought for and catalogued and various readings noted, and the movement for a revised text gathered weight. What brought it to a head was Tischendorf's sensational discovery of the *Codex Sinaiticus* in 1859, and his production of the first reasonably satisfactory edition of the *Codex Vaticanus* (which had been in the Vatican since the sixteenth century, but had never been properly utilized) in 1867. It then became clear that these two most ancient manuscripts, both dating from the first half of the fourth century, supported one another in a text showing important differences in detail from the "Received Text," and with all the weight of antiquity in their favour. Support for this type of text was also to be found in some other manuscripts and early versions, especially the Egyptian.

Revision in the Light of Modern Knowledge

AS a result, the demand for a revised Greek text, and for a revised English translation based upon it, became imperative, and it was met by the simultaneous publication in 1881 of an edition of the Greek New Testament by the Cambridge scholars, Westcott and Hort, and of the English Revised New Testament, which, though not directly based on Westcott and Hort, represents a Greek text of substantially the same character. So far, therefore, as the text is concerned, students have for the last half century had

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at their disposal a text and a translation based upon witnesses far more numerous and far more ancient than were available for the translators of 1611. The Revised Old Testament (in which the changes made were not due to differences in the text translated, but to improved Hebrew scholarship) followed in 1885.

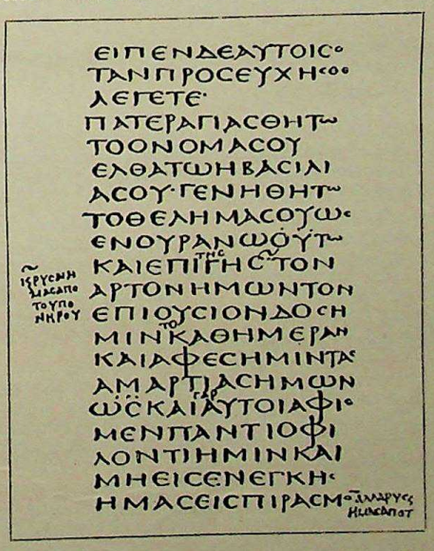
Precious Fragments of Ancient Scripture

NEITHER criticism nor research has been idle during the half century that has elapsed since the appearance of the Revised Version. Many discoveries of early manuscripts have been made, notably the Syriac palimpsest of the Gospels from Sinai (fourth century), the Freer MS. of the Gospels (fourth or fifth century), and especially the group of papyri known as the Chester Beatty papyri, which have given us fragments of a copy of the Gospels and Acts of the early third century, a nearly complete copy of the Pauline Epistles of about A.D. 200, about a third of the Book of Revelation of the late third century, and important portions of several of the books of the Old Testament from the second to the fourth centuries. Some tiny fragments of St. John (first half of the second century) and Deuteronomy (second century B.C.) have still more recently come to light. Criticism has also been busy on the authorities previously known, including not only the manuscripts in the original tongues but also the early translations, Latin, Syriac, and Coptic.

The net result is to reinforce the conclusion that we must get back behind the "Received Text" to the earlier authorities of the second to the fourth centuries. Here we find evidence of a considerable diversity of readings, the result of the conditions under which the Christian Scriptures circulated in the earliest ages. In particular, the early authorities show us two main types or families of text: one with its headquarters probably at Alexandria, represented mainly by the Vatican and Sinaitic manuscripts, which is the basis of Westcott and Hort's edition and in the main of the Revised Version; the other emanating from the Latin West, found mainly in Graeco-Latin MSS. (notably the *Codex Bezae* at Cambridge) and the earliest Latin translation, and characterized by rather marked divergences, especially in St. Luke and Acts. But the earliest evidence of all seems to show that these families do not go back to the beginning of things, but are rather the outcome of editorial work on the mass of materials presented by the unrevised copies of the earliest centuries. Along with them we seem also to find local texts being formed—one in Syria, round the church of Edessa; one probably in Egypt, which eventually found its home in the library at Caesarea, where the manuscripts used by Origen were preserved. The Alexandrian family may itself be regarded as another such text, formed in a centre where good materials and skilled scholarship were available.

WHERE THE CODEX SINAITICUS WAS FOUND. Above is St. Catherine's monastery on Mount Sinai, where Tischendorf discovered the Codex Sinaiticus, purchased for the British Museum in 1933. Left is the Lord's Prayer (Luke xi, 2-4) from the MS. In the margin the petition "and deliver us from evil," originally omitted, was inserted by a corrector.

Left photo, British Museum



ΕΙΠΕΝΔΕΑΥΤΟΙϹ·
ΤΑΝΙΠΡΟϹΕΥΧΗϹΘΕ
ΛΕΓΕΤΕ·
ΠΑΤΕΡΑΓΙΑϹΘΗΤΩ
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ΕΛΘΑΤΩΗΒΑϹΙΛΕΙ
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The general conclusion seems to be, first, that the general integrity of our Bible is confirmed by recent discoveries, which have carried back our evidence into the sub-Apostolic age; that the "Received Text," underlying our Authorized Version, is the result of a relatively late revision; that so far as the text is concerned the text underlying our Revised Version has earlier attestation and the preference of almost all textual critics; that absolute verbal certainty is not obtainable, and that the whole truth does not lie in any one type or family of text; that we may still search in the hope of finding fresh evidence and of elucidating new truth, and with the fullest confidence that the foundations of our faith in Holy Scripture will continue to stand firm.

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The Books of the Bible

The Old Testament

THE Bible in common use throughout the English-speaking world is composed of two great divisions—the Old Testament and the New Testament (Latin, *testamentum*, a covenant).

The sharp division between the two Testaments is justified on the ground of history as well as of theology. The Old Testament consists of books produced by the Jewish people during some six or seven centuries preceding the opening of our era.

The New Testament, on the other hand, is of entirely Christian origin and acceptance.

In the form it assumes today the Old Testament dates from soon after the fall of Jerusalem, when the Jews ceased to look to the Temple as the centre of their faith but found it instead in the pages of an inspired book. For centuries earlier, however, the canon had been in course of formation.

The first Jewish Bible probably consisted of the Law, i.e., the Pentateuch (Greek, *penta-*, five, and *teuchos*, a book) or rather the Hexateuch (Greek, *hex*, six), for Joshua was generally associated with the five "books of Moses"—Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy. After the return from the Babylonian Captivity other books were added, and in course of time we find references to the Law and the Prophets. The latter consisted of the books of Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the twelve "minor prophets."

As early as 130 B.C. we gather that other books were being included in the canon, and these in their complete form constitute the writings or Hagiography (Greek, *hagios*, holy, and *graphein*, to write). Contained under this heading are the books of Psalms, Proverbs, Job, Song of Solomon, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, Esther, Daniel, Chronicles, Ezra and Nehemiah.

Thus in the course of centuries there emerged a Jewish Bible composed of twenty-four books, equivalent to the thirty-nine in our Old Testament. The discrepancy is due to the fact that the Jews regarded Samuel, Kings, Chronicles, and Ezra and Nehemiah as forming one book in each case instead of two as in our canon, and, moreover, counted the twelve "minor prophets" as one.

SAVE for less than a dozen chapters which are in an Aramaic dialect, the Old Testament was written in Hebrew. All the existing Hebrew MSS. seem to be derived from the same text, i.e. that produced by the Massoretes—a school or guild of Jewish scholars—between the fifth and eighth centuries A.D., and the earliest complete Hebrew manuscript dates from A.D. 916. There is thus a gap of more than a thousand years between the penning of the latest of the books of the Old Testament and the preparation of the oldest surviving MS. Fortunately, however, the Septuagint (from the Latin for seventy, referring to the number of the translators)—the translation into Greek of the Hebrew scriptures made by seventy (or seventy-two) Jewish scholars at Alexandria in the third and second centuries before Christ—was obviously based on a very much earlier Hebrew text than that which has come down to us. Other witnesses to the Old Testament text are the Old Syriac (date uncertain), Old Latin (c. A.D. 200) and the Vulgate (A.D. 400) versions, the version of the Pentateuch made by the Samaritan community after the return from Babylon, the targums or explanations prepared for the Jews of Palestine after the time of Ezra, and the notes of the rabbis who prepared the vast body of scriptural commentary known as the Talmud.

The Five Books of the Pentateuch

GENESIS

Taking its title from the Greek word for Beginning, the book deals with universal creation, and then confines its scope to the patriarchal origin of the Hebrew nation.

EXODUS

The name of this book, signifying Departure, is descriptive of the going out of the Israelites from Egypt. The first part is historical, the second legislative.

LEVITICUS

The Priests' Law is the better title given to this book in the Septuagint Version of the Pentateuch, as it is virtually a manual of religious rites and ceremonies.

NUMBERS

Comprising events during the last days of the Israelites' halt at Sinai and the thirty-eight years' wandering, this book records two numberings of the people.

DEUTERONOMY

Three addresses of Moses, recapitulating and augmenting the previous codes of law, are contained in this book, which concludes with his death. Its title means Repetition of the Law.

The Twelve Historical Books

JOSHUA

Covering a period of a few years, the book is the record of the Hebrew conquest of Canaan under the leadership of Joshua, entrusted with this command on the death of Moses.

JUDGES

Rulers of Israel after the death of Joshua, the Judges governed during a transition period until the time of the Monarchy. The book contains the great Biblical stories of Deborah, Jephthah and Samson.

RUTH

The history of the Moabitess Ruth, who became an ancestress of David, was written after the period of his reign. The events recorded in this book occurred in the times of the Judges.

SAMUEL : the First Book

Regarded as a single work in the Hebrew Canon, the two books of Samuel have the alternative titles, in the Authorized Version, of the First and Second Book of the Kings. The subject matter of the first book consists of the history of Samuel, Saul and David, up to the death of Saul.

SAMUEL : the Second Book

This book is a history of the events in the reign of David. The period covered by the First and Second Books of Samuel is about 1050-970 B.C.

KINGS : the First Book

One book in the Hebrew Canon, First and Second Kings are also commonly called the Third and Fourth Book of the Kings in the Authorized Version. The first book covers the period 970-842 B.C., from the death of David, the reign of Solomon and the division of the people into two kingdoms, northern (Israel) and southern (Judah), in 930 B.C., to the accession of Jehoram to the throne of Judah and the evil reign of Ahaziah over Israel, 852-850.

KINGS : the Second Book

In the struggle against Baal-worship Elisha succeeds to Elijah and continues the prophetic work for Israel. This book contains records of the fall of Samaria and end of the northern kingdom, 722 B.C., of the destruction of Jerusalem and end of the kingdom of Judah, 586 B.C., and of the Captivity in Babylon.

CHRONICLES : the First Book

In the Hebrew the two books of the Chronicles are entitled The Acts or Annals of the Days and are a single work, including many of the events recorded in Samuel and Kings. The first book ends with the death of David. The history of Chronicles is ecclesiastical rather than political.

CHRONICLES : the Second Book

This book begins with the account of events in the reign of Solomon and concludes with the permission of Cyrus, conqueror of Babylon (539 B.C.), for the return of Jews, who were willing to go, to Jerusalem.

EZRA

An account of the return of a number of Jews from the Captivity to Jerusalem, 538 B.C., and the subsequent rebuilding of the Temple, is given in this book. It covers the period 538-457 B.C.

NEHEMIAH

Anciently united with the book of Ezra this book records the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem and carries on the history of events down to the year 432 B.C.

ESTHER

The story of the Jewish heroine who became Queen of Persia belongs to the history of those Israelites who did not return from the Captivity. Ahasuerus (Xerxes) was King of Persia from 486 to 465 B.C

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The Five Poetical Books

JOB
This masterpiece of Hebrew literature contains no reference to Israelitish history. It is a great religious discussion and an argument against intolerance. Through his trials Job finally comes to renewal of faith.

PSALMS
In the Hebrew the title of this book is Praises. Its composition extends over many centuries, from the time of the poems written by David to the post-Exilic period.

PROVERBS
This book contains a collection of the Proverbs of Solomon with portions by other contributors, the original title being preserved, just as was done for the Psalms, in honour of the royal contributor.

ECCLESIASTES
Written in the person of Solomon, this book is a collection of wise sayings and essays on a practical, if pessimistic, philosophy. The general theme is "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity."

THE SONG OF SOLOMON
Called in the Hebrew The Song of Songs, this poem is authoritatively considered to be a single work, and not, as the popular title, Canticles, suggests, an anthology.

The Seventeen Prophetical Books

ISAIAH
The prophecies and prophetic narratives contained in this book deal with the critical period of Jewish history before the Babylonian Captivity and during the Exile. The prophet foretells the advent of the Messiah whose mission is to reveal the highest spirituality to Jew and Gentile.

JEREMIAH
Called to prophesy about the year 626 B.C., Jeremiah predicts the fall of Babylon and of many nations, the inauguration of spiritual worship, and final acceptance of the Jews.

LAMENTATIONS
The subject of this book, ascribed to the prophet Jeremiah, is the capture of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar and the destruction of the Temple. The writer bewails the desolation of Israel.

EZEKIEL
The ministry of Ezekiel among the Jewish exiles began about five years after he was taken away to Babylonia in the captivity (597 B.C.) at the time of Nebuchadnezzar's first attack on Jerusalem. The book narrates events before and after the destruction of Jerusalem, foretells the regeneration of the Hebrew race, and contains a vision of the reconstruction of the Temple and city.

DANIEL
Contemporary with Ezekiel, Daniel is the leading character in this narrative of events in Babylon at the time of the captivity, which constitutes the first part of the book. The second part consists of apocalyptic prophecies.

HOSEA
Prophet in Israel during the reigns of the last seven kings, Hosea began his ministry in the reign of Jeroboam II, King of Israel (786-746 B.C.), and continued it probably till about 735 B.C., during a period of anarchy.

JOEL
This prophecy warns the people of Judah, exhorting them to repentance to avert calamities, and gain a blessing.

AMOS
A native of Judah, Amos denounces the idolatry of the Israelites and foretells their impending captivity. He was called to the northern kingdom to prophesy against Israel at Bethel in the reign of Jeroboam II.

OBADIAH
The first part of this prophecy threatens Edom and the second predicts the restoration of Israel. A portion of the book appears in Jeremiah.

JONAH
The book of Jonah contains a profound lesson of tolerance and mercy. It records the story of the prophet and his mission to Nineveh, overthrown 612 B.C.

MICAH
The prophet was contemporary with Isaiah, and his ministration was during the latter part of the eighth century B.C. He predicted Bethlehem Ephratah as the birthplace of the Messiah.

NAHUM
Nineveh's fall with the overthrow of Assyria is the sole theme of this nationalistic prophecy and consolation.

HABAKKUK
Writing during the time of the great oppression of the people of Judah by the Chaldeans, Habakkuk prophesied, not earlier than the last quarter of the seventh century B.C., ultimate deliverance of the Jews.

ZEPHANIAH
The date of this prophecy, denouncing idolatry in the kingdom of Judah, is about 626 B.C., the time of Jeremiah's call and before the great reformation of Josiah, 621 B.C., suppressed the worship of Baal.

HAGGAI
Rebuking the apathy of the people and encouraging the rebuilding of the Temple, Haggai's prophecies belong to a period about 520 B.C. He was the first of the prophets to write after the return.

ZECHARIAH
A contemporary of Haggai, Zechariah also sought to rouse the people to enthusiastic support of Jerusalem's national sanctuary.

MALACHI
The last book of the Old Testament begins with reproof of the priests for lack of spirituality in their leadership of the people and closes with promises of blessing and of the messenger, or forerunner, of the Messiah.

The New Testament

AT the same time as the Jewish rabbis were establishing the canon of the Old Testament, the first books of the New Testament were being written. For a generation or so after the Ascension Christian teaching was oral, but as, one by one, those who had known Christ passed away, the need for written testimony became increasingly apparent. The spread of the Christian Church, too, involved the preparation of "letters" bearing on matters of right doctrine and conduct. Hence there came into being the apostolic epistles, the Gospels known as Synoptic (from Greek, *sunoptikos*, "taking a general view": Matthew, Mark and Luke show marked similarity of viewpoint and treatment), and "Acts," all of which may have been written before the fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. The remainder of the books in the New Testament were added during the next few decades, although the canon was not finally established until A.D. 397.

THE New Testament was written in Greek, and numerous MSS. of an early date serve as a basis for the accepted text. Further testimony is afforded by the numerous quotations contained in the writings of the "Fathers of the Church" who flourished in the first, second, and third centuries of our era, and by the early translators of the various books into other languages. The oldest MS. of the entire New Testament is the Codex Sinaiticus, bought in 1933 by public subscription for the British Museum. This dates from the fourth century of our era.

The Five Historical Books

MATTHEW
In his record of the life of Jesus Christ the Evangelist attests the fulfilment of the prophecies concerning the Messiah, laying stress on the Old Covenant as the basis of the new inspired teaching, incompatible with decadent Judaism.

MARK
Written primarily for the Gentiles, this Gospel is the most graphic of the accounts of our Lord's human life and ministry. Though not an Apostle, St. Mark was a companion of Apostles, and a relative of St. Barnabas.

LUKE
This record is the third of the three gospels, known as synoptic, on account (as explained above) of their similarity. St. Luke, close companion of St. Paul, not an Apostle and perhaps a Gentile, presents Jesus as the universal Redeemer and perfect Exemplar for all mankind.

JOHN
While the three Synoptic Gospels are more concerned with the external life of Jesus, the fourth Gospel gives us the most spiritual interpretation of the Incarnate Word. It contains none of the parables, but a larger proportion of the Master's discourses.

ACTS OF THE APOSTLES
This treatise by St. Luke is a continuation of his Gospel. It narrates acts of Peter, John, Stephen, Philip, Paul, the founding of the Christian Church and communities, and the progress of the Christian mission to about the year A.D. 62.

The Fourteen Pauline Epistles

ROMANS
This letter to the Church in Rome is both doctrinal and practical. It explains how Jew and Gentile alike are justified through faith in Christ Jesus, the duties of Christians and the Law of Love. It was written before St. Paul's imprisonment at Rome and during his stay in Corinth A.D. 56.

CORINTHIANS : First Epistle
Writing from Ephesus in A.D. 55, St. Paul rebukes the corruption of the Church at Corinth, a centre of adjacent Christian communities in Greece. He deals with abuses and their correction, and establishes the doctrine of the Resurrection.

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The New Testament (continued)

CORINTHIANS : Second Epistle

In this letter, written also in A.D. 55, St. Paul rejoices at the good news he has received from Corinth ; warns the Church there of the dangers of pagan influences and makes arrangements for a collection to relieve the poverty of Christians in Judaea.

GALATIANS

The purpose of this letter, written by St. Paul in A.D. 50, was to prevent the falling away of the converts in the Roman province of Galatia, Asia Minor, into Judaism. He explains that the Mosaic Law was preparatory to the Law of Christ, which was its fulfilment.

EPHESIANS

Writing to the Church at Ephesus from prison in Rome, about A.D. 61, St. Paul gives thanks that its members have been called with other Gentiles to participate with the Jews in the glorious privileges of Christianity. He presents the idea of the one Church, the living body of Christ.

PHILIPPIANS

In this epistle, written during the Roman imprisonment, St. Paul commends the constancy of the Philippians in Macedonia and joyously exhorts them to a consistently Christian life.

COLOSSIANS

This letter was sent from Rome at the same time as the epistle to the Ephesians. It contains a warning to the Church at Colossae, in Phrygia, 'not to be diverted from Christianity by false philosophy or needless Jewish observances. Since Jesus Christ is the one Mediator between God and man, vain ordinances are blotted out.

THESSALONIANS : First Epistle

Written in A.D. 51, this letter to the Church at Thessalonica, in Macedonia, encourages the members in their trials, praises their constancy, exhorts them to diligence and purity, and concludes with precepts.

THESSALONIANS : Second Epistle

Probably sent in the same year as the first Epistle to the Thessalonians, this letter helpfully corrects a belief current among the members of their Church that the Second Advent was at hand.

TIMOTHY : First Epistle

The letters to Timothy and Titus are commonly known as the Pastoral Epistles because they direct the shepherding of the Christian flock. The first was written about A.D. 64 to advise Timothy in charge of the Church at Ephesus how to conduct it safely in the midst of great difficulties.

TIMOTHY : Second Epistle

Last of the Pauline epistles in time, this letter was written during St. Paul's second imprisonment, when he knew that his death was at hand, to give final directions and admonitions.

TITUS

The Apostle encourages Titus to maintain the true doctrine in the Church at Crete and instructs him on discipline and morals. The letter was written in A.D. 64.

PHILEMON

Probably written A.D. 61, this is the only strictly private letter among the epistles of St. Paul. It contains a petition for Onesimus, the bearer, who had robbed his master Philemon, escaped to Rome, and there been converted by the Apostle.

HEBREWS

Addressed to the Jewish Christians, probably of Rome or Palestine, this letter shows how the New Covenant fulfils the Old Covenant, the sacrifices of the latter being types and shadows of the one perfect Sacrifice of the Saviour, and conveys moral exhortations and encouragement.

The Seven General Epistles

JAMES

This epistle is addressed, like those of St. Peter, St. John and St. Jude, to the whole Church and not to a particular Christian community. It is notable for its practical teaching that " faith without works is dead."

ST. PETER : First Epistle

To comfort and encourage the Christian Church, suffering persecution in the Roman Empire, was the purpose of this letter, written between A.D. 63 and 67.

ST. PETER : Second Epistle

After admonitions for growth in grace and understanding, the author exhorts to steadfastness in the true doctrine as expounded by St. Paul and warns his readers against being led astray by the wicked.

JOHN : First Epistle

This encyclical letter presents God as Love and Light, requiring purity of His worshippers. It stresses unshaken faith in Christ, and the bond of unity.

JOHN : Second Epistle

Addressed to the Elect Lady and her children, this epistle contains a general exhortation to maintain the truth and thereby to manifest love.

JOHN : Third Epistle

More personal than his other two epistles, this letter to Gaius also conveys the Apostle's universal message of the essential virtue of brotherly love.

JUDE

The purpose of the writer, brother of James, is to warn his readers against false teachers. The last two verses beautifully ascribe praise to God.

The Prophetic Book

The REVELATION of St. John the Divine

In the title of this book, the word Revelation, or Apocalypse, denotes the Uncovering of the future in connexion with the Christian Church and the world. The book contains the messages to the seven Churches, the Prophetic Visions, culminating in the new heaven and the new earth, and concludes with general benediction.

The Apocrypha

IN addition to the Old and New Testaments, there is a third body of Biblical writings, known as the Apocrypha (Greek, " things hidden "), composed of fourteen books or parts of books (see below) connected with the Old Testament. These are found in the Septuagint but were not regarded as canonical by the Jews of Palestine. However, most of them are included in the Bible used by the Roman Catholic Church. There are in addition a number of New Testament apocryphal writings which are not included in the canon accepted by any of the great Churches, although they have value and interest of their own.

ESDRAS : Third Book

This book is also called the First Book of Esdras. The name is identical with Ezra and it embraces parts of Chronicles, Nehemiah, and the whole of Ezra as given in the Old Testament ; it also contains the story of The Three Youths.

ESDRAS : Fourth Book

Often styled the Second Book of Esdras and anciently known as The Revelation of Ezra, this is a purely apocalyptic writing. It contains seven visions, including : Sion and the Heavenly Jerusalem ; The Eagle Vision ; The Man from the Sea.

TOBIT

The story of Tobit, stricken with blindness and miraculously healed, his son Tobias, the demon-haunted Sarah and their angelic benefactor Raphael, reveals and upholds the strict observance of their faith by the captive Jews in Nineveh.

JUDITH

Centred on the majestic character of its Jewish heroine, the interest of this story is tensely maintained. Throughout her vengeance on Holofernes, captain of Nebuchadnezzar's invading forces, Judith regards herself as Jehovah's instrument.

ESTHER : Rest of the Book

Found neither in the Hebrew nor in the Chaldee, a part of the tenth chapter and numerous other additions after the Greek version of this book have been placed together in the Apocryphal Writings.

WISDOM

Known also as The Wisdom of Solomon, this book consists of two main sections dealing respectively with the praise of wisdom and the doctrine of wisdom.

ECCLESIASTICUS

Also styled The Wisdom of Jesus, the Son of Sirach, this valuable collection of sayings and proverbs has an appendix (Ch. xliv-xlix) in praise of righteous and famous men.

BARUCH

Divided into three unconnected parts in the English Version, this book contains two letters, one professedly written by Baruch, from captivity in Babylon, and the other professedly by Jeremiah, the prophet.

SONG of the THREE CHILDREN

This addition to the narrative in Daniel iii contains the prayer of Azariah for deliverance from the fiery furnace, tells how the three youthful Hebrews were saved and concludes with the Hymn of the Three.

SUSANNA

Set apart from the beginning of the book of Daniel because it is not in the Hebrew, Susanna's story contrasts the wisdom of Daniel with the folly of the two elders.

BEL and the DRAGON

This fragment from the Greek version of Daniel contains propaganda against idolatry. It relates the destruction of two objects of Babylonian worship by Daniel.

THE PRAYER OF MANASSES

Of unknown date and origin, this prayer was ascribed to the penitent king of Judah, held captive in Babylon.

MACCABEES : First Book

Though there are four books of the Maccabees, the first and second only find a place in the Vulgate and among the generally-recognized apocryphal books. The first contains the history of the Jewish heroes, the Maccabees brethren, from the beginning of the reign of the oppressor Antiochus Epiphanes to 135 B.C.

MACCABEES : Second Book

In this book the persecution of the Jews, the death of Antiochus Epiphanes and the great victory obtained by Judas Maccabaeus over Nicanor in 161 B.C. are recounted.

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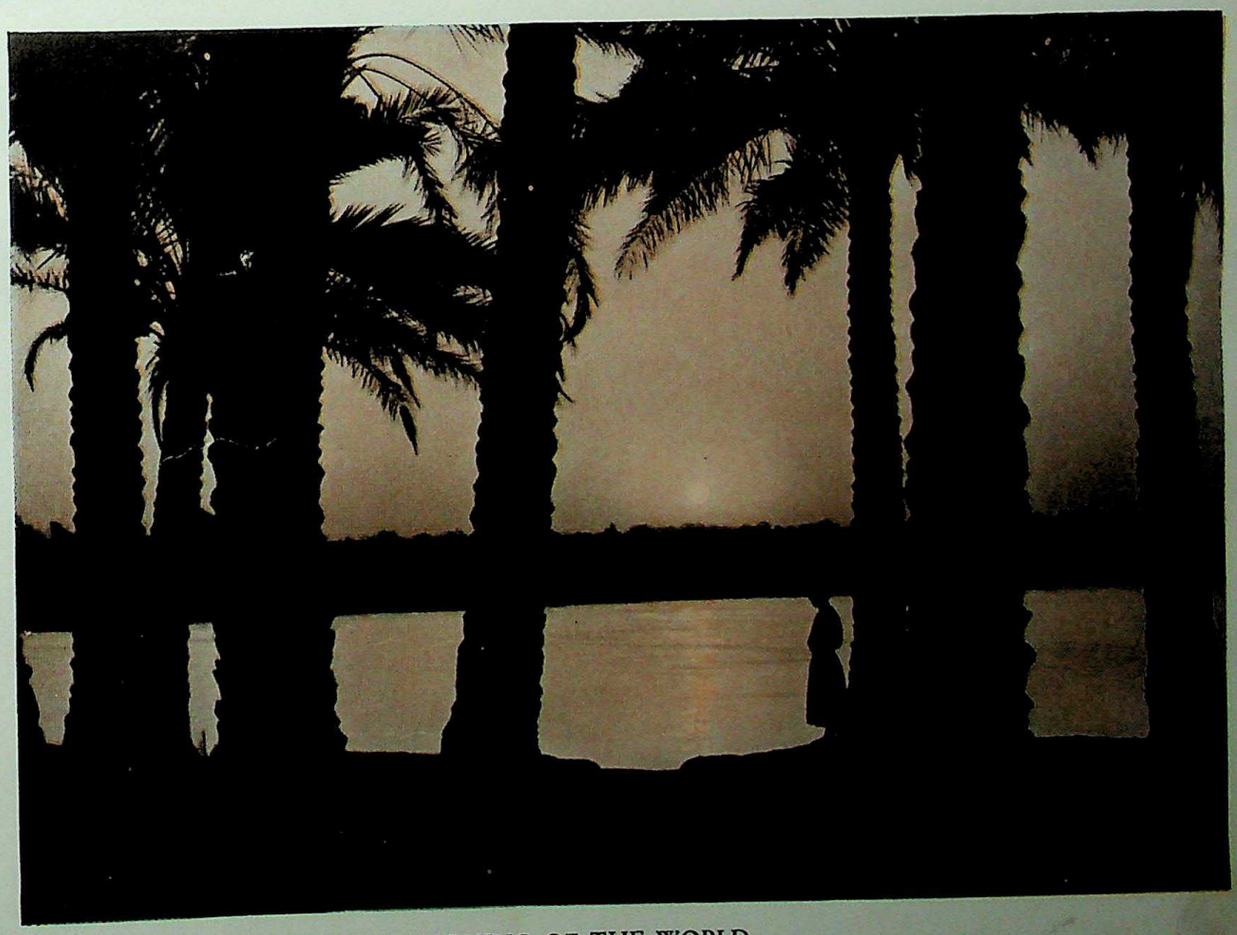
"THE GREAT RIVER, THE RIVER EUPHRATES"



IN THE MORNING OF THE WORLD

Sunrise is seen through a palm grove on the banks of the Euphrates named in the second chapter of Genesis as the fourth river parting from the main stream that watered the Garden of Eden. In the upper photograph fishermen of today dry their nets on the palms. The river flows through Mesopotamia and by salt marshes to the Persian Gulf. The city of Ur was situated near it, and Abraham knew it well. In the covenant (Genesis xv, 18) he was promised: "Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates." This promise was fulfilled when the border was conquered for the Israelites by David.

Photo: Kingsley Colton, Jerusalem

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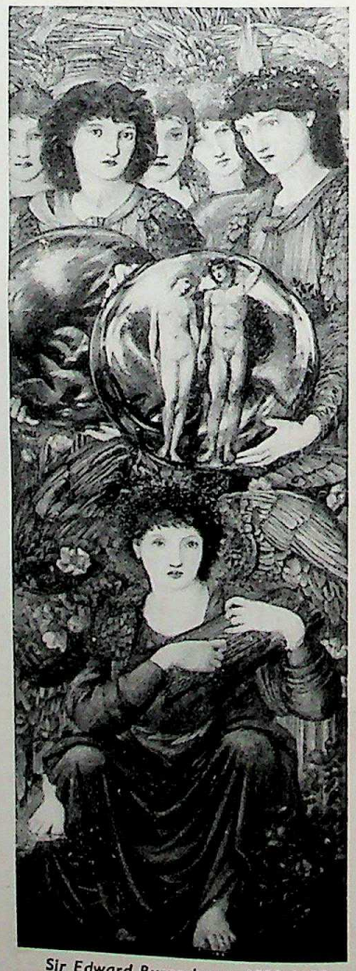

Sir Edward Burne-Jones, 1833-1898

THE SIX DAYS OF THE CREATION

In this series of six symbolic paintings, illustrative of the first chapter of Genesis, Sir Edward Burne-Jones shows a sincere fervour of religious and poetical inspiration, a beauty of pattern and design, that recall medieval art. The pictorial ideas in the circular shapes representing the earth are in harmony with the progress of the lovely Biblical waters. And God said, Let there be light: and there was light"—to "And the evening and the morning were the sixth day."

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A. T. Nowell, b. 1862

ADAM AND EVE DRIVEN FORTH FROM EDEN

The picture (in the Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool) by A. T. Nowell, of the Expulsion from Eden emphasizes the forlorn misery of Adam and Eve and the pity of the guardian Seraphim for the fall of Man. Titian (right) treats the fiercely cruel slaying of Abel by his brother Cain with a ruthless power and simplicity of detail which accords with the terrible nature of the Biblical tragedy ending with the curse and exile of the murderer from the presence of the Lord to the Land of Nod.

Titian, 1477-1576

"CAIN ROSE UP AGAINST ABEL AND SLEW HIM"

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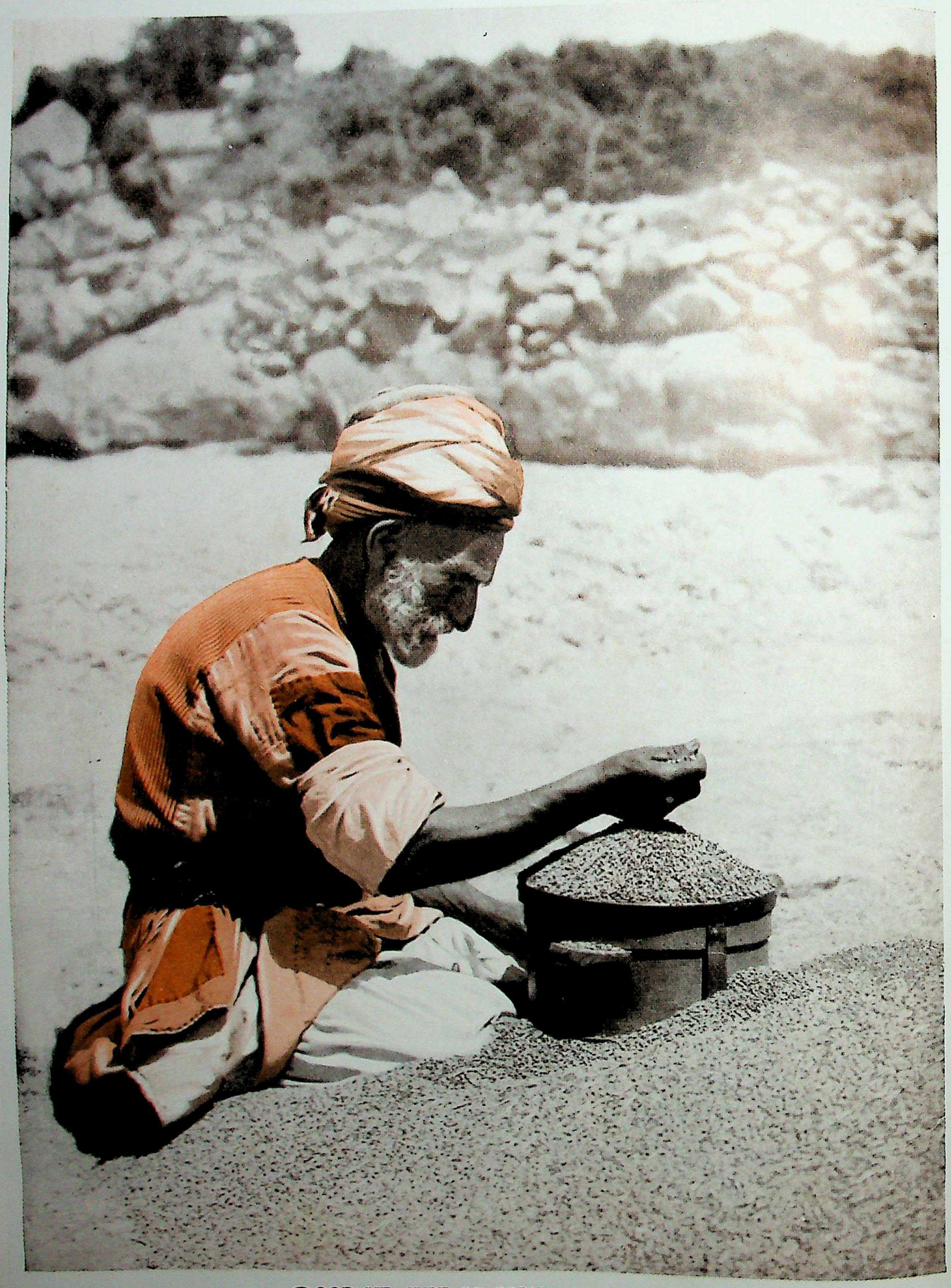

GOOD MEASURE OF CORN

In the Bible lands the grain was, and still is, trodden out of the ear. The corn lies threshed on the ground after the yoke of oxen have been driven round and round, dragging over it the comb of thin flints set in a massive log of wood. Ethical Eastern custom entails giving good value to purchasers, but the grain is taken away before cleansing. This household task is woman's work ; it is done by vigorous sifting preparatory to use. Thus, in Genesis xviii, 6, we read that Abraham says to Sarah " Make ready quickly three measures of fine meal, knead it, and make cakes upon the hearth."

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

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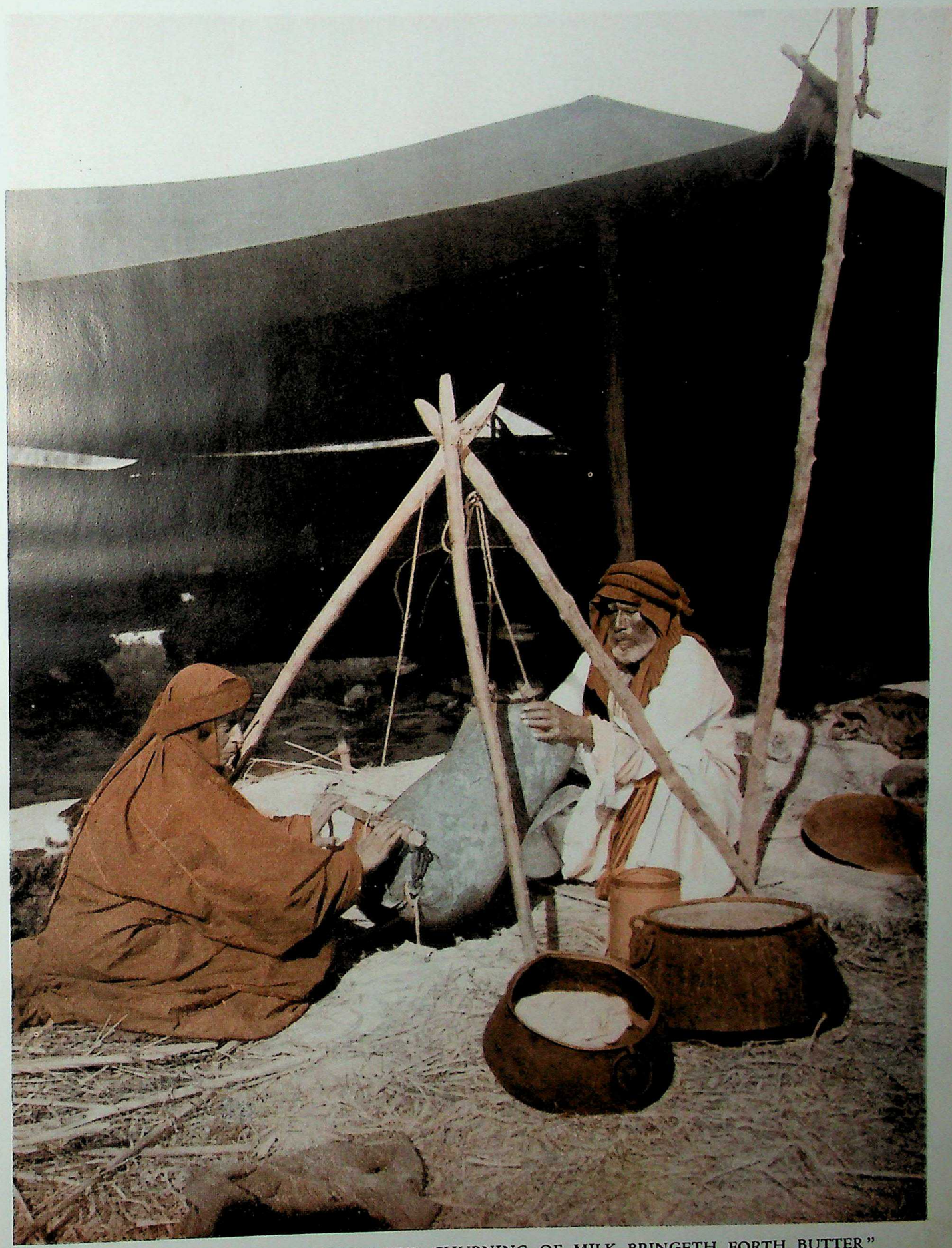

"SURELY THE CHURNING OF MILK BRINGETH FORTH BUTTER"

When Abraham rose from the shade of the tent door, where he sat in the heat of the day, to entertain angels unawares, "he took butter, and milk, and the calf which he had dressed, and set it before them" (Genesis xviii, 8). The primitive, patriarchal way of making butter still obtains in the East. Milk is placed in a goatskin "bottle" and rocked to and fro. The improvised churn, which gives the butter a special flavour, is strung to a tripod. A staple food in the desert, because of its refreshing and wholesome properties, milk and butter mixed is offered to the guest in a wooden bowl.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

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Nicolas Poussin, 1594-1665

"AND THE FLOOD WAS FORTY DAYS UPON THE EARTH"

Gustave Brion 1824-1877

RETURN OF THE DOVE BEARING AN OLIVE LEAF

Scenes of the Deluge have seldom been more impressively and yet simply treated than in these two pictures by French painters. The Flood, by Nicolas Poussin, master of rhythmic line and strong composition, represents with grand poetic imagination the violence of tempest and dreary waste of waters prevailing over the living creatures of the earth. The Return of the Dove to the Ark, by Gustave Brion, realistic painter of simple pastoral and peasant life, illustrates starkly the assuaging of the flood after Noah had sent the bird forth for the second time (Genesis viii, 11): "and the dove came in to him in the evening; and lo, in her mouth was an olive leaf pluckt off; so Noah knew that the waters were abated from off the earth."

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Andrea del Sarto. 1487-1531

"LAY NOT THINE HAND UPON THE LAD"

The subject of Abraham's trial of faith and the Heavenly intervention which proved to him that God required not the human sacrifice of Isaac, but the surrender of human will, was an inspiring one to the Old Masters. Andrea del Sarto, called "the faultless painter," depicted it with all the suave idealism of the Renaissance. Such a successful unity of contrasts—sacred subject, classical treatment of figures, and contemporary background—belongs peculiarly to the Italian painters of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Artists of other nationalities did not blend so gracefully the antique with their own times. The dignified harmony of the Florentine landscape's castle and mountain line in his Biblical composition was what concerned Andrea, to whom the scenery of the Arabian desert was unknown.

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"AND LOT ALSO, WHICH WENT WITH ABRAM, HAD FLOCKS"

From earliest-known times in Mesopotamia there were, in addition to town dwellers and agriculturists, nomad shepherds. When Abraham and his nephew Lot started on the migration from their native land to Canaan they went with flocks and herds. By the time that they reached the plain of Jordan, after the temporary sojourn in Egypt, the multitude of their live-stock was so great that "the land was not able to bear them, that they might dwell together" (Genesis xiii, 6). At Abraham's suggestion, to avoid strife between their herdsmen, they agreed to part and Lot chose the well-watered plain as pasturage for his flocks.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

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LITERARY BEAUTY OF THE BIBLE. I

Selections from Genesis

POETIC qualities abound in the prose of Genesis. Not only were the ancient Hebrew writers masters of imagery and graphic realism, simplicity of diction, and concentrated expression, but the style of the English translation is, in this book, as throughout the Authorized Version of the Bible, one of stateliest rhythm and exquisite balance of words. It is founded on the pattern of William Tyndale, master of Tudor prose. The whole version was completed at the end of the most verbally musical period of our language, the first edition being published in 1611.

GENESIS reads like a sacred tale that is told by word of mouth. But with all its spontaneity there is dignity and restraint. The opening verses of the first chapter's magnificent Hymn of Creation stress the thought of universal dawn with lovely phrases. The narrative of the garden of Eden is rich in word pictures. None is more vivid than that evoked by the description of the expulsion of Adam and Eve. Full of human interest is the descriptive passage of the token of the rainbow, symbol of security and promise of fine weather, concluding the account of the Flood.

APART from poetic imagery, simile and metaphor in the prose, actual poetry is to be found in Genesis. As the Hebrew writers did not use rhyme, their translators did not have that difficulty to contend with. Parallelism or balance of thought takes the place of rhyme in Biblical poetry. The second part of the verse echoes, builds up, or forms a contrast to the idea expressed in the first. Sometimes, as in the case of the warlike little song of Lamech, the poetry is but a fragment. This song of revenge belongs to a very early period of the race, when the Hebrews lived like nomad Beduin, before migrating from the East into Canaan.

PRIMEVAL DAY

i, 1—5

IN the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, Let there be light; and there was light.

And God saw the light, that it was good; and God divided the light from the darkness. And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day.

LOST EDEN

iii, 1—11, 23, 24

NOW the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden; but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.

And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat. And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons.

And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day; and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden. And the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou? And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself. And he said, Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldst not eat?

Therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the Garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. So he drove out the man: and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden cherubim, and a flaming sword, which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.

LAMECH'S SONG

iv, 19—24

AND Lamech took unto him two wives: the name of the one was Adah, and the name of the other Zillah. And Adah bare Jabal; he was the father of such as dwell in tents, and of such as have cattle. And his brother's name was Jubal: he was the father of all such as handle the harp and organ. And Zillah, she also bare Tubal-cain, an instructor of every artificer in brass and iron: and the sister of Tubal-cain was Naamah. And Lamech said unto his wives,

Adah and Zillah, hear my voice;
Ye wives of Lamech, hearken unto my speech:
For I have slain a man to my wounding,
And a young man to my hurt:
If Cain shall be avenged sevenfold,
Truly Lamech seventy and sevenfold.

BOW IN THE CLOUD

ix, 12—16

AND God said, This is the token of the covenant which I make between me and you, and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations: I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth.

And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud: and I will remember my covenant, which is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh. And the bow shall be in the cloud; and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth.

CALL OF ABRAHAM

xii, 1—9

NOW the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee: and I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: and I will bless them that bless thee, and curse them that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed. So Abram departed, as the Lord had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him: and Abram was seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran. And Abram took Sarai, his wife . . . . and they went forth to go into the land of Canaan; and into the land of Canaan they came.

And Abram passed through the land unto the place of Sichem, unto the plain of Moreh. And the Canaanite was then in the Land. And the Lord appeared unto Abram and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land: and there builded he an altar unto the Lord, who appeared unto him.

And he removed from thence unto a mountain on the east of Beth-el, and pitched his tent, having Beth-el on the west, and Hai on the east; and there he builded an altar unto the Lord, and called upon the name of the Lord. And Abram journeyed, going on still toward the south.

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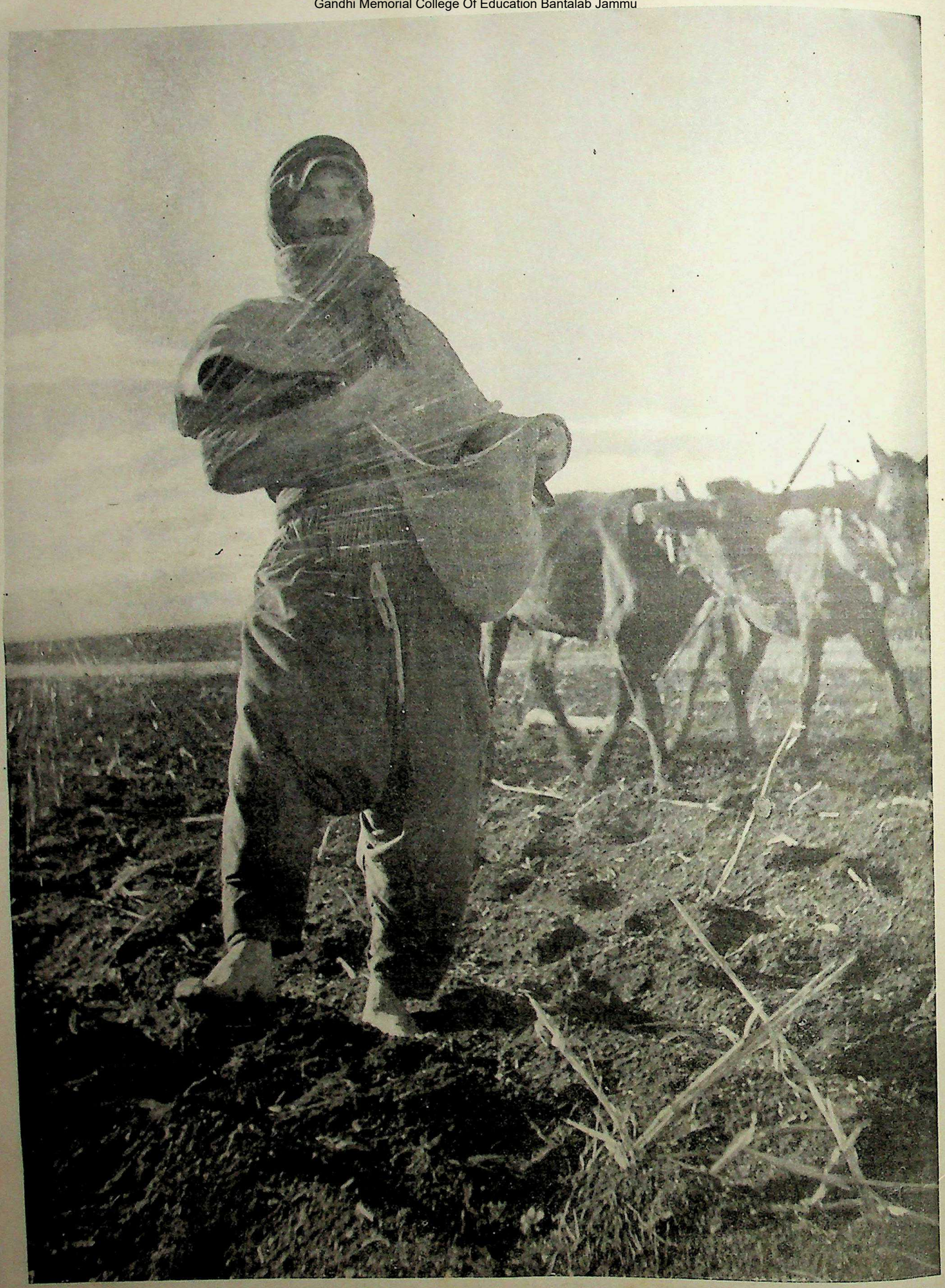

"A TILLER OF THE GROUND." Before Cain was exiled to lead the life of a nomad in the Land of Wandering, "a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth" (Genesis iv, 14), his calling was a tiller of the cultivated soil. The great bulk of fertile land in Syria is now, as it was then, given over to agriculture. The heavy plough has furrowed the earth on which the sower walks, broadcasting the wheat seed from dawn to sunset. Presently he will be followed by the ploughman with a light harrow to cover the seed as a protection against birds. Veritable showers of the grain stream, as he moves, from his rhythmically-swinging hand.

Photo, "Daily Mirror"

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Genesis

I

The Book in Outline

What It Tells of World Origins and of the Fathers of Israel

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TO open the book of Genesis is to take a step into remote antiquity, out of the modern scene of scientific investigation, economic problems and international complications into a realm of thought and life far removed from that of the present day. It is to change the complex for the simple, the artificial for the natural, the coldly scientific for the romantic and the poetical.

Yet the change is not so abrupt as might appear. The voices that speak to us out of the dim Hebrew past have their own forms of speech, but the things of which they speak are strangely similar to those which, in our quieter moments, concern us now. Genesis is concerned with the great thought of God in His relation to the world and to man; this is a concern which has not lost any of its acuteness with the passing of the centuries.

Once we understand the message of the Book, our respect for a wonderful literary achievement deepens into reverence before a revelation of Divine Truth that satisfies the deep needs of the soul. It must be admitted that the aim of Genesis to give an intelligible account of God's relation to the world and to man has been achieved in the highest degree. The Hebrews, it has been said, had a special gift for painting a richly-coloured picture in a very small compass; and as we survey the contents of Genesis in outline both the beauty and the religious message of the picture will be apparent.

Genesis is broadly divided into two parts, one dealing with the beginnings of all life and human activity, and the other presenting a series of great figures in the patriarchal age.

Order from out the Formless Void

INTO the primeval chaos, described as empty, dark and formless, God brought by His word all that exists in the natural world. In stages, which are described as days, there occurred the creation of Light with the institution of day and night; the creation of the "firmament" dividing the upper and lower waters; the formation of earth and seas, with the earth producing vegetation; the creation of sun, moon and stars; the creation of the creatures that inhabit the waters and the air; the creation of the creatures that live on dry land; and of mankind. On the seventh day, on which God rested, we have the institution of the Sabbath (Genesis i-ii, 3).

Another account (ii, 4-25) describes the creation of man. "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul." Then follows an account of how the Lord God planted a garden with trees and rivers, and placed man in it with trees for food. Of one tree, however, on penalty of death, he was forbidden to eat—the Tree of Knowledge. Animals were formed to provide companionship for man, and finally woman was created. "And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam and he slept: and He took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh instead thereof. And the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made He a woman, and brought her unto the man."

Man's Place in the Cosmic Process

THE dominant motive throughout these creation narratives is religious. The repetition of "And God said . . . and it was so" emphasizes the Divine source of all being, while the summary "And God saw that it was good" stresses the perfection of creation as the expression of God's will and power. The order in the Creation narratives indicates the preparation of a habitation for man, who is the climax of the whole process. Man is exalted through his possession of God's image and his dominion over all creatures. It is worth noting that there is an emphasis on the need for companionship in the story of the creation of animals, and of woman.

The third chapter presents a dramatic and moving account of the Fall of Man. The idyllic beauty of the garden was disturbed by the serpent, described as "more subtil than any beast of the field." It was the serpent that induced the woman to eat of the forbidden fruit, and she in turn persuaded Adam. Their eyes were opened, and to cover the nakedness thus revealed they made themselves aprons. But retribution was swift and severe.

Hearing the sound of God walking in the garden in the cool of the day they sought to hide themselves, but in vain. Adam's excuse was that he was tempted by the woman, and the woman's that she was beguiled by the serpent. Then God pronounced a threefold curse; on the serpent, which was condemned to go on its belly and eat dust and be at enmity with man: on the woman, who was condemned to suffer the pain of childbirth and be in subjection to her husband; and on Adam, for he would henceforth have to live by weary toil. "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." Finally, lest man should eat of the fruit of the Tree of Life and become immortal, God drove him from the garden, with the flaming sword of the Cherubim to prevent his return

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This highly dramatic narrative embodies profound truths of the moral and spiritual life. Human sin is traced to the will, the refusal to obey the commands of God. The consequences of wrong-doing are vividly suggested, and especially the ultimate consequence of alienation from God. The introduction of the serpent into the narrative is a wonderful pictorial representation of temptation.

CAIN and Abel, the sons of Adam and Eve, were engaged in different occupations: the former tilling the ground and the latter tending sheep. Both brought their offerings unto God, but "the Lord had respect unto Abel and his offerings; but unto Cain and his offering He had not respect." This angered Cain, and when they were together in the field he slew his brother. When God reproached Cain for this murder his famous rejoinder: "Am I my brother's keeper?" called out God's condemnation: "Cursed art thou from the ground, which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand: when thou tillest the ground it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her strength; a fugitive and a wanderer shalt thou be in the earth." Cain, overwhelmed by the severity of this curse, pleaded that the punishment was greater than he could bear, so God gave him a mark that he might be protected from blood-revenge. Thus Cain went into exile.

Following closely on the story of man's first disobedience, this ancient drama suggests what is the deadly result of hatred and jealousy; in their train come the violation of the sacred ideals of kinship, the disregard of truth, and murder. The first death recorded in the Bible is a murder, as if to suggest that it is man's wickedness that mars the beauty God has made. The narrative emphasizes the stern justice of God, but there is already an indication of that Divine mercy which was to receive increasing emphasis in later Hebrew writings.

We pass over the genealogies of the Cainites, of the Sethites, and of the human race from Adam to Noah to the picturesque account of the wickedness of the human race and the coming of the Deluge. "And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented the Lord that He had made man on the earth, and it grieved Him at His heart. And the Lord said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth" (vi, 5-7).

An exception, however, was made in the case of Noah, who "found grace in the eyes of the Lord." He was commanded to construct an ark and to take into it his wife, sons and daughters-in-law, together with two, male and female, of every living thing. (A second account varies this somewhat, commanding that clean beasts should be taken into the ark in sevens, the fowls of the air in sevens, and the unclean beasts in twos). So at the age of six hundred Noah embarked in the ark, and the rain began. For forty days and nights the rain fell, until the tops of the mountains were covered and "all in whose nostrils was the breath of the spirit of life died." Only the inhabitants of the ark were saved. After a hundred and fifty days the waters began to abate. Noah tested this abatement by sending out first a raven, and then a dove. He repeated this experiment, and when the dove returned with a leaf in her mouth, Noah knew that the flood had almost completely subsided. When eventually the dove did not return at all he looked out and "behold the face of the earth was dried." Then the occupants of the ark went forth, and Noah built an altar unto the Lord and offered burnt offerings.

GOD'S response to this act of worship is beautifully expressed. "The Lord said in His heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake: neither will I again smite any more every thing living as I have done. While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease." God made a covenant with Noah, and for a token set a rainbow in the cloud. "And it shall come to pass, when I

GENESIS: A SYNOPSIS

Creation and the Dawn of History

	Chapters
The Work of God in Creation ...	i-ii
Paradise Lost	iii
The Crime of Cain	iv, 1-16
The Visitation of the Flood ...	vi, 5—ix, 7
The Story of Babel	xi, 1-9

Abraham, the Friend of God

How Abraham Heard God's Call ...	xi, 27—xii, 9
Abraham's Adventures in Egypt ...	xii, 10-20
How Abraham parted from Lot ...	xiii, 1-18
God's Covenant with Abraham ...	xv, 1-21
The Tragedy of Sodom	xviii, 16-33; xix, 1-29
How God Tested Abraham ...	xxii, 1-19
Abraham's Last Resting Place ...	xxiii; xxv, 8-10

The Career of Isaac

Isaac and Ishmael	xxi, 9-21
The Romance of Isaac and Rebekah	xxiv
The Birth of Esau and Jacob ...	xxv, 20-28

Jacob, Father of the Jewish Race

How Jacob obtained a Blessing	xxvii, 1-40
How Jacob Dreamed and Made a Vow	xxviii, 10-22
How Jacob Found Romance ...	xxix
How Jacob Wrestled through the Night	xxxii, 24-32
Jacob's Reconciliation with Esau	xxxiii, 1-16

Joseph: From Slave to Premier

Joseph the Dreamer	xxxvii, 1-11
How Joseph was Sold into Slavery	xxxvii, 12-36
How Joseph rose to Power in Egypt ...	xxxix-xli
How Jacob's Family came into Egypt ...	xlii-xlvi
How Jacob Blessed his Children and Died ...	xlix

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NOMADS ENCAMPED NEAR UR. Within sight of the ziggurat of Ur, seen on the skyline of this photograph, these Beduins have pitched their tent. Their forefather Abraham—the Arabs claim descent through his son Ishmael—saw the ziggurat in all its pyramidal glory, rising in terraces and temple-crowned, instead of the ruined structure of today. It is still, however, a notable landmark of the plain. The patriarchal tent cannot have differed much from that in modern Beduin use.

DESERT SONS OF JABAL. Unchanged in manner of living since Jabal, son of the nomad warrior Lamech, was designated "the father of such as dwell in tents" (Genesis iv, 20) are the Beduin who inhabit the desert. They call their rectangular tents "houses of hair" because these are made of strips of cloth, woven of goat's or camel's hair and strongly sewn together. The men in the photograph, gathered round the large common dish, are eating their frugal dinner of boiled rice.

Photos, American Colony in Jerusalem; E.N.A.

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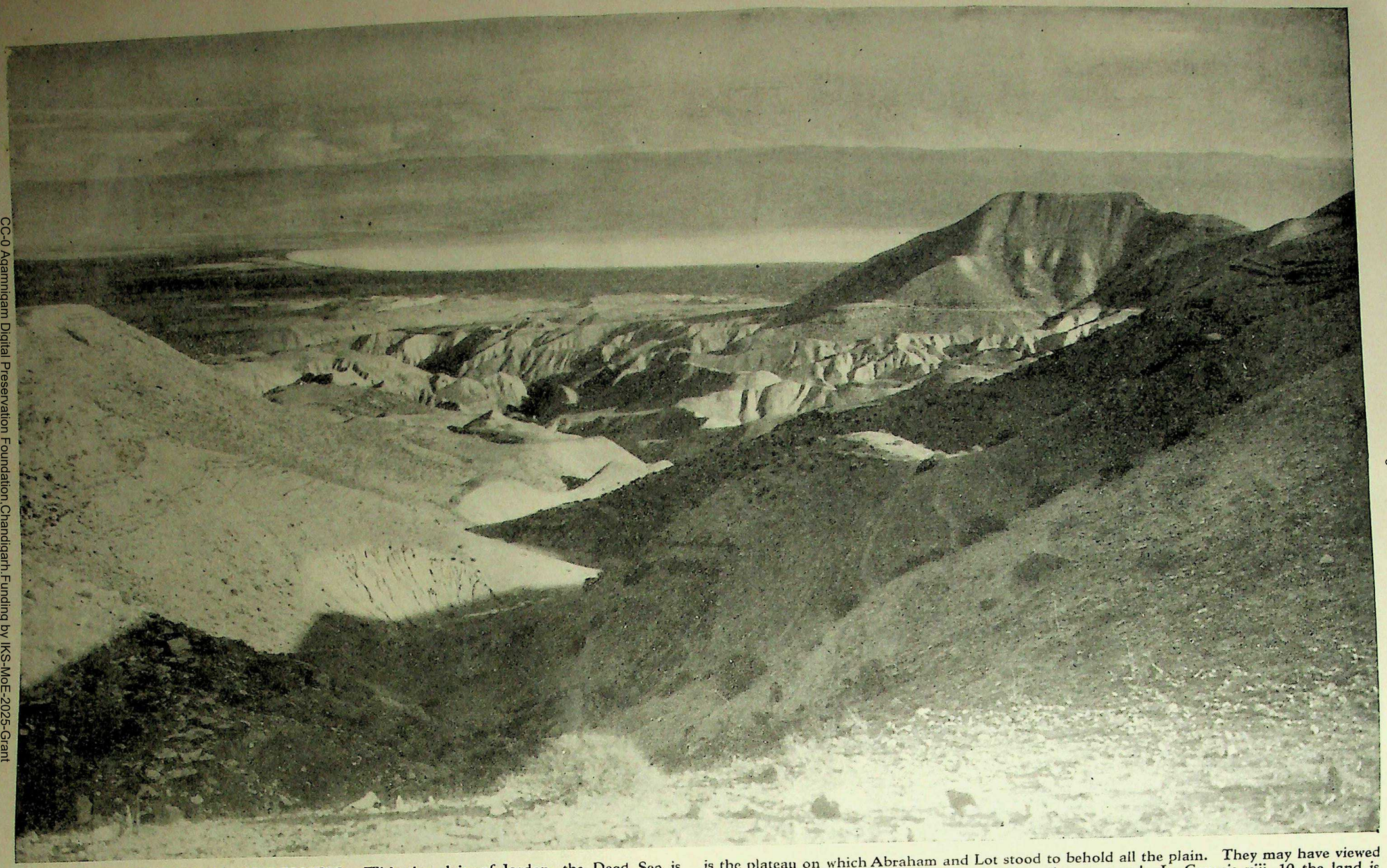

DEAD SEA AND BARREN WILDERNESS. With the plain of Jordan, the Dead Sea is 1,300 feet below the Mediterranean level. In contrast, on the eastern side, rise the mountains of Moab, seen in the background of this photograph; while the rocky barrier which separates the Sea from the devastated Wilderness of Judea breaks the foreground. On the western side is the plateau on which Abraham and Lot stood to behold all the plain. They may have viewed it from this very point, but how different then the prospect! In Genesis xiii, 10 the land is compared to Eden. It was "even as the garden of the Lord" before the cataclysmic destruction of the district with Sodom and Gomorrah, dramatically described in the eighteenth chapter.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

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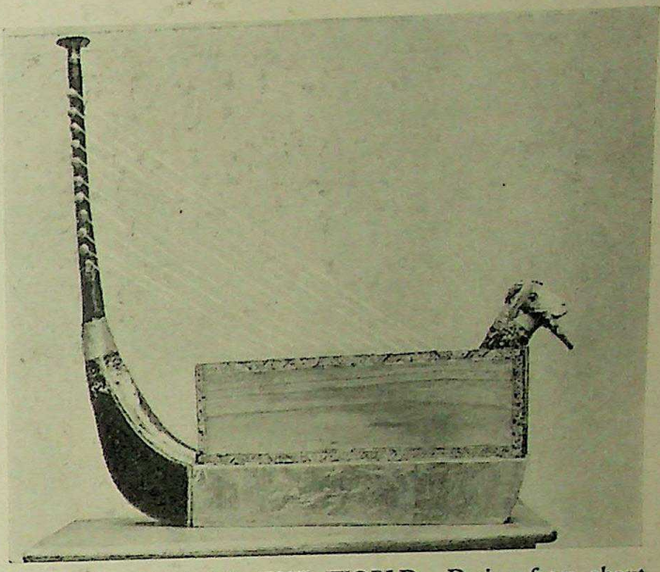
bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud: and I will remember My covenant which is between Me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh."

In those days, when the whole of mankind spoke one language, they were settled in the plain of Shinar (Babylonia). They began to build a city and a tower in order that they might keep together. "Let us build us a city and a tower whose top may reach unto heaven, and let us make us a name lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth." But "the Lord came down to see the city and the tower," and, regarding this building as an impious assertion of human pride, He confounded their language so that they could not understand one another. Consequently men gave up the building scheme and were scattered abroad (xi, 9). "Therefore is the name of it called Babel; because the Lord did there confound the language of all the earth: and from thence did the Lord scatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth."



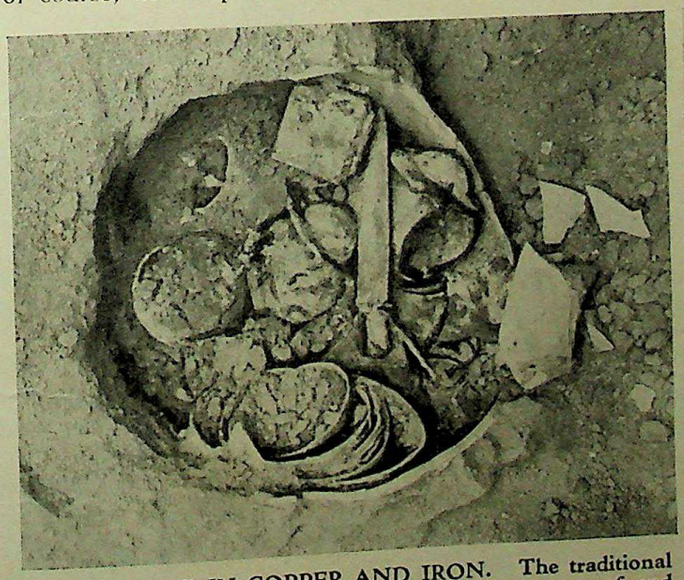
OLDEST HARP IN THE WORLD. Dating from about 3500 B.C., many centuries before the time of Abraham, this antique example of Sumerian decorative art aptly illustrates the harps known to Jubal, "father of all such as handle the harp and organ" (Genesis iv, 21). The instrument, as pictured here from the painting by M. Louise Baker, was restored from the fragments found in Queen Shub-ad's grave at Ur.
British Museum

THE background of this narrative is, once again, the supremacy of God. The implication is that human discords are to be traced to human assertiveness.

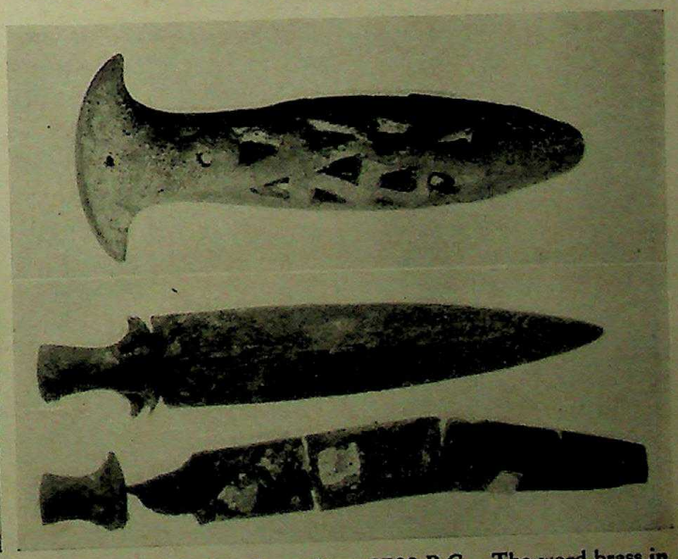
Scattered through the foregoing chapters are references to individuals regarded as important in the history of the race; e.g., to Enoch who "walked with God, and he was not, for God took him" (v, 24); to Jabal, the father of such as dwell in tents and have cattle; Jubal, the father of such as handle the harp and the organ; Tubal-cain, the instructor of every artificer in brass and iron (iv, 20-22); and to Noah's three sons, Shem, Ham and Japheth, from whom the nations were descended (x, 1).

The second part of Genesis is devoted to a series of fascinating studies of great men, all of whom were regarded with special veneration in the subsequent history of the Hebrew peoples. There is no attempt, of course, at complete biography, but epoch-making events are clearly and frankly depicted, and with such a naïve charm that these great personalities, from Abraham to Joseph, have taken a unique place in the world's portrait gallery. They are depicted as real figures, yet it must be remembered that much that is recorded of them has significance also in connexion with the life and movements of tribes.

Abraham, the son of Terah, migrated with his father and the household from Ur of the Chaldees unto Haran, where Terah died at the age of two hundred and five. Some years before his father's death Abraham felt the bidding of God to move westwards. "Now the Lord had said unto Abraham" (we use the form Abraham throughout, though in the earlier narratives Genesis uses the shorter form Abram) "Get thee out of thy country and from thy kindred and from thy father's



"ARTIFICES" IN COPPER AND IRON. The traditional designs of these weapons and other objects in copper, found in a jar, buried beneath a palace, during excavations at Tell Asmar, are very likely the same as those of "Tubal-cain, an instructor of every artificer in brass and iron" (Gen. iv, 22).
Courtesy of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago



They are held to date from about 2700 B.C. The word brass in the Bible text is correctly rendered copper. The knives, shown above, were included in this hoard; the top knife-hilt bears remains of an iron blade, the earliest trace of an iron weapon discovered up to now, and is thus of special interest.

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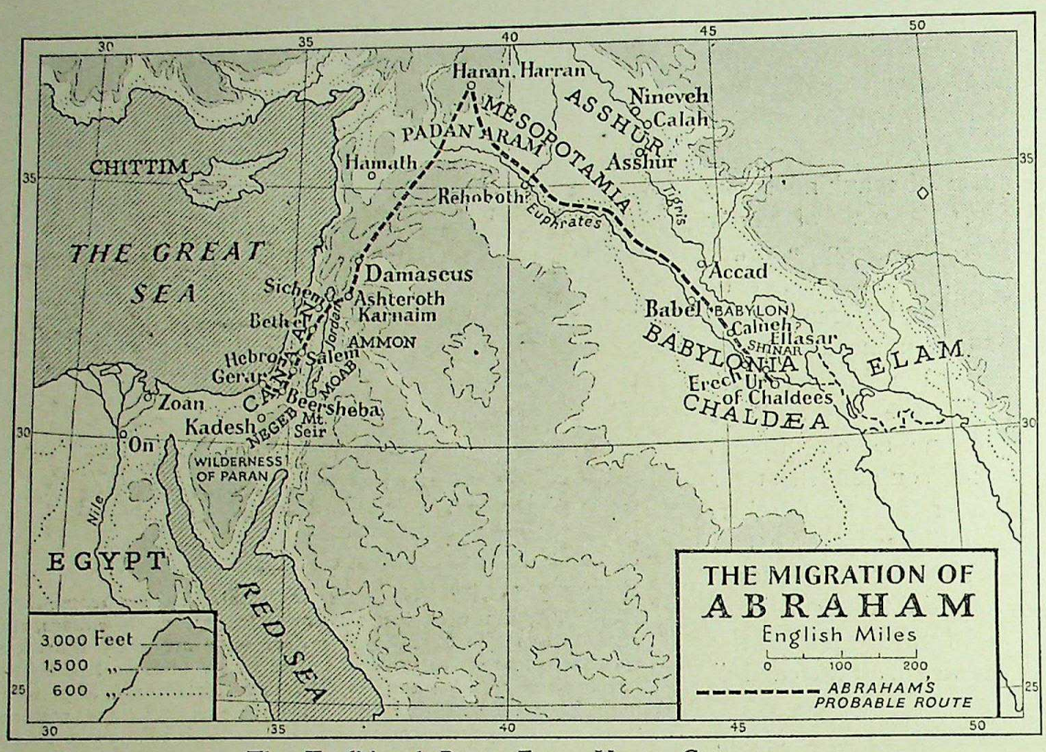

The Traditional Route From Ur to Canaan

house, unto a land that I will show thee. And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great, and thou shalt be a blessing." In complete reliance on the Divine call Abraham responded, and with his wife Sarah and his nephew Lot came from Haran into the land of Canaan. His piety was shown in that, on the journey, he built altars to the Lord. At the Oak of Moreh the Lord appeared unto him again, and the promise of blessing was renewed. And at Bethel, a spot ever afterwards to be sacred in Hebrew thought, he pitched his tent, reared an altar and worshipped the Lord.

A famine in the land of Canaan drove Abraham southwards into Egypt, and in the record of this journey there is a frank acknowledgment of the deception practised by the patriarch. "And it came to pass, when he was come near to enter into Egypt, that he said unto Sarah his wife, Behold now, I know that thou art a fair woman to look upon; Therefore it shall come to pass, when the Egyptians shall see thee, that they shall say, This is his wife: and they will kill me, but they will save thee alive. Say, I pray thee, that thou art my sister: that it may be well with me for thy sake; and that my soul may live because of thee."

It happened as he had foreseen. In Egypt Sarah's beauty appealed to Pharaoh, who took her into his household, and made Abraham a generous present of servants and cattle. But Pharaoh's bargain proved to be a bad one. "The Lord plagued Pharaoh and his house with great plagues because of Sarah, Abraham's wife." In some way the deception must have been made known to Pharaoh, for he upbraided Abraham and banished him.

This frank revealing of the weak as well as the strong points in great Biblical personalities is

VALE OF THE SLIMEPITS. Between the north end of the Dead Sea and Jericho is "the vale of Siddim which is the salt sea" and "full of slimepits" (Genesis xiv, 3 and 10). Here it is recorded that the battle with the five kings of the cities of the plains took place. The undulating surface of salt sand mounds is so slippery in the rainy season that pedestrians cannot keep their foothold, but would fall there like the fleeing kings of Sodom and Gomorrah. The sure-footed donkey makes traffic practicable.

Photo—American Colony in Jerusalem

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characteristic of Hebrew literature. It will be noted that the writer expresses neither approval nor disapproval of Abraham's deception. But the fact that Divine intervention, in the form of the plagues, was necessary to rescue Abraham from his predicament may suggest an indirect criticism of his action.

Now comes a narrative which presents the patriarch in a much nobler light than the Egyptian episode. For its own sake it is worth careful study, as a wonderful presentation of the force of material ambitions, and the contrast between the ideals of Abraham and his nephew Lot. But quite apart from the strong human interest, the narrative doubtless has some relation to the Hebrew tradition that the Hebrews broke up into two sections shortly after their arrival in Canaan.

Both Abraham and Lot were rich in possessions, and between their respective followers a rivalry developed which soon broke out into open strife. "The land was not able to bear them that they might dwell together: for their substance was great." Abraham, with the ripe wisdom of an older man, realized that a separation was in the best interests of both the parties. With great generosity he gave his nephew choice of district. Lot, looking towards the well-watered Plain of Jordan, decided to make that his home. So he journeyed on to Sodom, and Abraham remained in Canaan.

CITY OF "THE FRIEND OF GOD." Hebron is first mentioned in the Bible in Genesis xiii, 18: "Then Abram . . . dwelt in the plain of Mamre, which is in Hebron." The Revised Version has: "dwelt by the oaks (terebinths) of Mamre, which are in Hebron." Such trees are still a feature of the place whose Arabic name is El-Khalil, "the friend," that is of God, a title of Abraham. The large building, seen in the background to the left, is the Mosque over the Cave of Machpelah, where the three Patriarchs lie buried.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

In this narrative the commercial ambitions of the younger man are set in contrast with the calm generosity of Abraham. But we must remember that Abraham was fully aware of God's promise to him; his concern was rather with spiritual than with material prosperity.

We pass over the record of chapter xiv, with its story of how four kings from the east defeated the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah, taking Lot captive, and how Abraham rescued Lot, to the important chapter which records God's covenant with Abraham.

The idea of a Divine covenant is central to the understanding of Hebrew religion. The covenant of Genesis xv may be compared with that at Sinai (Exodus xix, 5; xxxiv, 10, 27), which the Hebrews always regarded as their religious charter.

"After these things the word of the Lord came unto Abraham in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abraham: I am thy shield and thy exceeding great reward." Abraham found it difficult to understand how God's promise that his seed would be greatly blessed could be fulfilled, inasmuch as he was without a son as heir. So in the vision God promised him a son. "Look now toward heaven and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them; and He said unto him, So shall thy seed be." Abraham believed the word of God and God "counted it to him for righteousness."

But he asked for a sign. This was vouchsafed in a form which was subsequently used on many occasions for the ratification of a covenant. Abraham was commanded to take the divided carcasses of animals, laying the halves over against each other. At sundown he fell into a trance and the voice of God announced to him events which were to occur: the

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"THE TIME THAT WOMEN GO OUT TO DRAW WATER." The drawing and fetching of water for domestic use has always been women's work in the Bible lands. It is not light labour, but carrying the earthenware vessels on head or shoulder gives a splendid carriage and necessitates a graceful walk. Towards the cool of evening they go to the wells outside the villages to fill their pitchers, just as did Rebekah of old. When Abraham's faithful servant arrived in quest of her, as the bride destined for Isaac, he waited till sunset by the well, without the town, of her father Nahor, expecting that she would be among "the daughters of the men of the city" (Genesis xxiv, 13) who would come to draw water and be the one to give him and his camels drink.

Photo, "Daily Mirror"

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bondage in Egypt, the deliverance of the Exodus, and the conquest of Canaan. A "smoking furnace" and a "flaming torch" passed between the halves of the carcasses, and God promised to give to Abraham's seed the territory from Egypt to the Euphrates.

In a subsequent chapter (xvii) we are given an account of the institution of circumcision as the sign of the covenant. All the males of Abraham's household were accordingly circumcised forthwith.

From the record of God's covenant of kindness with His servant Abraham we turn to a picture in different colours: God's visitation of the wickedness of men in His destruction of the Cities of the Plain. But grim and terrible as this picture is, its darkness is relieved by a moving story of Abraham's intercession for the people of the doomed cities.

CROSSING THE DESERT AS IN REBEKAH'S TIME. Camels are still the principal sumpter animals owned by the desert tribes. They can carry considerable loads; a specially-constructed pack-saddle with a wooden framework is used, over which the baggage is slung. Abraham, who lived as a Beduin sheikh, had many of these valuable beasts, and sent ten with his servant to Rebekah's native town. She, having consented to go (Genesis xxiv, 61), "arose, and her damsels, and they rode upon camels, and followed the man" into the land of Canaan.

First we have the announcement to Abraham of the coming destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. "And the Lord said, Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous; I will go down now, and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which is come unto me; and if not, I will know."

For the Sake of the Faithful Few

ABRAHAM drew near unto God and humbly began his pleading. "Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked? Peradventure there be fifty righteous within the city; wilt thou also destroy and not spare the place for the fifty righteous that are therein? That be far from thee to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked; and that the righteous should be as the wicked, that be far from thee: Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?"

The simplicity and directness of this speech to God indicate the intimate relation between God and His friend. God agreed to the suggestion of His servant. "If I can find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare all the place for their sakes." Emboldened by his success, Abraham went further and continued his plea. "Suppose forty-five are found faithful in the town . . . suppose there are even forty . . . . or even thirty . . . ." Thus Abraham continued, until his pleading induced God to agree that for the sake of ten good men in Sodom He would not sweep it away. "And the Lord went His way as soon as He had left communing with Abraham; and Abraham returned unto his place" (xviii, 33).

Meanwhile God's messengers had reached Sodom. Lot sat in the gate of the city, and when he beheld the approach of these Divine messengers hastened to offer them hospitality in his house. That night the men of the city "both young and old, all the people from every quarter" made an onslaught on the house to ill-treat the two messengers . . . a speedy answer to God's question whether the reputation of Sodom was according to the facts. The attackers were smitten with blindness, and Lot was warned to prepare to take his family out of the city. His sons-in-law scoffed at Lot's entreaties, and eventually only Lot, his wife and two daughters were able to set out to safety.

The command had been given to Lot "Escape for thy life; look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain: escape to the mountain, lest thou be

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consumed." Lot's wife, however, did look back in her flight "and she became a pillar of salt."

The story now takes us back to Abraham. "And Abraham gat up early in the morning to the place where he stood before the Lord; and he looked toward Sodom and Gomorrah, and toward all the land of the plain, and behold, and lo, the smoke of the land went up as the smoke of a furnace."

A son had been promised to Abraham and Sarah (Genesis xviii, 10), greatly to the wonder of Sarah. When Abraham was a hundred years old this son of promise was born. "For Sarah conceived and bare Abraham a son in his old age at the set time of which God had spoken to him. And Abraham called the name of his son that was born unto him, whom Sarah bare to him, Isaac."

Supreme Test of Abraham's Loyalty

NO story in the world is better known than that of Abraham and his son Isaac, told so tenderly and with such insight into the deep emotions of a father's heart. Abraham greatly loved this son of his old age. When Isaac was weaned there was great rejoicing. But the measure of Abraham's pride in his boy was to be the measure of his sacrifice in loyalty to God.

"And it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham and said unto him, Abraham; and he said, Here am I. And he said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of." In full obedience to God's command the old man set out, and on the third day came to the appointed place. Together the father and the son made preparations for the offering, Abraham with fire and knife, Isaac carrying the wood.

There is something of beautiful pathos in Isaac's wonder. "My father," he said: "behold the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?" "God will provide a lamb, my son," was the reply. Even then, as the great testing drew to its consummation, Abraham clung to the belief that somehow God would reveal another way. Yet if there was no other way, Isaac should be the offering. So he bound Isaac upon the wood of the altar, and his knife was uplifted, when a voice from above bade him stay his hand. "Lay not thine hand upon the lad, for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, from Me." And Abraham, lifting up his eyes, beheld a ram caught in the thicket. "And Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt offering in the stead of his son."

This was the climax of all Abraham's testing. He had now proved his utter obedience to the call of God, even when that involved the offering of his dearest possession. Following on this supreme evidence of his loyalty to the will of God there came a repetition of God's promise that in Abraham's seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed.

At length there came to the old servant of God the grief of separation from his companion and comrade of many years. Sarah died in Hebron at the age of a hundred and twenty-seven, and Abraham took steps to secure a burial ground where Sarah and he could be laid in peace.

THE narrative at this point gives us a perfect example of Oriental courtesy in business relationships, and at the same time indicates the veneration in which the old patriarch was held. Abraham sought to buy from Ephron the Hittite a field and a cave, offering him four hundred shekels of silver. Ephron desired to make Abraham a present of the field. "Nay, my lord, hear me: the field give I thee, and the cave that is therein: in the presence of the sons of my people give I it thee: bury thy dead." But Abraham insisted, and for the price named the cave of Machpelah went into his possession, and Sarah was buried there. Eventually Abraham himself was laid to rest in the same place. "Then Abraham gave up the ghost, and died in a good old age, an old man and full of years; and was gathered to his people. And his sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him in the cave of Machpelah."

So there passed from view a great soul. Not without mistakes, he had passed his long life of unbroken prosperity in continual fellowship with God, and in complete obedience to His will. Lofty in spirit, generous in his dealings with others, concerned rather with spiritual than material prosperity, he richly earned the veneration which later ages gave to him.

In the account of the life of Abraham mention has already been made of the birth of Isaac and the part he was called upon to play in the trial of his father's faith. Genesis gives much less attention to Isaac than to his father Abraham, and there is no doubt that much of the impression made by Isaac upon the life of the Hebrews was due to the reflected glory of his father. Yet his story is told with great literary charm, and serves as a link between the great careers of his father Abraham and his son Jacob.

Maternal Love in the Desert

WHEN Isaac was born Abraham already had a son, born to him by Hagar. The seeds of jealousy were sown in the heart of Sarah, Abraham's wife. "And Sarah saw the son of Hagar, the Egyptian, which she had born unto Abraham, mocking. Wherefore she said unto Abraham, Cast out this bondwoman and her son: for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, even with Isaac." Abraham was reluctant to do this, but, assured that God would bless the son of his bondwoman, he acquiesced in the suggestion.

The story pathetically describes the departure of Hagar and Ishmael into the wilderness of Beersheba, and their wandering till their water was spent and the boy was in danger of death. But to Hagar in her sorrow came the voice of God. "Fear not, for God hath heard the voice of the lad where he is. Arise, lift up the lad and hold him in thine hand, for I will make him a great nation." God opened Hagar's eyes, and she saw a well of water and was able to give her son drink. So "God was with the lad; and he grew . . . and became an archer" (xxi, 9-21).

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Abraham solemnly bade his trusted servant to go to his kinsfolk, the family of Nahor, to seek out a wife for his son Isaac. In this, as in all the great events of his career, the aged patriarch trusted in the guidance of God: so, too, did the retainer, for after he had set out and made his plans, he prayed, "O Lord God of my master Abraham, send me good speed this day, and show kindness unto my master Abraham."

HIS errand, and the measures he adopted to secure its success, reproduce well-known experiences of nomadic life, and reflect the customs of the ancient time. He halted by a well outside the city and waited, believing that the maiden who responded to his request for drink for himself and his camels would surely be the appointed wife for Isaac. In the evening came Rebekah with her pitcher on her shoulder, "very fair to look upon." Eagerly she let down her pitcher both for the stranger and his camels. To his request for lodging in her father's house she replied "we have both straw and provender enough, and room to lodge in."

The welcome to the house at Nahor was very cordial. Laban, Rebekah's brother, greeted the traveller with the words "Come in, thou blessed of the Lord: wherefore standest thou without? For I have prepared the house, and room for the camels." Then, during a meal, Abraham's servant told Laban the story of his quest, and how everything had happened according to his prayer. Laban and Bethuel, Rebekah's father, at once gave their consent. "The thing proceedeth from the Lord: we cannot speak unto thee bad or good. Behold, Rebekah is before thee: take her and go, and let her be thy master's son's wife, as the Lord hath spoken."

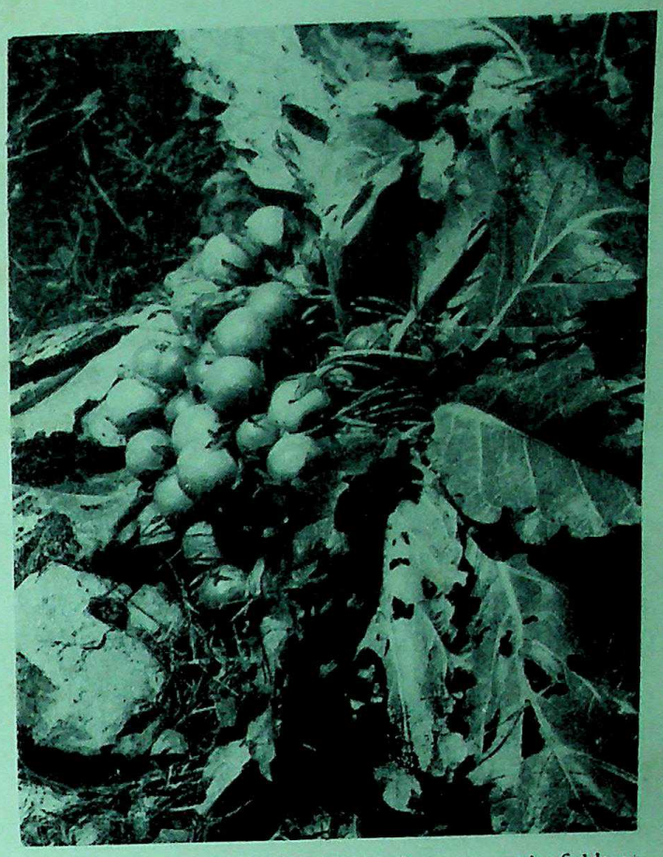
There is a very human touch in the narrative when we are told that Rebekah's mother and brother wanted her to stay with them a few days; but Abraham's servant was anxious to make his way back to his master, and Rebekah was willing to set out at once.

Meanwhile Isaac, doubtless wondering what the result of this mission would be, went out into the fields one evening. "And he lifted up his eyes and saw, and behold, the camels were coming. And Rebekah lifted up her eyes and when she saw Isaac she lighted off the camel." So Isaac welcomed his bride into his mother's home.

Jacob and Esau His Brother

AT first the marriage was childless, but Isaac "intreated the Lord for his wife because she was barren," and two sons were born to them, the twins Esau and Jacob. Esau became a cunning hunter, a man of the fields, and was his father's favourite: Jacob was "a plain man, dwelling in tents," and beloved of his mother.

Genesis gives detailed consideration to the career of Jacob, and his importance in the story of the Hebrew people is indicated by the fact that they were known by his name, Children of Israel. His life was an epitome of the life of the race: to understand Jacob is to understand Jewish history throughout the centuries. Graphically he is portrayed in his weaknesses, aspirations and sorrows. His story shows how a character in which there was a strange mixture of good and evil can be strengthened and transformed by discipline. His career is worth study for the sake of the play and interplay of conflicting forces which it reveals: but its presence in Genesis has a deeper purpose, to indicate how God was able to make use of an imperfect man in the achievement of His purposes.



THE FRUITFUL MANDRAKE. Common in the fields of Palestine, the mandrake is mentioned in the Bible in connexion with its supposed virtues in love incantations. Thus Reuben, eldest son of Jacob's less-favoured wife, "went in the days of the wheat harvest, and found mandrakes . . . and brought them to his mother Leah" (Genesis xxx, 14). The yellow fruit of this stemless plant is about the size of a plum.

Photo. American Colony in Jerusalem

Jacob had already shown indications of his desire to "steal a march" on his brother Esau. Genesis, chapter xxv, 29-34, relates how Esau one day came in hungry from hunting, and Jacob, quick to seize advantage of the situation, offered Esau bread and pottage in exchange for his birthright. Esau, caring more for the satisfaction of his hunger than for any birthright, agreed to the bargain. Now we are to learn of a second occasion on which Jacob supplanted his brother.

Rebekah was not without blame in the matter. She seems to have degenerated in character since those romantic days when she rode out to become the bride of Isaac. She overheard Isaac one day ask Esau to get venison and make savoury meat, that he might give him a blessing. Taking advantage of Isaac's age and blindness, she conceived the idea of dressing up

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Jacob to impersonate his brother. At first Jacob was afraid of the risk involved, but, prevailed upon by his mother, he went in to his father. Isaac was doubtful whether it really was Esau. "The voice is Jacob's voice, but the hands are the hands of Esau." But eventually he was convinced, and gave to Jacob the blessing: "God give thee of the dew of heaven and of the fatness of the earth, and plenty of corn and wine. Let people serve thee and nations bow down to thee: be lord over thy brethren, and let thy mother's sons bow down to thee."

Shortly afterwards, in came Esau, and the fraud was discovered. In anger Esau lifted up his voice and wept, beseeching his father still to give him a blessing. Isaac could not resist this plea and promised him: "Behold thy dwelling shall be the fatness of the earth, and of the dew of heaven from above; and by thy sword shalt thou live, and shalt serve thy brother; and it shall come to pass when thou shalt have the dominion, that thou shalt break his yoke from off thy neck."

Esau swore vengeance on his brother, and when Rebekah heard of her favourite son's danger she urged him to flee to Haran to his uncle Laban, until Esau's wrath had died down.

(Another account, immediately following the above, sets down the reason for Jacob's journey to Haran as the search for a wife: clearly an attempt to give a less discreditable reason for Jacob's hurried departure).

Jacob's Dream in Bethel

NOW comes one of the best-known stories of the Old Testament, that of Jacob's Ladder. With a stone for a pillow he laid himself down to sleep. "And he dreamed, and, behold, a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and, behold, the angels of God ascending and descending on it. And, behold, the Lord stood above it and said: I am the Lord, the God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it and to thy seed . . . and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. And behold, I am with thee . . . whither thou goest . . ."

In fear and reverence Jacob took the stone, on which his head had rested, and made it into a pillar, poured oil upon it, and made a vow. "If God will be with me and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat and raiment to put on, so that I come again to my father's house in peace, then shall the Lord be my God: and this stone, which I have set up for a pillar, shall be God's house: and of all that Thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto Thee."

There is more of the nature of a bargain in this than a solemn dedication to the service of God; but the resolve marks a stage in Jacob's progress away from the principles of self-aggrandizement: it indicates the recognition of God in his life in a fuller degree than he had hitherto allowed.

The story of Jacob's prolonged suit for Rachel resolves itself into a battle of wits between uncle and nephew. As we shall see, Laban got the better of his nephew: but only for a time: later, Jacob was able to "get his own back" in a commercial transaction (xxx, 25-43). Yet beneath all the bargaining which characterized Jacob's wooing there are elements of pure romance which are among the most beautiful in all literature.

HAVING reached the land of Haran, Jacob beheld a well covered by a great stone. As he discussed with some shepherds a plan for meeting Laban's daughter Rachel, she herself appeared, for she kept her father's sheep. With true courtesy Jacob rolled away the stone from the well and watered her sheep for her. Speedy in his wooing, Jacob "kissed Rachel and lifted up his voice and wept." He was welcomed into Laban's home, and agreed to serve seven years if he might make Rachel his bride. It was pleasant service: the seven years "seemed unto him but a few days for the love he had to her." But at the end of the period Laban deceived his nephew and gave him Leah instead of Rachel. So Jacob had to serve another seven years before he could make Rachel his wife.

The importance of this romance for the story lies in the fact that from this marriage of Jacob and Rachel there was eventually born a son, Joseph, whose career occupies the closing chapters of Genesis.

After a sojourn of twenty years in Haran, Jacob determined to return to Canaan. By this time he was prosperous, and his father-in-law looked with disfavour on his suggested departure. While Laban was busy sheep-shearing Jacob was able to escape, only to be pursued by Laban who took exception to Jacob's conduct. However, they made a truce, fixing the boundaries of the lands afterwards occupied by their descendants.

About this time Jacob's thoughts seem to have turned towards the brother whom he had wronged years before. But the news from that quarter was disquieting. He heard that Esau was on his way to meet him with an armed force.

God's Gift of Israel's Name

THEN Jacob met with an experience which was the turning-point in his career. At Peniel, overlooking the ravine of the river Jabbok, Jacob was left alone, and a man struggled with him till break of day: when the man found that he could not master him, he struck the hollow of his thigh so that Jacob's thigh was sprained in the wrestle. Then he said, "Let me go, for the day is breaking." "I will not," said Jacob, "unless you bless me." "What is your name?" said the man. "Jacob," he answered. "Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed."

Jacob was permanently lame from that struggle, but whatever may have happened to his thigh, much more happened to his spirit. When day came, it seemed to Jacob that his antagonist had been God Himself. He was convinced that he had been face-to-face with God. The experience seems to have convinced him that his life of deceit had been directed

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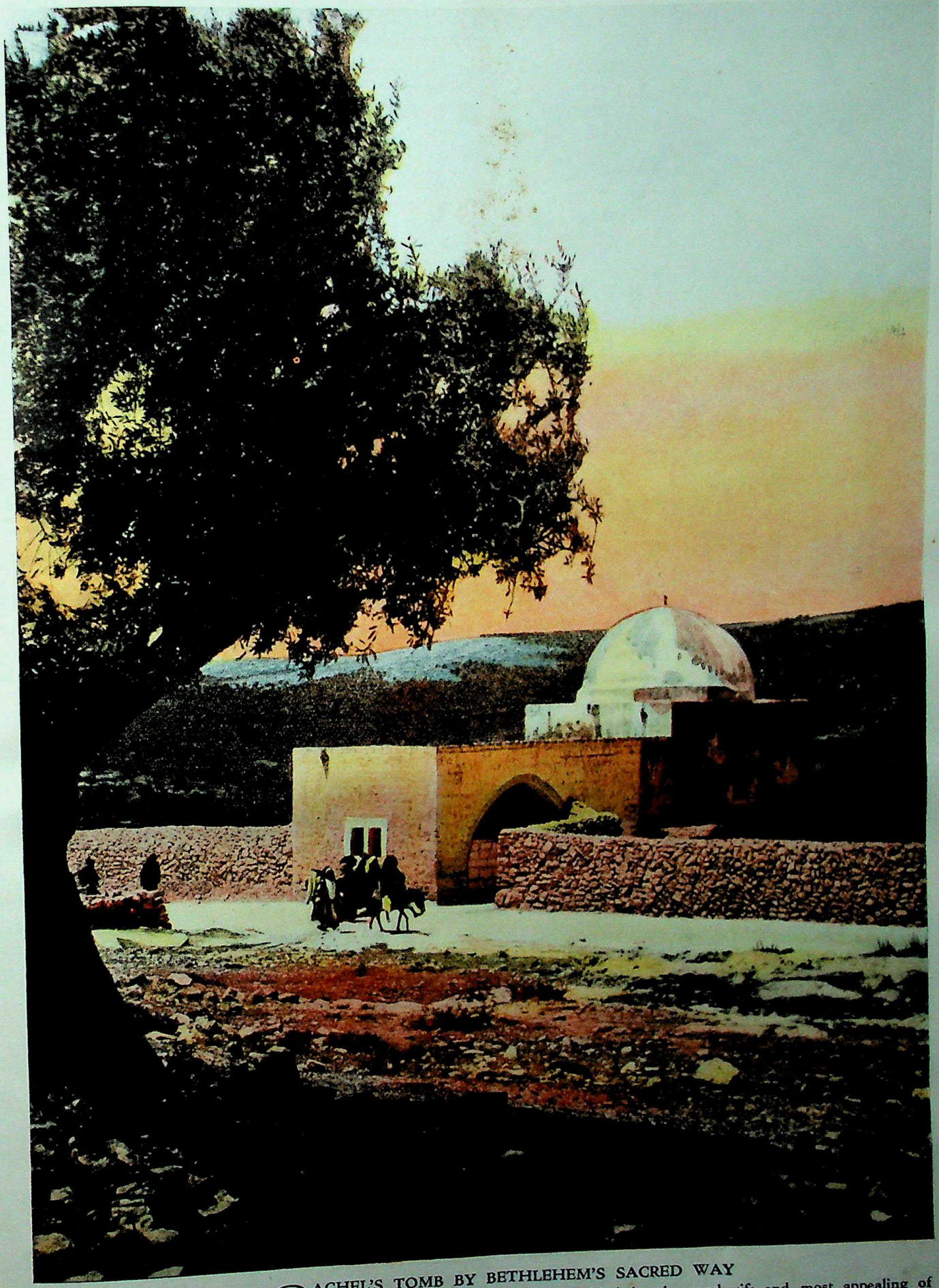

RACHEL'S TOMB BY BETHLEHEM'S SACRED WAY

The traditional tomb of Rachel, Jacob's beloved second wife and most appealing of the four matriarchs, has a beautiful background of hills bearing the finest olive groves in the region. Mother of Joseph and Benjamin, Rachel died after the latter's birth "and was buried in the way to Ephrath, which is Bethlehem" (Genesis xxxv, 19). The site of the squarely-built, domed edifice by the high road that runs through the centre of Palestine was purchased by the Jewish community in 1849. It is the only one of the places sacredly associated with their history in the land that bears a sign in Hebrew.

Photo American Colony in Jerusalem

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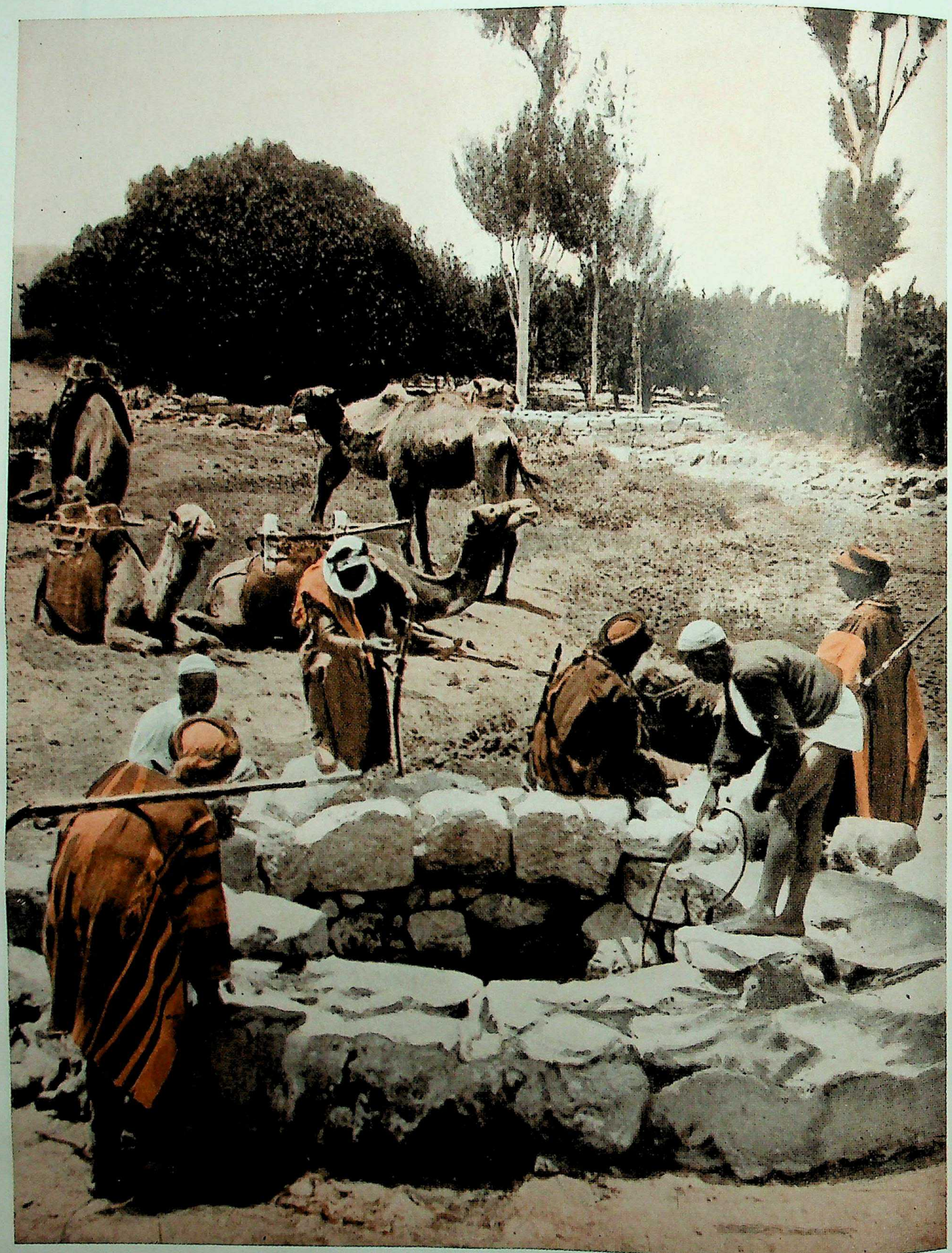

WATERING CAMELS AT JOSEPH'S WELL

The desert well is often a boring in the ground surrounded by stones grooved by the ropes of the buckets let down to obtain water. Dried-up wells, or rainwater pits, are common in the East today as " when Joseph was come unto his brethren . . . and they took him, and cast him into a pit: and the pit was empty, there was no water in it" (Genesis xxxvii, 24). The well shown in this photograph lies on the historical route from the east of Jordan to Egypt, and it may well be that it is at least on the site of the scene of Joseph's imprisonment near Dothan, with which it is traditionally associated.

Photo W. F. Taylor

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"FETCH ME FROM THENCE TWO GOOD KIDS OF THE GOATS"

This shepherd lad, with his armful of the goat's quaint little family in one of Palestine's rocky valleys, is reminiscent of the youthful Jacob, whose task for years was to superintend his father's herds, while Esau hunted to provide game for the household's meat. Their own animals, providing wool and milk, were too valuable to kill except on special occasions. Such an occasion arose in Rebekah's estimation when she instructed her younger and favourite son to deceive Isaac. He was to obtain Esau's blessing by fetching two kids as a substitute for the venison which their father had asked his older son to bring and make him "savoury meat" (Genesis xxvii, 7, 14). And Jacob "went, and fetched, and brought them to his mother."

Photo "Daily Mirror"

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"AND ESAU RAN TO MEET HIM AND EMBRACED HIM"

Two modern Beduin are here seen saluting each other just as Esau saluted Jacob, when they met after long years of absence and were reconciled. Jacob, fearing Esau's vengeance for the deception he had practised, had sent gifts to his brother. But Esau, now a great Edomite chieftain, could afford to be magnanimous. Greeting Jacob kindly, he "fell on his neck, and kissed him" (Genesis xxxiii, 4). The Beduin of today, in many respects the same manner of men as the sons of Isaac, wear the distinctive headdress of a large square of silk or cotton, bound with a thick rope of goat's, or camel's, hair; a characteristic garment is the long cloak of sackcloth.

Photo, American Colony, Jerusalem

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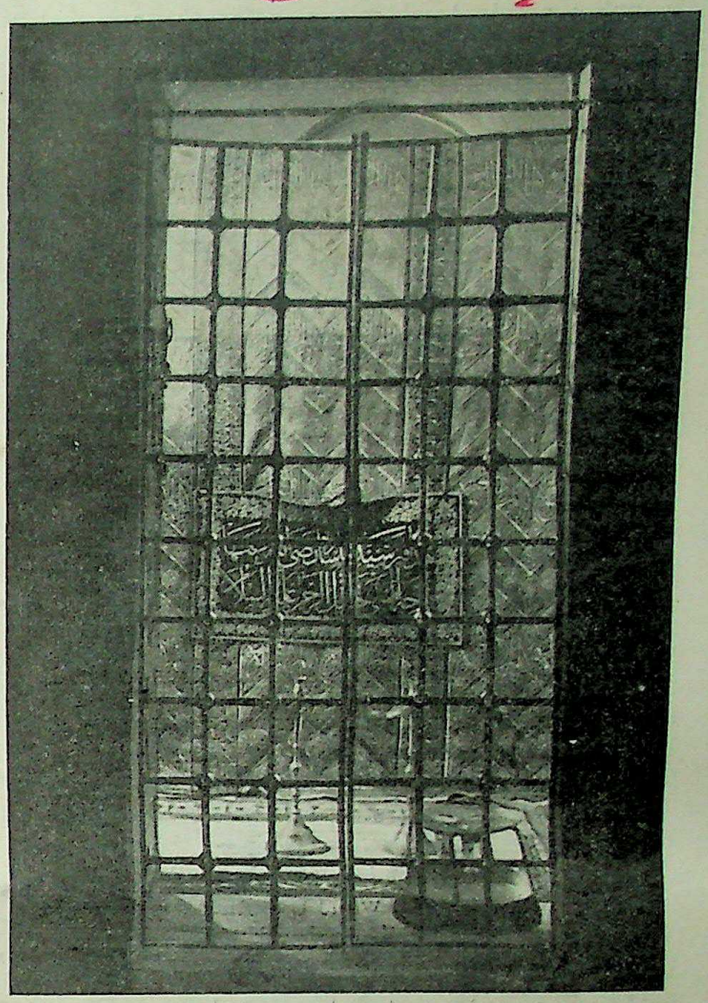
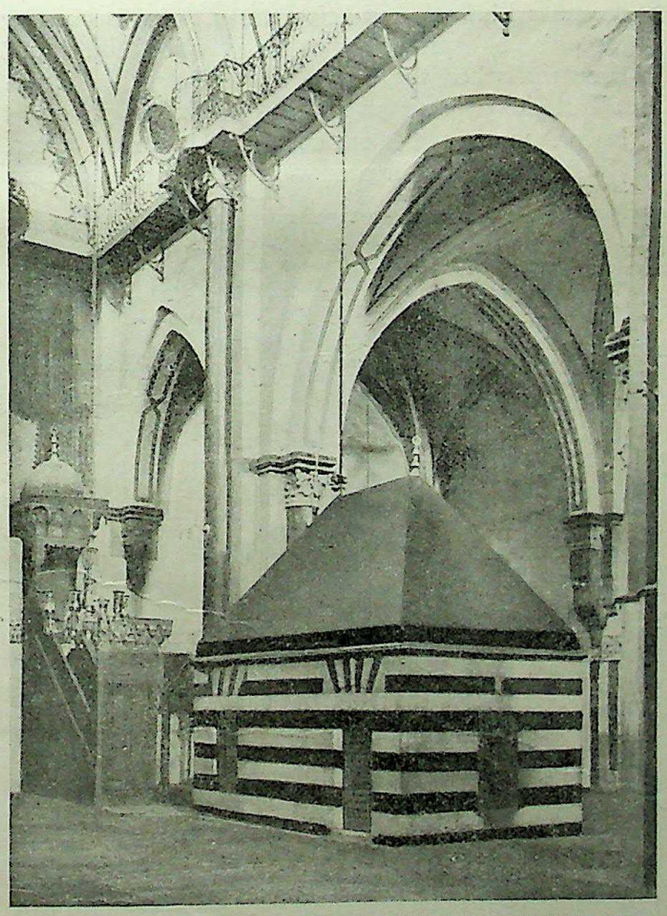
not only against Esau and others, but in reality against God Himself. This conviction worked a change in his nature. No longer was he to depend on his own cunning and strength: henceforth he was to live in accordance with God's promise and God's power.

We need not here follow Jacob much further in his career, for the narrative in Genesis soon passes from Jacob to his son Joseph, and we shall follow the father's fortunes in the brilliant career of his famous son.

But there are two pictures which suitably round off the story of Jacob at this stage. The first shows us his joyous reconciliation with Esau. "And Jacob lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold Esau came with four hundred men. And he bowed himself to the ground seven times until he came near to his brother. And Esau ran to meet him, and embraced him, and fell on his neck and kissed him: and they wept." The second picture shows us Jacob once again at Bethel, ever memorable on account of his dream. "Then Jacob said unto his household and to all that were with him, Put away the strange gods that are among you, and be clean, and change your garments: and let us arise and go to Bethel: and I will make there an altar unto God Who answered me in the day of my distress, and was with me in the way which I went. . . . So Jacob came to Luz, which is in the land of Canaan, that is, Bethel, and he built there an altar and called the place El-Bethel because there God appeared unto him." (xxxv, 2-7).



SHRINE OF SARAH AT HEBRON. Sacred both to Moslem and Jew, the burial place of Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Rebekah, Jacob and Leah is at Hebron. Sarah's cenotaph is enshrined in a chapel of the mosque built over the Cave of Machpelah, purchased for "four hundred shekels of silver" (Genesis xxiii, 16, 20) and "made sure unto Abraham for a possession of a burying place by the sons of Heth."



ISAAC'S TOMB IN MOSQUE OF MACHPELAH. Soon after his son Jacob's return to Hebron from Mesopotamia, Isaac died, aged "an hundred and fourscore years . . . and was gathered unto his people, being old and full of days" (Genesis xxxv, 28, 29). Esau and Jacob buried him in the Cave of Machpelah. The photograph shows the memorial tomb erected to him by Arabs inside the mosque.

Photos, American Colony in Jerusalem

Up to the point to which Genesis, so far, has taken us, Abraham and his descendants played out their careers as wandering pilgrims. With the increase in population and prosperity during the days of Jacob the hostility of the Canaanites became more and more apparent, and the time was drawing near for the next stage in the fortunes of the chosen race, migration into Egypt. This migration was to be of immense importance in the strengthening of the Israelite national consciousness and through their contact with an already developed civilization. The stages and significance of this migration are reflected in the story of Joseph, with which Genesis closes.

None of these early Hebrew figures is delineated with more charm, or greater attention to detail, than Joseph. The strength of his moral character, his reverence, kindness, and his capacity for successful administration are all clearly depicted: and in such romantic manner that the story appeals to our imagination. Who can forget the coat of many colours, or the dreams, or the superb drama of Joseph's reconciliation with his brethren? The narrative does not merely give us a fascinating study of human nature:

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it supplies ample local colouring for the events in Egypt, and rises to heights of lyrical beauty. The sorrows of Joseph's early career all arose out of his own indiscretions. Beloved by his father, who made him a "coat of many colours" (the correct rendering is "a long garment with sleeves," such as that worn by persons of distinction), he dreamed that he and his older brothers were binding sheaves in the field, and their sheaves made obeisance to his sheaf. Another dream showed him the sun, moon and stars making obeisance to him. There was no harm in his having dreams: the trouble arose when the young dreamer told his brothers about them. Even his father had to rebuke him, and in the brothers' hearts thoughts of resentment, already planted there by the father's favouritism, grew stronger and stronger.

Joseph Cast into the Pit

AN opportunity soon occurred for dealing with the young dreamer. They would cure him of his dreams! Joseph was sent to Shechem to see how it fared with his brethren who were tending the flocks. When he came in sight, they arranged to get rid of him. There are two strands in the narrative: one in which Judah induced his brethren to sell Joseph to a company of Ishmaelites, with Reuben pleading that the boy should be cast into a pit (his intention being to restore him later to his father), while the other suggests that Joseph was kidnapped by a band of Midianites and taken away into slavery. However, Joseph disappeared, and when the brothers took home his blood-stained coat as evidence of his destruction by "an evil beast" Jacob was greatly distressed. He "rent his garments and put sackcloth upon his loins and mourned for his son many days . . . and he said: I will go down to the grave unto my son mourning."

In the Prison of Pharaoh

JOSEPH was sold into the service of Potiphar, captain of Pharaoh's guard. He quickly grew into favour, but, declining the advances of Potiphar's wife, he aroused her anger, and she charged him with an assault upon her. So the young man was thrown into prison. "But the Lord was with Joseph, and showed kindness unto him, and gave him favour in the sight of the keeper of the prison" (R.V.).

He was placed in charge of the prisoners, and it was in this capacity that the opportunity came which led to his advancement. The chief butler and chief baker were thrown into prison, and each of them had a dream. When they told Joseph of their dreams he was able to interpret them. The butler's dream meant that he was to be restored to favour, but the baker's that he was to be hanged. Joseph could hardly expect much from the baker, but he had hopes from the butler whose dream was so assuring. He sought to enlist his kindly offices: "Have me in thy remembrance when it shall be well with thee, and show kindness, I pray thee, unto me, and make mention of me unto Pharaoh and bring me out of this house."

Joseph's interpretations were verified, but, unfortunately, when the butler was restored, he forgot all about the young man still languishing in prison.

Joseph was to be remembered, however, later. Pharaoh himself had dreams which his court magicians

"A GOLD CHAIN ABOUT HIS NECK." Ornaments were worn by both sexes in ancient Egypt and were lavishly bestowed in token of royal favour. This wall-painting from the el-Amarna necropolis, commemorates the receipt of jewelry by a court official and his wife from King Akhenaten (c. 1375 B.C.). The occasion and chains of gold depicted recall the passage, "Pharaoh took off his ring from his hand, and put it upon Joseph's hand, and arrayed him in vestures of fine linen, and put a gold chain about his neck . . . and he made him ruler over all the land of Egypt" (Genesis xli, 42, 43).

From N. de G. Davies, "Rock Tombs of El-Amarna"

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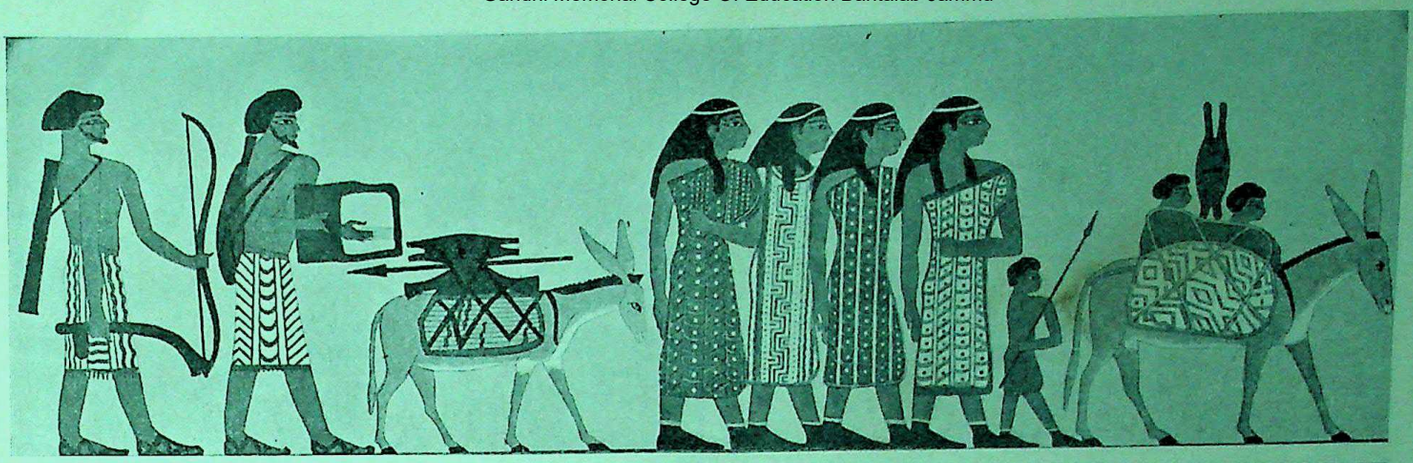

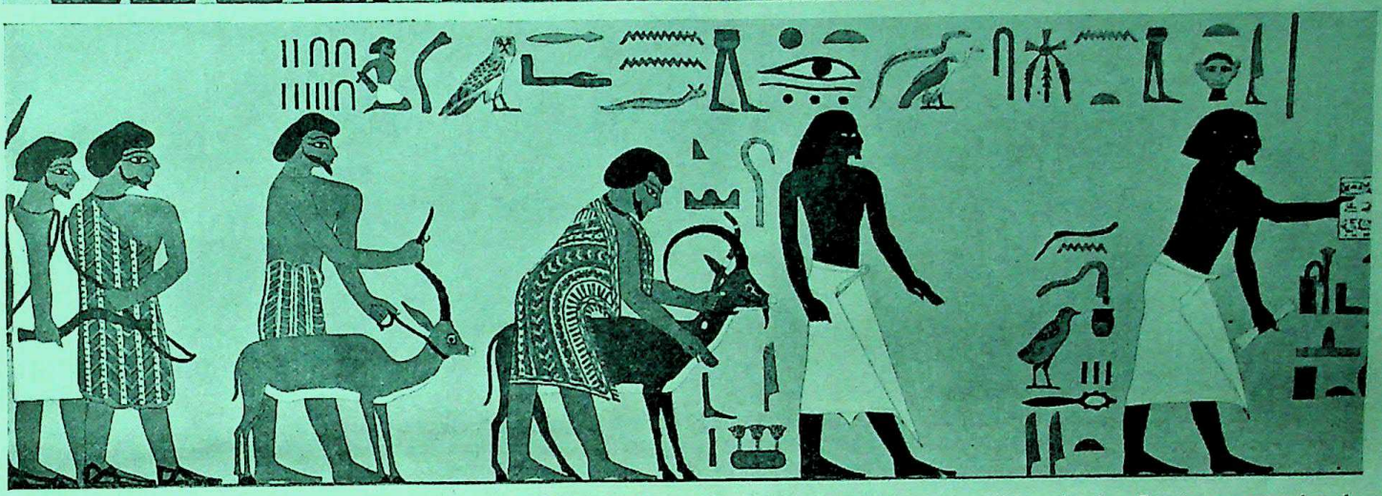

GIFTS SUCH AS WERE TAKEN TO JOSEPH. When Joseph's brethren journeyed a second time to buy corn in Egypt, Jacob told them to take offerings to the lord of the land: "Carry down the man a present, a little balm, and a little honey, spices, and myrrh, nuts and almonds" (Genesis xliii, 11). That such offerings were brought by Semites—even in the earlier times of the Twelfth Dynasty—is proved by painting on the walls of a tomb at Beni Hasan, depicting Beduin arriving with gifts of frankincense and game for the Administrator of the Eastern Desert, who held office under Senusret II about 1900 B.C.

After Lepsius, Denkmäler

could not interpret. Then the butler remembered that Joseph had shown remarkable power in his own case, and recommended him to Pharaoh. "Then Pharaoh sent and called Joseph, and they brought him hastily out of the dungeon, and he shaved himself and changed his raiment, and came in unto Pharaoh."

Pharaoh's two dreams (one in which he saw seven lean kine eat up seven fat kine: the other in which he saw seven thin ears of corn swallow up seven full ears) were interpreted together by Joseph as having reference to seven years of plenty to be followed by seven years of famine. He recommended that overseers should be appointed to store up produce against the needs of the future. Whereupon Pharaoh, believing that God had enabled Joseph to interpret the dreams, set him over the land and gave him Asenath, daughter of the priest of On, as wife.

Thus at the age of thirty Joseph found himself supreme in Egypt under Pharaoh; so effective was his administration that, when the years of famine he had prophesied came, he had adequate stores of grain laid up. "And all countries came unto Egypt to Joseph for to buy corn."

Jacob, hearing that there was corn to be had in Egypt, sent Joseph's ten brothers there to buy corn, keeping Benjamin at home "lest peradventure mischief befall him." Joseph knew his brothers when they arrived, but they did not recognize him. He treated them as spies, and for three days put them in prison. Then he released them with supplies of corn on condition that they returned bringing their youngest brother back with them. Simeon he kept as a hostage.

On the journey back to Canaan one of them found money in his sack of corn, and great was their wonder when, having arrived back home, they found that every sack contained money. They told the story of their adventures to Jacob. At first Jacob refused to allow Benjamin to accompany them on the return journey, but in the end he gave way. He ordered them to take back the money "peradventure it was an oversight" (how had Jacob changed from former days!) with double money for the corn, and presents. "God Almighty give you mercy before the man, that he may release unto you your other brother and Benjamin. And if I be bereaved of my children, I am bereaved."

Joseph's Feast of Reconciliation

THE account of Joseph's reception of them on their second visit is very moving. They explained to his stewards about the money in the sacks, and when they were ushered into Joseph's presence he enquired about their father in tender tones. Then, seeing Benjamin, "his bowels did yearn upon his brother; and he sought where to weep; and he entered into his chamber and wept there."

The feast which followed was the prelude to the reconciliation of Joseph and his brethren. He bade his steward hide a silver cup in Benjamin's sack, so

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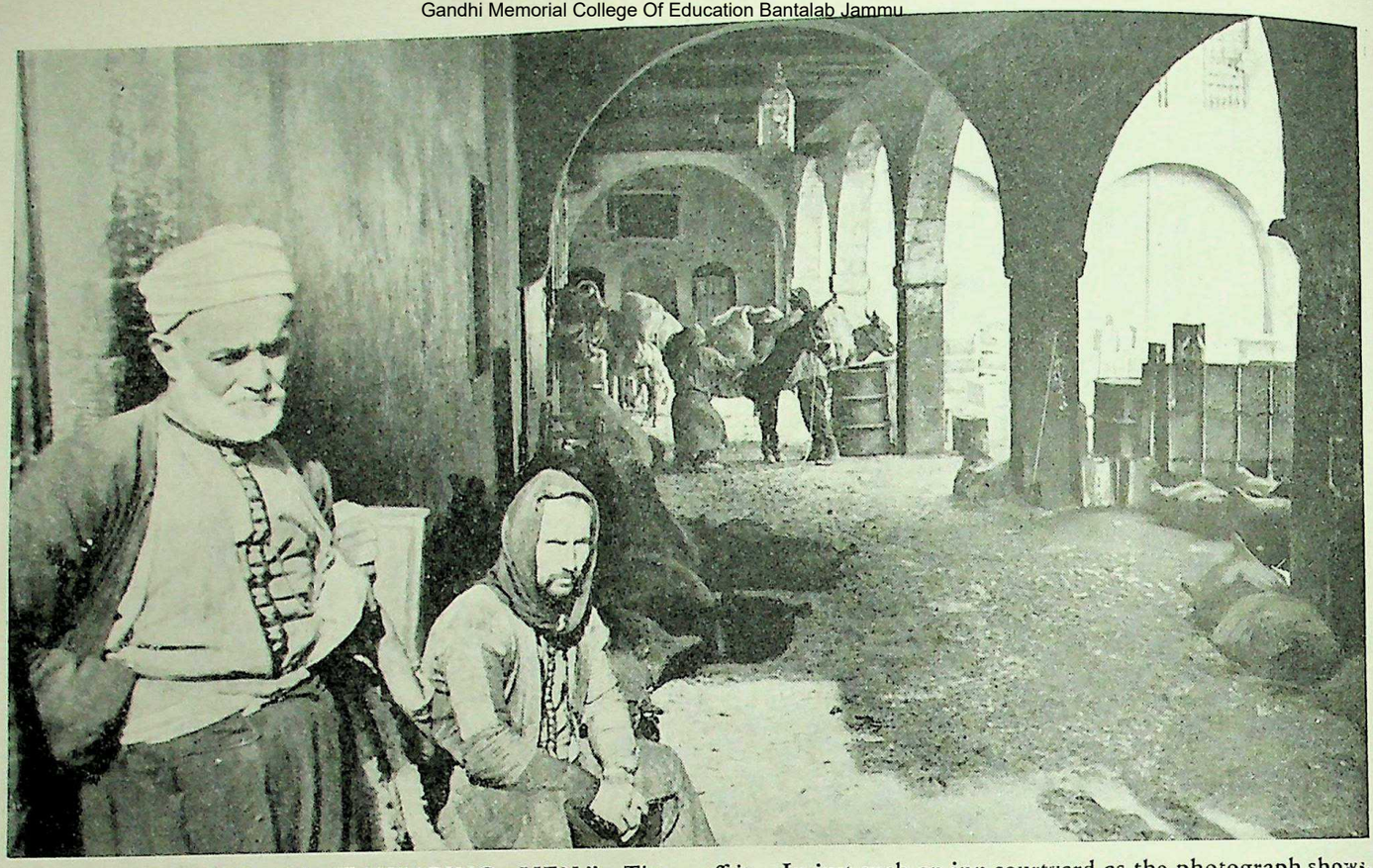


"LODGING PLACE OF WAYFARING MEN." The caravanserai, or khan, has a middle court for the accommodation of man and beast. Asses, pack-horses and camels are tethered here; travellers, who provide their own beds and food, may lodge in the covered arcade, or in unfurnished rooms off it. In just such an inn courtyard as the photograph shows, Joseph's brethren can be pictured, when, returning out of Egypt with their supplies of corn, "as one of them opened his sack to give his ass provender in the inn" (Genesis xlii, 27) he saw his money "in his sack's mouth and was dismayed."

Photo, "Daily Mirror"

that on their way home they might be overtaken and brought back. When the "theft" was discovered Joseph in pretended anger proposed to keep Benjamin as a slave and release the rest. Then, in a passage of singular beauty, Judah began to plead for Benjamin, offering himself as a substitute. "Now, therefore, when I come to thy servant my father, and the lad be not with us: seeing that his life is bound up in the lad's life; it shall come to pass, when he seeth that the lad is not with us, that he will die, and thy servants shall bring down the grey hairs of thy servant our father with sorrow to the grave."

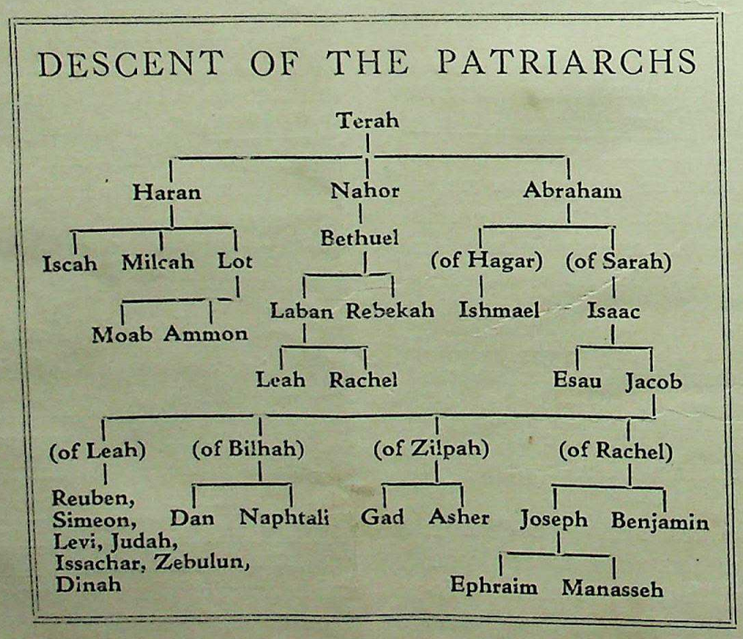
Joseph could keep up his part no longer, and having got them alone he made himself known to them. "And he fell upon his brother Benjamin's neck and wept: and Benjamin wept upon his neck. And he kissed all his brethren, and wept upon them."

When the story became known to Pharaoh he was greatly pleased and ordered them to go and bring back with them Jacob and their families. So "Israel took his journey with all that he had and came to Beer-Sheba, and offered sacrifices unto the God of his father Isaac. And God spake unto Israel in the visions of the night and said, Jacob, Jacob. And he said, Here am I. And He said, I am God, the God of thy father: fear not to go down into Egypt, for I will there make of thee a great nation."

So Joseph was able to deal generously with them all. "And Joseph placed his father and his brethren, and gave them a possession in the land of Egypt . . . as Pharaoh had commanded."

Jacob was spared to live in Egypt for seventeen years. On his death he was embalmed, and a great funeral procession accompanied him into the land of Canaan to the burial ground purchased long before by Abraham.

Genesis closes with an account of Joseph's life in Egypt, his continued kindness to his brethren, and his injunction that his body should ultimately be laid to rest in the land of Canaan. "So Joseph died . . . and they embalmed him and he was put in a coffin in Egypt."



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LITERARY BEAUTY OF THE BIBLE. II

Prose and Poetry of Genesis

NOTABLE features of Hebrew literature are the concentration of its writers on the religious theme and the aptly concise descriptions. Only what is essential to the narrative is told. The Bible stories have an ethical purpose, and the characters in them illustrate that purpose. There is no elaboration of detail, and actions convey personality. Sometimes the stories express a special quality. For instance, in the idyll of Rebekah's wooing by proxy the outstanding characteristic of Abraham's servant is his unswerving loyalty throughout his mission. The charm of Rebekah, the picturesque setting of the well outside the city at sunset, are perfectly suggested; in a few words we are vividly familiarized with the eastern scene. A verbal impression, colourful and unforgettable, has been created.

RECORDS of visions and dreams are frequent in the Bible. They are poetically, often sublimely, treated, and convey revelations or prophecies. Joseph's dreams which so offended his brethren, form a striking prologue to the epic cycle of his story. Near its conclusion is the impressive passage of Jacob's blessing. Scholars have placed the actual writing of this early poem in the 10th century B.C., though it is based on older material. In Jacob's speech the individual sons become merged with the twelve tribes of Israel; the characteristics depend mainly on word-plays (in the Hebrew) upon the names. In the Old Testament, blessings, cursings, elegies, and triumphant rejoicings are written in rhythmic verse incorporated in the text. Strong emotions called forth the lyrical form of expression natural to the Hebrew people.

REBEKAH AT THE WELL
xxiv, 10—26.

AND the servant took ten camels of the camels of his master, and departed; for all the goods of his master were in his hand: and he arose, and went to Mesopotamia, unto the city of Nahor. And he made his camels to kneel down without the city by a well of water at the time of the evening, even the time that women go out to draw water. And he said, O Lord God of my master Abraham, I pray thee, send me good speed this day, and shew kindness unto my master Abraham. Behold, I stand here by the well of water; and the daughters of the men of the city come out to draw water: And let it come to pass, that the damsel to whom I shall say, Let down thy pitcher, I pray thee, that I may drink; and she shall say, Drink, and I will give thy camels drink also: let the same be she that thou hast appointed for thy servant Isaac; and thereby shall I know that thou hast shewed kindness unto my master.

And it came to pass, before he had done speaking, that, behold, Rebekah came out, who was born to Bethuel, son of Milcah, the wife of Nahor, Abraham's brother, with her pitcher upon her shoulder. And the damsel was very fair to look upon, a virgin, neither had any man known her: and she went down to the well, and filled her pitcher, and came up. And the servant ran to meet her, and said, Let me, I pray thee, drink a little water of thy pitcher. And she said, Drink, my lord: and she hasted, and let down her pitcher upon her hand, and gave him drink And when she had done giving him drink, she said I will draw water for thy camels also, until they have done drinking. And she hasted, and emptied her pitcher into the trough, and ran again unto the well to draw water, and drew for all his camels. And the man wondering at her held his peace, to wit whether the Lord had made his journey prosperous or not. And it came to pass, as the camels had done drinking, that the man took a golden earring of half a shekel weight, and two bracelets for her hands of ten shekels weight of gold; And said, Whose daughter art thou? tell me, I pray thee: is there room in thy father's house for us to lodge in? And she said unto him, I am the daughter of Bethuel the son of Milcah, which she bare unto Nahor.

She said moreover unto him, We have both straw and provender enough, and room to lodge in. And the man bowed down his head, and worshipped the Lord.

JOSEPH'S DREAMS
xxxvii, 5—11

AND Joseph dreamed a dream, and he told it his brethren: and they hated him yet the more. And he said unto them, Hear, I pray you, this dream which I have dreamed: For, behold, we were binding sheaves in the field, and, lo, my sheaf arose, and also stood upright; and, behold, your sheaves stood round about, and made obeisance to my sheaf. And his brethren said to him, Shalt thou indeed reign over us? or shalt thou indeed have dominion over us? And they hated him yet the more for his dreams, and for his words.

And he dreamed yet another dream, and told it his brethren, and said, Behold, I have dreamed a dream more; and, behold, the sun and the moon and the eleven stars made obeisance to me. And he told it to his father, and to his brethren: and his father rebuked him, and said unto him, What is this dream that thou hast dreamed? Shall I and thy mother and thy brethren indeed come to bow down ourselves to thee to the earth? And his brethren envied him; but his father observed the saying.

THE BLESSING OF ISRAEL
xlix, 2—8, 13, 14, 16—22, 26, 27

GATHER yourselves together, and hear,
ye sons of Jacob;
And hearken unto Israel your father.
Reuben, thou art my firstborn,
My might, and the beginning of my
strength,
The excellency of dignity, and the excellency of power:
Unstable as water, thou shalt not
excel;.....
Simeon and Levi are brethren;
Instruments of cruelty are in their
habitations.
O my soul, come not thou into their
secret;
Unto their assembly, mine honour, be
not thou united:
For in their anger they slew a man,
And in their selfwill they digged down a
wall.
Cursed be their anger, for it was fierce;
And their wrath, for it was cruel:
I will divide them in Jacob,
And scatter them in Israel.

Judah, thou art he whom thy brethren
shall praise.....
Thy father's children shall bow down
before thee.
Zebulun shall dwell at the haven of the
sea;
And he shall be for an haven of ships;
And his border shall be unto Zidon.
Issachar is a strong ass
Couching down between two burdens:
Dan shall judge his people,
As one of the tribes of Israel.....
Gad, a troop shall overcome him:
But he shall overcome at the last.
Out of Asher his bread shall be fat,
And he shall yield royal dainties.
Naphtali is a hind let loose:
He giveth goodly words.

Joseph is a fruitful bough,
Even a fruitful bough by a well;
Whose branches run over the wall:
The blessings of thy father
Have prevailed above the blessings of
my progenitors
Unto the utmost bound of the ever
lasting hills:
They shall be on the head of Joseph,
And on the crown of the head of him
that was separate from his brethren.
Benjamin shall ravin as a wolf:
In the morning he shall devour the
prey,
And at night he shall divide the spoil.

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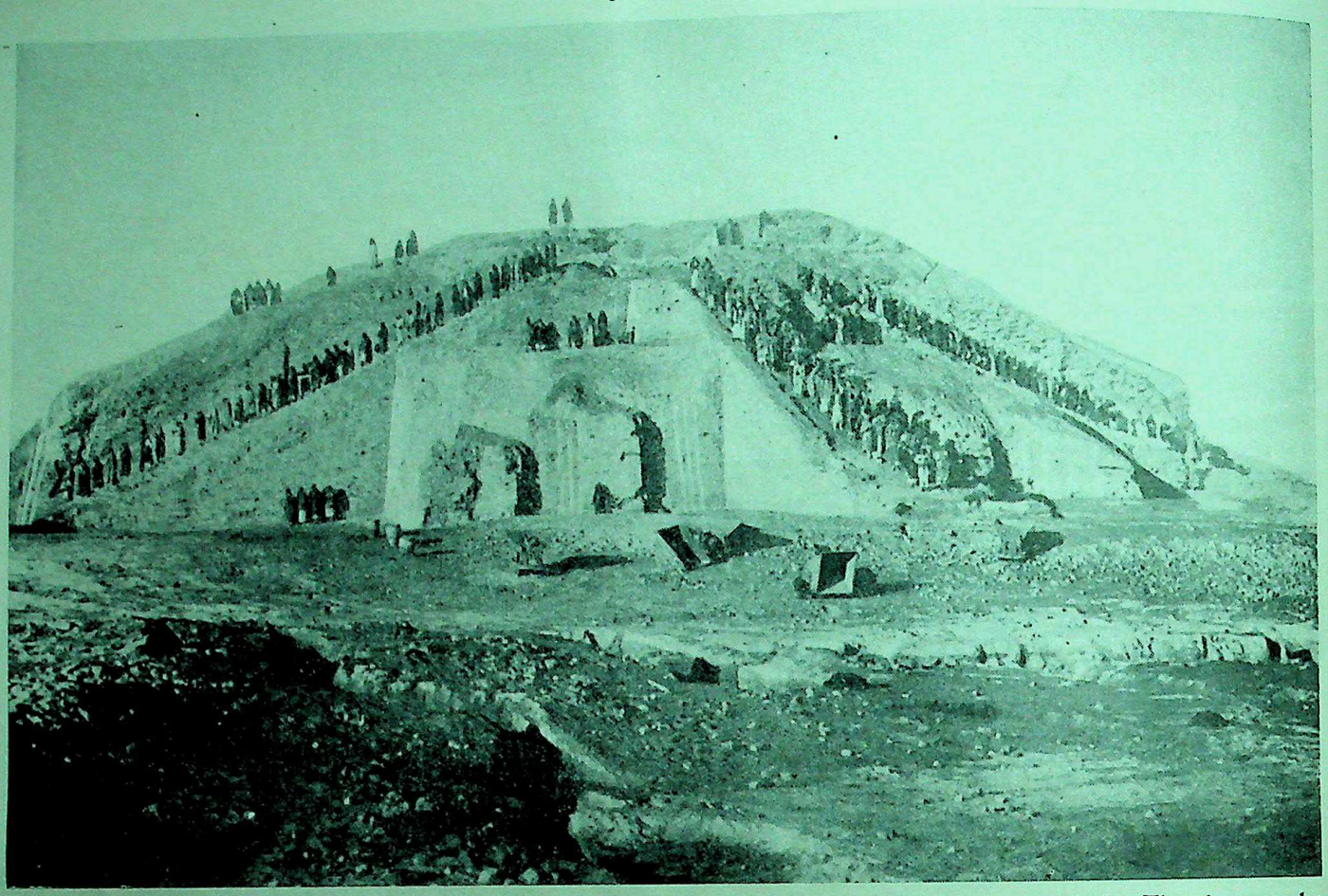
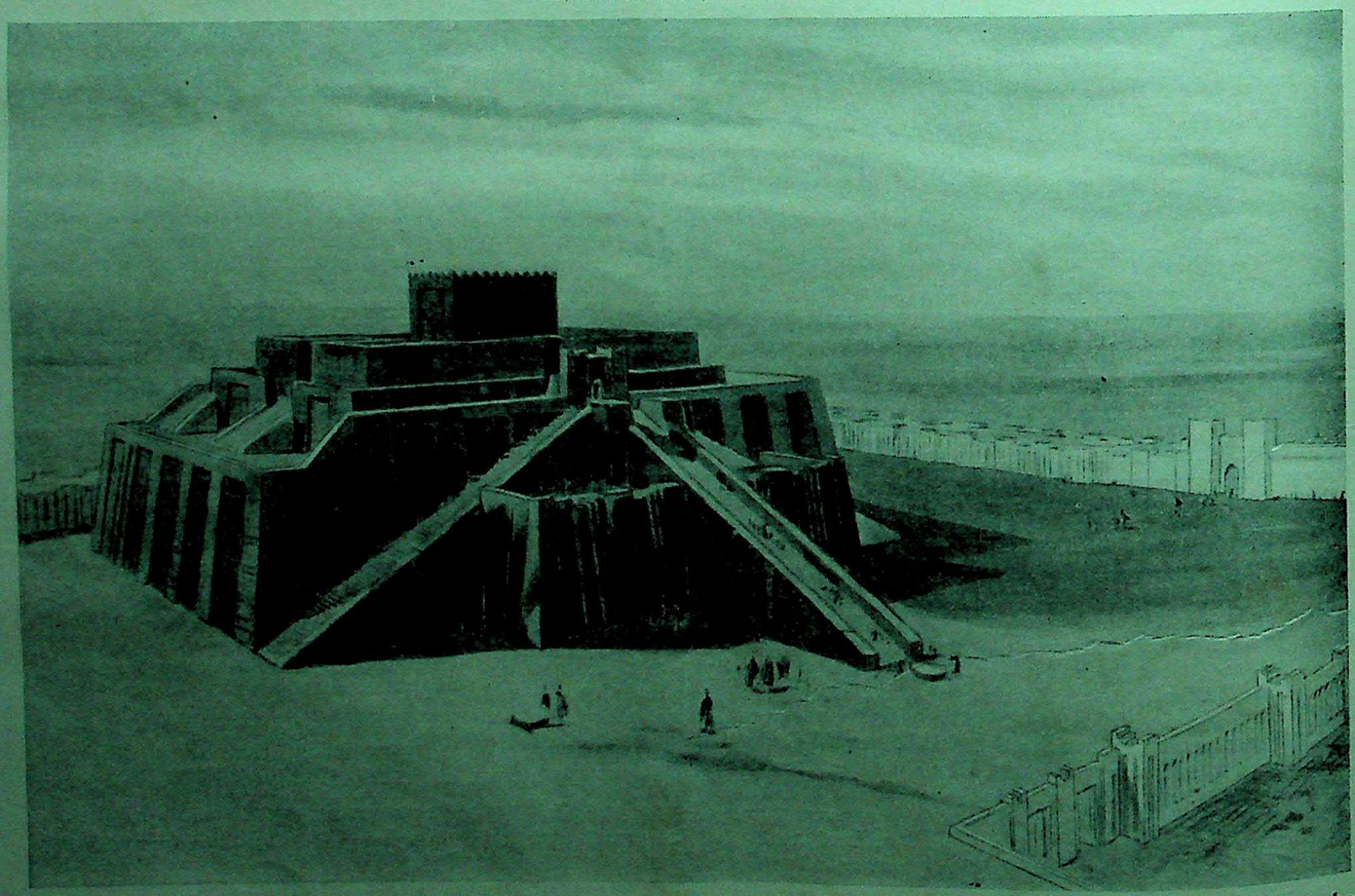


UR'S "HIGH PLACE" AS IT IS TODAY. In this present-day photograph of the temple-mount or Ziggurat of Ur we see pilgrims thronging the three wide stairways that ascend to meet on the level of the second of the terraces. By these the ancient shrine was reached. The ziggurat also served as a rallying-post for the people. About its courts the ruins of priestly dwellings and workshops for the maintenance of the Moon-god's temple have been excavated.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem



AS ABRAHAM MAY HAVE SEEN IT. This reconstruction shows the Ziggurat of Ur as it appeared when its terraces were surmounted by a lofty temple. It was erected about 2400 B.C. by Ur-Engur, a Sumerian king. The Sumerians, the biblical Chaldees, having no quarries in the plains, "had brick for stone, and slime had they for morter" just as is described in Genesis xi, 3, for the building of the most famous of ziggurats—the Tower of Babel.

Reconstruction by F. G. Newton

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Genesis

II

The Story of the Book

Life and Letters in the Earliest Age of Bible History

by REV. STEPHEN L. CAIGER, B.D.

Vicar of Wirksworth, Derbyshire; Author of "Bible and Spade," etc.

NONE of the Old Testament writings is so well known as the Book of Genesis.

Its contents are household words to countless millions of almost every race and clime. The three greatest religions in history unite to honour its traditions. By the universal consent of the civilized world it is acknowledged as at least a masterpiece of literature. To poets, playwrights, and artists of every kind it has proved a perpetual inspiration. Young men and maidens, old men and children, find in it an inexhaustible store of spiritual treasure. Archaeologists, historians, scholars, and writers of every kind have fastened eagerly upon it; surely no book ever made has begotten so numerous a progeny! Even where the rest of the Bible remains unknown, there must be few indeed who have never heard of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, of the Flood and Noah's Ark, or the famous story of the world's beginnings.

So Genesis has become and still remains the best-known book in the Old Testament—perhaps the best-known book in the world—the Paradise of the devotional reader, the Eldorado of the scholar, and too often, alas! the Armageddon of the controversialist.

Unique Importance of Genesis

TO the man who loves his Bible, Genesis has in addition an importance all its own.

Standing as it does at the head and forefront of the Scriptures, the first book of all, Genesis is bound to strike most readers as a kind of foretaste of the rest of Holy Writ. It acts, therefore, as the prow or cut-water to the good ship of the Bible, cleaving a passage for it through the adverse currents of ignorance and doubt.

For, granted that the cargo of living bread is stored mainly under the hatches of the New Testament further aft, nevertheless experience has shown that, where the early chapters of Genesis fail to open a way, too often the Gospel message goes adrift.

Hence the vital importance, especially in these modern times, of a right approach to the study of the Book.

Perhaps the first question asked by the thoughtful reader, as he begins with the celebrated early chapters of Genesis, is, How did the writer come to *know* all this?

There can be only one answer—through divine revelation.

But the term has been much misunderstood. To suppose, as some have done, that God suddenly revealed to mankind the first chapters of Genesis all ready-made and exactly as we find them in our Bible today, is to fly in the face not only of all human experience, but of the Bible itself.

The Old Testament is a record of God's *progressive* revelation to the world. Throughout the whole of its inspired pages runs the theme, how gently, gradually, and often in man's own despite, the dawn of truth dispelled the midnight of primal ignorance, God tempering the light to our dazzled eyes, and adapting His lessons as we grew in understanding. "For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little and there a little" (Isaiah xxviii, 10) before men may see "not as in a glass darkly, but face to face."

People sometimes forget, though it is stated in the Bible, that God revealed Himself to the world long before His chosen people, the Hebrews, appeared upon it.

How many aeons ago in "the dark backward and abysm of Time" the first men appeared on the earth, we know not. But archaeology tells us that from the earliest ages of which we have relevant evidence, the human species has been distinguished by a religious instinct. Go back to Palaeolithic Man, to an era so inconceivably remote that it can be measured only in geological terms, and there are already traces of a crude perception of the supernatural—magic pictures on the walls of caves, ritual burials, megalithic temples and the like. Already the first man, Adam, hears God calling to him through the darkness.

Pass onward thousands of years, from the glaciers of Europe to where the deserts of North Africa, Arabia, and the Near East then blossomed as the rose (so the scientists tell us) with well-watered pastures, shady forests, flowers, fruits, and teeming life beneath a temperate sun. Here, as Darwin and many moderns have surmised, we may seek perhaps the cradle of modern Man. And now, in this far-distant Garden of Eden, the evidence for religious belief and practice multiplies. Tasting freely of the Tree of Knowledge, reasoning, reflecting, observing with an increasingly eager curiosity, our forefathers marched with a firmer step along the way of progress.

As the centuries rolled by, mankind divided into great families or races of men, some more advanced than others on the way of truth. The most remarkable in this respect were the children of Shem, whom to this day we know as the *Shem-itic*, or Semitic, peoples.

Waves of Migrant Semites

THEIR aboriginal homeland seems to have been Arabia, but as the mists of pre-history begin to clear, we find them pouring northward in successive waves of emigration into Palestine, Egypt, and the valley of the Euphrates. Differing from one another in many ways, these Semitic Beduin, Aramaeans, Canaanites, Hyksos, Phoenicians, Babylonians, and so forth, show nevertheless unmistakable evidence of kinship in their language, racial characteristics, mode of thought, and particularly in their alert attitude towards ethics and religion.

It was in the well-watered lowlands of Mesopotamia, where the Tigris and Euphrates flow into the Persian Gulf, that the most religiously precocious branch of this Semitic family, the Babylonians, sometimes called the Chaldeans, first appeared on the stage of history.

We find them as early as 2500 B.C. firmly established in that fertile land, the inheritors of an elaborate civilization which their predecessors, the Sumerians, had founded at least 2000 years earlier. The union of Sumerian culture with Semitic idealism created such a ferment in the mind

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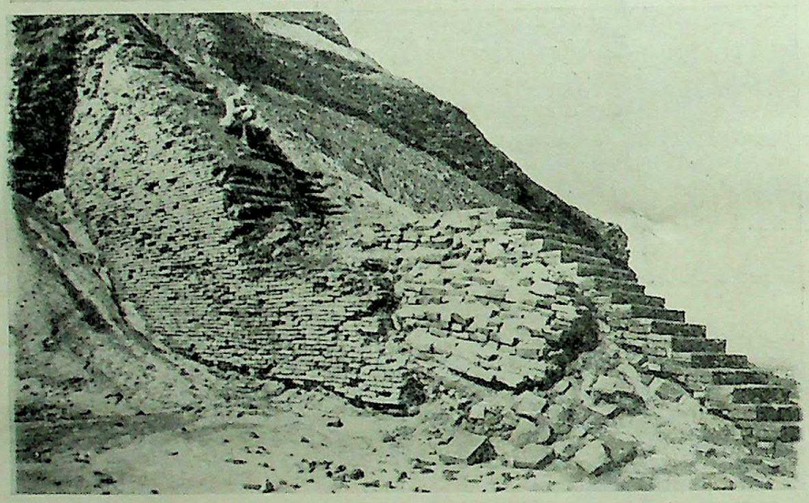

UR'S TEMPLE-HILL OF BRICK. Originally a mountain people, the Sumerians, early dwellers in Mesopotamia, used to worship their gods in "the high place." Coming down to the plains, they constructed artificial mounds of brick for their shrines. Each city of importance had such a terraced tower. The Ziggurat of Ur, here viewed from the south, though lacking the temple-summit which Abraham would have known, is in fair condition. A close-up of one of the wide stairways, seen in the photograph of the Ziggurat in page 48, is shown on the left.

Photo, "The Times"

of man as had never yet been known. Around Ur of the Chaldees especially all men were agog with speculation as to the origin of life, and the supernatural agency which had called it into being. A growing body of tradition passed from mouth to mouth, from father to son, from tribe to tribe.

There was a scintilla of truth in much of it, a sort of instinctive consciousness of right and wrong, a certain "divine discontent" with things as they were, a dim perception of the unseen world; for they had not been altogether blind to the light. But human fantasy was inextricably mixed with heavenly revelation, superstition struggled with religion, the darkness of error clouded the dawn of truth.

But a new era is at hand. All this time God has been gradually building up, as it were, the pyramid of human families to its apex in the chosen people—chosen, that is, to be the special recipients of His further revelation, and His messengers of light to the rest of humanity.

The Hebrews first emerge as a distinct people, conscious of a divine mission, at the ancient holy city of Ur of the Chaldees. They are as yet only a small clan within the Semitic colonists of Babylonia. The date is about 2000 B.C., and the ruling monarch is Hammurabi the Great. Such is the account in Genesis, and it is thrilling to learn that after all these years the archaeologist has dug up tangible evidence for it. Tablets inscribed with the name "Hebrew," and many contemporary records of Hammurabi, or "Amraphel" (as the Bible spells the name of the Great King) have been found, belonging to the period indicated by the Bible story.

As a result of Sir Leonard Woolley's wonderful discoveries, we now know almost as much about the Ur of "Abraham the Hebrew" as we do about modern Baghdad. We can reconstruct exactly the kind of house he must have known; we can visualize—in fact, we actually possess—many tools, domestic utensils, weapons, jewelry, and objects of art which Abraham himself may have handled. We are surprised over and over again by the highly-advanced state of culture and invention in those far-off days. The citizens of Ur had also been familiar for over a thousand years before Abraham with the arts of reading, writing and arithmetic.

We know, too, of course, a great deal about the religious atmosphere of the city in Abraham's day, when the world-famous Temple of Nannar, or Sin, the moon god, stood by one of those imposing pyramids or tapering mounds of solid brick, which were so characteristic of the land of Shinar.

Cruel and crude was the cult of the Babylonian moon god with its human sacrifice, its practice of wholesale *suttee* on the death of a potentate, and its fantastic ceremonial. But at least it had this to its credit—a definite tendency towards monotheism. While the rest of the world was still worshipping an innumerable pantheon of very human gods, goddesses, demons, and jinns, the devotees of Nannar seem to have been very jealous for their god, allowing no peer, and expecting all nations of whatever race, politics, and religion, to acknowledge the supremacy of their Temple at Ur.

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Recent discovery also, as it happens, gives us an unexpectedly detailed knowledge of the social, commercial, and legal system which prevailed in Babylonia in those days. Cuneiform "contract tablets" consisting of deeds, invoices, marriage settlements, and the like have been dug up in immense quantity, and throw a strangely intimate light upon the daily life of Ur. Many of these contracts are signed, sealed, and witnessed in due form, and among the signatures it is interesting to note those of Abraham, Abram, Jacob, Joseph, and others familiar in the Bible story—though not, of course, referring to the Biblical characters so named.

The most important discovery in this connexion is the celebrated diorite stele (*see* page 117) containing the legal Code of Hammurabi in upwards of 300 enactments. Nothing shows the true greatness of Hammurabi or Amraphel more clearly than this systematic arrangement and publication of the Law. And it is peculiarly interesting to the Bible reader, because it was made actually during the lifetime of Abraham, and because the stories in Genesis give us many examples of how Abraham, Isaac and Jacob conformed in their social customs to the regulations of this Code—as, for example, to the Law concerning marriage and concubinage which affected Abraham's dealings with Sarah and Hagar.

Such, to outline briefly material which would fill a volume, was the atmosphere in which Abraham first heard the call of God, and the family of the Hebrews appeared as a divinely chosen people amongst men.

The call of Abraham was not only the birth of a nation; it was a great awakening of the human soul. We can picture him rubbing his eyes, as the blindness of night yields to the rising sun of Revelation. He sees men as trees walking, like the blind man cured by Jesus (Mark viii, 24). For Abraham, too, is human, and cannot see clearly all at once. Many centuries have to pass before mankind shall hear the great promise that "When He, the Spirit of Truth is come, He will guide you into all Truth" (John xvi, 13).

But the sun is well above the horizon now, and Abraham sets to work. We have come to it at last—to the beginning of the distinctively Hebrew tradition, to the beginning in that sense of the book of Genesis.

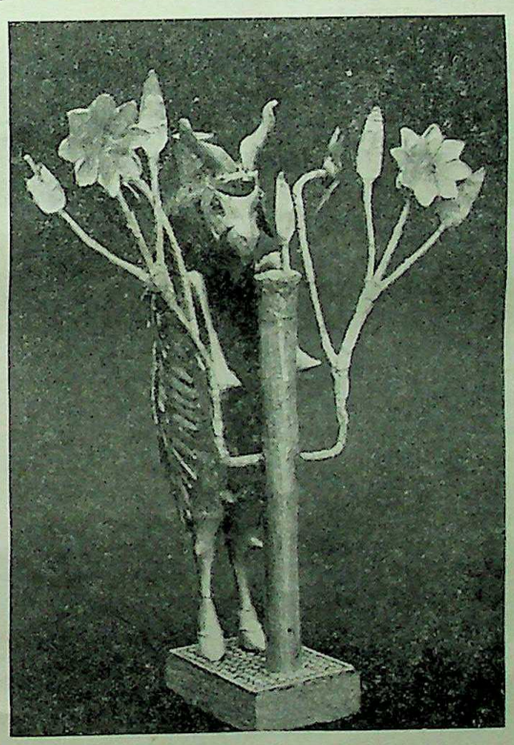
Examining afresh in the light of his new knowledge the old Semitic traditions amongst which he has been reared, Abraham finds in them at once too little and too much. He is far from blind to the scintilla of truth of which we have already spoken; he recognizes that many godly men in ancient times—like Adam, Abel, Noah—had glimpses of the Divine. But he sees clearly that these pre-Hebrew traditions must be purged of much error, and supplemented by much truth that is new, before they can be acceptable to the Lord.

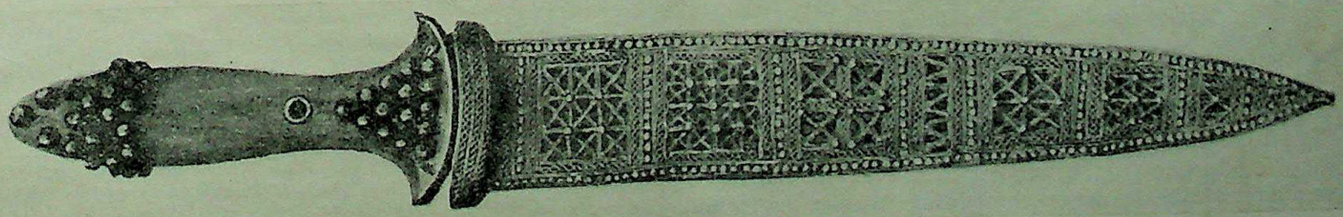
Modern excavation has brought to light whole libraries of cuneiform documents hitherto buried in oblivion, and many striking parallels have been noted between the sacred traditions of Babylonia and the stories of Genesis. That there is a blood relationship between them is now clear, and we owe a great debt of gratitude to the archaeologist for enabling us to set them side by side. For if anything were needed to enhance our veneration for the Bible, it would be a comparison so unspeakably to its advantage.

Hebrew Story and Babylonian Myth

IN comparing the Babylonian and Hebrew traditions, far too much emphasis has been laid upon the *resemblances* between them; infinitely more startling and significant are the points of *contrast*. The Hebrews have so spiritualized the archaic material that it becomes barely recognizable in its new setting. We move from a welter of legend and mythology, to a prose-epic of simple dignity, consummate charm, and the unmistakable stamp of eternal truth. In nothing is the "Hebrew genius for religion" more manifest than in this power to transmute base metal into gold.

Nor must we forget what is often overlooked in our modern enthusiasm for archaeological parallels, that by far the greatest bulk of Babylonian tradition is not represented in the Bible in any shape or form. An "omnibus" volume containing all the cuneiform legends, poems, and sacred writings which have been discovered during the last century, would probably rival the Old Testament itself in size. Of these, only infinitesimal extracts have been retained in the Scriptures. In substance as well as in origin, all but a very small proportion of the Biblical tradition is unique in sacred literature, and can be traced to no earlier source than distinctively Hebrew revelation.





TREASURES FROM ABRAHAM'S CITY. The discoveries of Sir Leonard Woolley at Ur reveal objects of special interest to Biblical students; those reaching back towards that antique civilization, glimpsed in Genesis iv, 22, when there were artificers in metal, and those connected with the 21st century B.C., about the time of Abraham. The gold dagger, with exquisitely-worked filigree sheath, is dated to 3500 B.C. So is the beautiful goat statuette, sometimes called the Ram-in-the-Thicket, of wood overlaid with shell, lapis lazuli and gold, but it represents an art-motif well-known in the patriarch's day.

Courtesy of Joint Expedition to Ur

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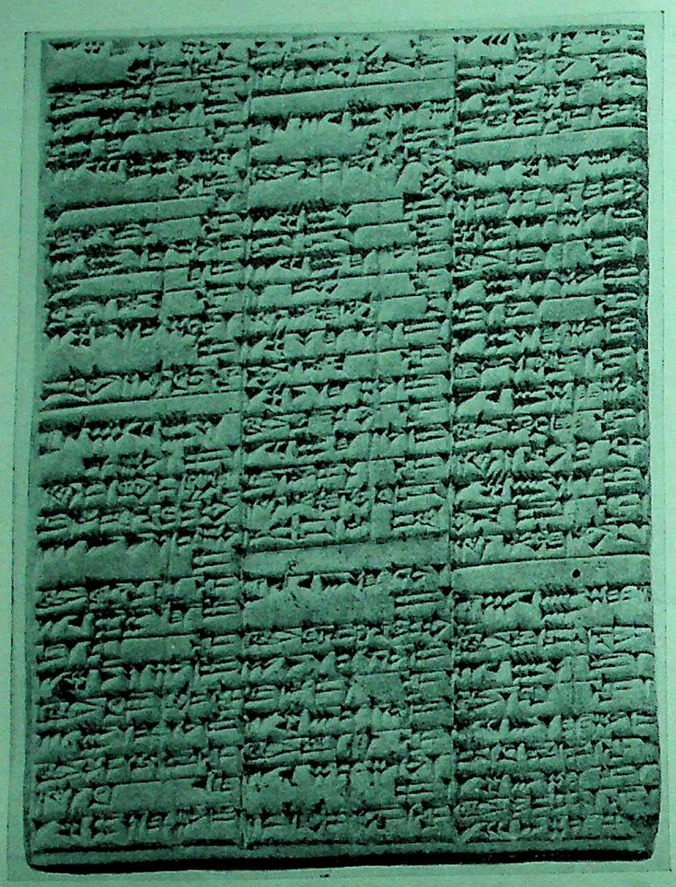


MESOPOTAMIAN CUNEIFORM SCRIPT. The absence in Babylonia of stone and papyrus, which afforded Egyptian scribes smooth surfaces for writing, forced the Mesopotamians to use clay tablets. These, after inscription, were baked, thus producing time-enduring records. This example is a temple account. How the stylus was pressed into the clay to make the cuneiform indentations is shown right.

Photo, Dr. Stephen Langdon (right); the British Museum

As an example of how the ancient traditions of Babylonia were transformed in the light of God's further revelation to Abraham, we may have space for a brief study of the Creation stories.

The pre-Hebrew tradition of Creation is now extant in many cuneiform tablets. Most of them are of Sumerian origin (3000 B.C.) although these in turn have passed through the Babylonian sieve, and in some cases are much later than, and may thus have been influenced by, the Biblical narrative.

In comparing the two traditions, we note first that the Babylonian starts with the description of an era even earlier than that with which the Bible begins—it starts with a time when even the gods were not yet in existence!

> When the heavens above existed not,
> Nor yet the earth beneath,
> When none of the gods had yet been made;
> When all was primeval Deep.

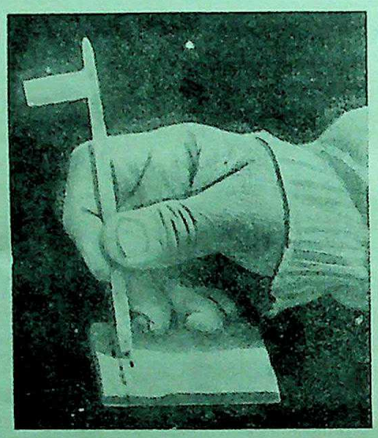
Then somehow or other—the First Cause of all is passed over in silence—the gods came into being:

> Then the gods emerged in the midst of the Deep:
> One after another (their names are given) they came to life.
> The ages of time were long.

In what sharp contrast is the Hebrew conception of the Deity! "In the beginning God . . . ." The majestic simplicity of these opening words of Genesis, and the doctrine they express, are a commonplace today. But pause a moment to realize the utter novelty, the amazing audacity, of this unequivocal dogma when it was first uttered: "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth!" Today we all realize its truth, but what must the Babylonian theologians; saturated so long in the extravagant mythologies of polytheism, have thought of this upstart clan of Hebrews telling the world that God is not many, but One; that God is not created, but without beginning as He is without end; that the universe is neither self-existent nor the result of warfare among the gods, but was created by Jehovah, the One God and Father of all.

Thus in the very first words of this inspired Book the light of divine Revelation shines on a fundamental truth about the nature of God. And as we read on, we shall find one lamp after another lighted on our path.

BUT to continue: having brought the gods so summarily to life, the Babylonian tradition next turns to the creation of the world. At first there is nothing but darkness and the deep out of which monstrous creatures arise—two-headed men, satyrs, centaurs, dogs with four bodies and fishes' tails, and other chimeras which were depicted upon the temple in Babylonia, but which the Bible scornfully ignores. Canto after canto of the cuneiform epic is now occupied in detailing the vicissitudes of internecine strife among the gods. In the end Marduk, overlord of the gods, engages in mortal combat with his principal enemy, Tiâmat, or the Deep. Finally he gets her into his net, slays her with a blast of wind in the throat, and an arrow in the body, and chops her in half "like a flat-fish." With one half he makes the earth, with the other he makes the sky!



Could anything be less like the plain, straightforward account of the Creation which we find in Genesis? Small and curiously interesting points of contact there certainly are, such as the word for "Deep" which is virtually identical in both traditions, or the faint echo of the splitting asunder of Tiâmat which may perhaps be heard in the "divided waters" and the two "firmaments" of Genesis (Genesis i, 7). But it is the utter unlikeness of the two traditions which strikes the reader most.

On leaving the realm of theology, however, and passing to matters more mundane, the Hebrew writer sometimes follows more closely the current tradition of the day. In passing, one should always bear in mind that the Old Testament was never intended as a manual of science. Its interest in such matters is only secondary to the predominant religious and spiritual *motif*. So that Abraham and the prophets of Israel accept, as a rule, the current mode of expression where divine realities are not in question.

For instance, in the Biblical narrative of Creation one hears a faint echo of the following cuneiform texts:

> He lit up the moon to rule the night,
> He ordained it as a night body to distinguish the days.
> He bound together a foundation on the surface of the sea:
> He made masses of earth, and piled them together.
> He created the race of man, and the beasts of the field,
> He proclaimed their name.
> He made the green grass of the field, the meadow, and marsh,
> The cow, the calf, the sheep, and the lamb.
> He built cities, Nippar, Ekura, Erech. . .

And yet how utterly changed is the Babylonian tradition when the Bible arrives at the Creation of Man!

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According to the former the god Bel cut off his own head, and the other gods caught the flowing blood, mixed it with earth, and fashioned Man out of the bloody paste, which accounted for the wisdom of men, because their mortal clay was tempered with blood divine!

Compare this with the statement of Genesis that "the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul" (Genesis ii, 7). That is all; so simple, so restrained—and so true!

Not that a modern scientific treatise on biology would express it in those terms. It would present us with an analysis of various chemical constituents, all of them commonly found in the earth, held in organic combination by an imponderable vital principle which can only be accounted for by reference to some indefinable First Cause—or some such jargon. Providentially, the Biblical writer said what he had to say in language less scientifically accurate, perhaps, but infinitely more universal and enduring in its appeal.

Perhaps this is partly the reason why the oldest book in the world is still easily the world's best-seller!

Immortal Idyll of Eden's Garden

WITH the appearance of Man upon the earth, a reasoning, reflecting, observing, and remembering being, we obviously enter upon a new phase of Revelation. Henceforward Man's own reaction to circumstances, his recollection of the past, and his plans for the future take their place amongst the means by which God reveals Himself in the world. The God of Creation now becomes the God of History.

From now onwards we have always to reckon with the possibility that ancient traditions preserve some actual memory, dim yet tenacious, of the distant past. Experience has shown how almost incredibly retentive human memory and human tradition may be, especially amongst people who have never learned to depend upon written reminders, and again especially among the naturally reflective peoples of the Orient.

Yet the guidance of God is still as essential as ever it was. Tradition is so easily distorted, and the lesson of history so soon forgotten, save where divine inspiration steers the mind along the narrow path of truth.

One of the most ancient traditions of Man is that of the Garden of Eden. Until recently this was believed to be preserved only in the familiar Biblical account in Genesis, but a Sumerian Epic of Paradise has recently been discovered, dating from at least 3000 B.C. Here the Age of Innocence is thus described:

In Dilmun, the Garden of the gods,
Where divine Enki with his consort lay,
That place was pure, that place was clean.
The lion slew not,
The wolf plundered not the lambs,
The dog worried not the slumbering kids;
The birds forsook not their young,
The doves were not put to flight.
There was no disease nor pain,
No lack of wisdom among princes,
No deceit or guile.

Then for some reason Enki grew wroth with mankind, and sent the flood to destroy him. After which we find a solitary survivor named Tag-Tug, whose name is the Sumerian version of Noah, back in the garden. He is warned not to taste the fruit of the cassia tree, but he does so, and incurs the curse of the gods.

The cassia plant he approached,
He plucked, he ate.
Then Ninhersag in the name of Enki
Uttered a curse;
The face of life, until he dies,
Shall he not see.

So Paradise is lost:—

My brother, what of thee is ill?
My pastures are distressed,
My flocks are distressed,
My mouth is distressed.
My health is ill.

Such is the tragic conclusion of the Sumerian epic.

Here, again, the resemblances to the Bible story are undeniable, yet the fundamental unlikeness is even more so. In the Sumerian poem there is no mention of Eve, the Tree of Life, the Temptation, the Fall, the expulsion from Eden, or many other salient features of the Bible story. The hero of Dilmun is not Adam, but Noah, and Paradise is mixed up with the Flood. Finally, when we seek for anything corresponding to the strong moral and spiritual teaching which gives point to the narrative in Genesis, we seek in vain.

It is when we come to the Flood story that the resemblances between the Babylonian and the Hebrew tradition become most marked. And this is understandable.

That the Flood was an actual historical event in Babylonia has been proved, apart from the written records, by the permanent marks of it recently disclosed at Kish and Ur, and referred to in a later chapter (see page 67). Woolley fixes the subsidence of this flood, to which there are frequent references in the cuneiform historical records, at about 3200 B.C.

The most elaborate and interesting version of the Babylonian Flood Story is contained in the XIth Tablet of the so-called Gilgamesh Epic, or Epic of Creation. Its discovery by George Smith in the eighteen-seventies caused great excitement in this country, and his published account of it, the "Chaldaean Account of Genesis," became a best-seller of the day.

The tablet is too long to quote extensively here; we must be content with a few pertinent extracts, in which

CHAOS AND ORDER IN BABYLONIAN CREATION MYTH. Strangely unlike the Bible story is the Babylonian account of the Creation. It was believed that the ordered system of the universe began after the slaying of Tiâmat, dragon-goddess of the Deep. Split in two, from one half of her body were formed the heavens, from the other the earth. This Assyrian relief, found at Nimrûd, illustrates the combat between Tiâmat, personified chaos, and Ashur—or in Babylonia, Marduk—champion of the gods, representing light and order. His symbol was the spear.

From Layard, "Monuments of Nineveh"

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we attempt to reproduce the rhythmical blank-verse form of the original.

The gods warn the hero of the story (Uta-napishtim) that a terrible flood is coming on the earth, and that he is to build an ark :

> Abandon thine house, and build a ship ;
> Leave all behind, look to thy life ;
> Bring living things of every kind
> Within the ship that thou shalt build.

Detailed measurements of the ark are then given, as in Genesis, and the hero enters his vessel, taking with him all the silver and gold he can carry, and embarking his animals. The dreaded day approaches :

> The dawning of the day I feared,
> The day to see I was afraid ;
> I entered the ship and shut the door.
> From the depths of Heaven black clouds arose,
> The wrath of the gods thundered forth.
> The storm-god marched across the sky ;
> Thick darkness took the place of light.
> The waters flooded all the land ;
> They rose above the mountain tops.
> The storm appalled the gods themselves,
> They fled for refuge to the skies.
> They cowered like dogs within their walls.

The gods and goddesses wept and complained bitterly over the destruction of mankind, and at last after six days of storm and rain the flood abated.

> The sea fell calm, the storm flood ceased,
> I looked around, and cried aloud,
> I opened the hatch, I saw the light,
> I knelt me down, and sat and wept.
> My countenance was wet with tears.
> On Nizir, peak of Ararat,
> The ship held fast, and came aground.

After waiting in patience for another six days, on the seventh Uta-napishtim tests the abatement of the waters. And we come to the most remarkable parallel of all :

> I let out a dove and set her free ;
> The dove flew away and returned again,
> Returned, for nowhere to perch she found.
> I let out a swallow, and set her free ;
> The swallow flew off, and returned again.
> I let out a raven, and set him free ;
> The raven flew off, saw the waters sink,
> Flew nearer, croaked, and came not back.

This passage alone, with its obvious, although inexact, resemblance to the episode of Noah and the birds sent forth from the ark (Genesis viii, 6-12), establishes a literary relationship of some sort between the Babylonian and the Hebrew Flood-Story. But what the precise relationship is we cannot tell. The Hebrew account of this particular incident is considerably older than the cuneiform tablet containing it, so that the Gilgamesh Epic may here be reproducing a dim recollection of the Biblical narrative. The point is not important, if both versions (as we believe) give the gist of a tradition passed down from the days of the Flood itself. The memory of such a catastrophe would be particularly long-lived ! As Uta-napishtim himself observes :

> Those days, by my necklace, will I not forget !
> I will think on them, nor forget them for ever !

The story continues with an account of the hero descending from the ark upon the summit of Nizir, and making a sacrifice of thanksgiving to the gods :

> I sacrificed on the top of the mount,
> Twice seven altars set I up.
> The gods from heaven smelled the odour,
> They smelled the fragrance from above ;
> The gods from heaven swarmed like flies,
> They swarmed about the sacrifice

Thus the famous Flood Story of Babylonia ends on a note which reminds us once more how very different, after all, is the spirit of the Gilgamesh Epic from that of Genesis—" the gods swarmed like flies about the sacrifice ! " As an artist sees in a landscape a thousand beauties which the layman overlooks, so the Biblical writer learns from the historical Deluge a thousand lessons to which the Babylonian is blind.

The Gilgamesh Epic does not even perceive the rainbow in the heavens !

Coming to the story of the Tower of Babel (Genesis xi, 1-9), this, too, has been richly-illustrated for us by the excavations, so that we know now exactly what the Tower of Babel, that is to say, of Babylon, looked like and where it stood. Its ruined foundations are in fact still visible, in what was called the Etemenanki within the walls of the city.

The history of the Hebrews begins with Abraham setting out from his Babylonian home at Ur of the Chaldees as the leader of a new nation, and the prophet of a new religion, seeking a country where he can make a home for his people and his God.

He carries with him, as we have seen, the beginnings of a Bible, namely, the story of God's providence in Creation and in pre-history. Part of this story has come down to him through pre-Hebrew traditions long reverenced in Babylonia, but now sifted and spiritualized in the light of God's special Call and Revelation. The Father of the Hebrews now enters upon the task which for many centuries was to remain the peculiar contribution of his people to human progress, namely, the quest and propagation of religious and ethical Truth.

How Genesis Became a Book

WE must now try to answer the question, How did these sacred traditions of the Hebrew race come to be written down in the book of Genesis as we have it today ?

We have spoken of Abraham leaving Ur with " the beginnings of a Bible " already lighting his pathway to the Promised Land. Does this mean that he actually carried with him a *written* account of the events covered by the first ten chapters of Genesis ?

It is impossible to be certain. On the one hand, we can scarcely believe that Abraham, evidently a Chieftain or Sheikh of high station, was behind the rest of his contemporaries in the ability to read and write. The story of his purchase of the field of Machpelah (Genesis xxiii) reads exactly like one of those cuneiform contract tablets which were a commonplace of life in Abraham's day, while he and many of his people must have dipped at times in the vast library of Babylonian records and inscriptions. In short, if Abraham followed the normal practice of his day, he may very well have put into writing the new truths which God had revealed to him.

In that case, he must have written in the cuneiform script, impressing the wedge-shaped characters with a wooden or bone stylus on tablets of clay which were afterwards baked hard in an oven. And the language in which he wrote must have been some primitive Semitic dialect, akin to the Babylonian, which afterwards developed into Hebrew. It is not as if the knowledge of cuneiform would be easily forgotten, even after leaving Babylonia, for the script was in constant use throughout Abraham's route along the Fertile Crescent from Haran to Canaan, as archaeology has abundantly proved. In Palestine, in fact, cuneiform remained the official medium of diplomatic intercourse until the days of Moses and beyond. For these reasons it has been argued by some

(*Continued in page* 63)

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"THY STAFF THAT IS IN THY HAND"

This Beduin carries his staff, the undressed branch of a tree, as a support and a weapon; it may also be a symbol of authority. The Eastern shepherd sleeps with it at his back, thrust under his shirt, ready at need to defend his flock; the sheikh carries it as a hereditary rod of office, mark of his chieftainship. In Genesis xxxii, 10, we find Jacob, after praying to be delivered from the vengeance of Esau, saying "with my staff I passed over this Jordan; and now I am become two bands (camps)." In the hereditary sense the staff should have belonged, after their father's death, to Esau, the elder brother, who had sold his birthright to Jacob for a mess of pottage.

Photo, "Daily Mirror"

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Murillo 1617-1682

"AND HE DREAMED, AND BEHOLD A LADDER SET UP ON THE EARTH"

Jacob's dream at Luz, the place he afterwards called Bethel, is one of the most sublimely described of the theophanies in the Old Testament. Murillo's painting conveys the bright loveliness of the vision in the dark and dreadful night. "Behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven; and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it" (Genesis xxviii, 12, 15). Then from above came the assurance: "I am with thee and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest."

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Murillo, 1617-1682

"DRINK, AND I WILL GIVE THY CAMELS DRINK ALSO"

Ribera, 1588-1656

"AND JACOB FED THE REST OF LABAN'S FLOCKS"

The Israelites of Genesis were mostly nomads and shepherds, journeying on swift-striding camels—like Eliezer, Abraham's steward, on his mission to find Rebekah at the well outside the Mesopotamian city—or tending flocks—like Jacob, when he served Laban, "seven years for Rachel; and they seemed unto him but a few days, for the love he had to her" (Genesis xxix, 20). In the paintings of these characteristic scenes the styles of the two Spanish masters, so renowned for their religious pictures, are finely contrasted. Rebekah at the Well is in Murillo's graceful, softened manner; Jacob with Laban's Sheep exhibits Ribera's rugged naturalism and sombre tone.

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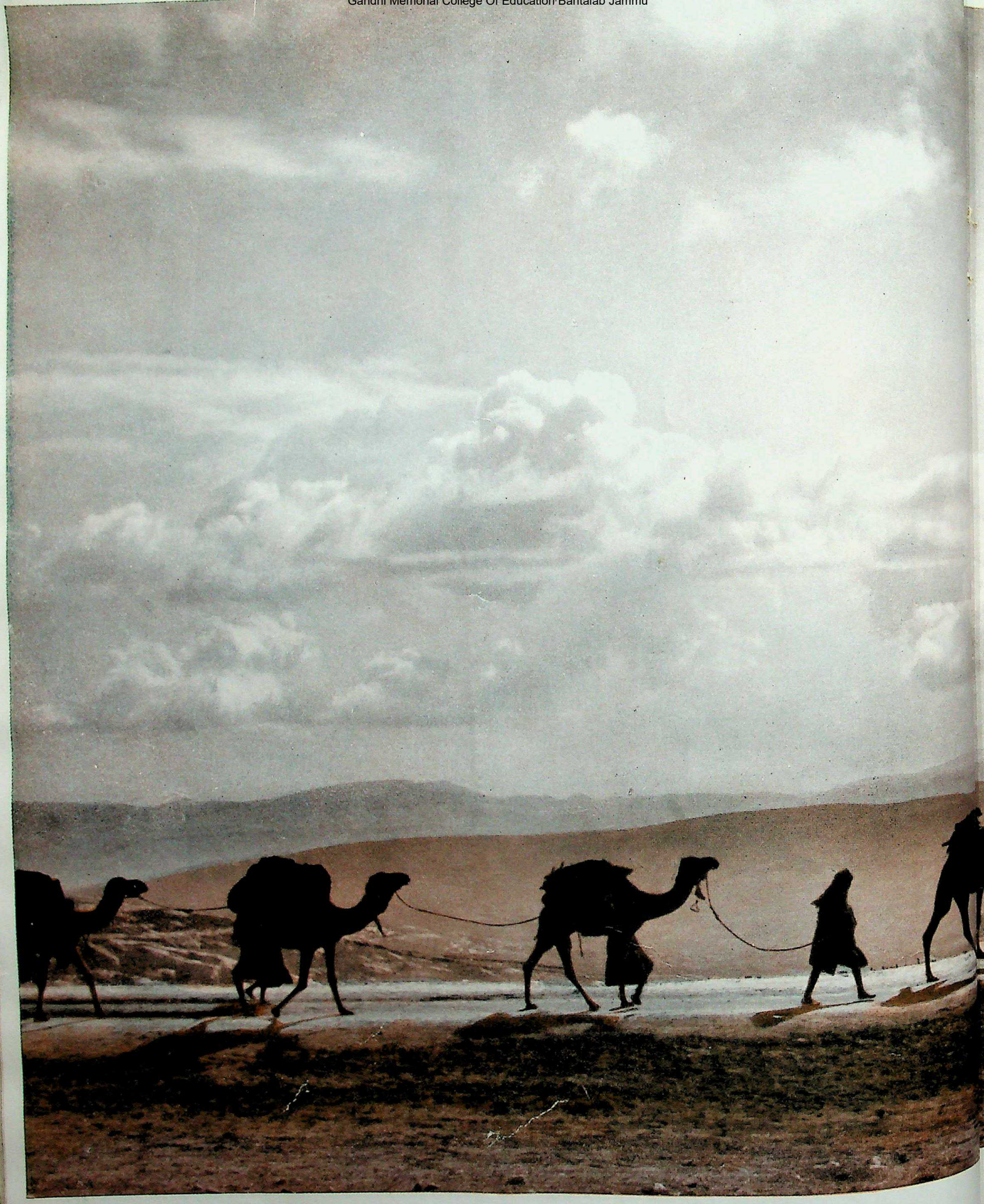

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"BEHOLD, A COMPANY OF ISHMAELITES WITH THEIR CAMELS"

From ancient times across the desert camels have carried, east and west, the frankincense and myrrh for which Arabia Felix is far-famed. A caravan such as this was seen by Joseph's brethren in the wilderness, after they had cast him into the pit and sat down to eat bread. Even while they discussed his fate, " behold, a company of Ishmaelites came from Gilead with their camels bearing spicery and balm and myrrh, going to carry it down to Egypt " (Genesis xxxvii, 25). To these merchants Joseph was sold, later to be bought of them by Potiphar, captain of Pharaoh's guard, and made overseer of his household.

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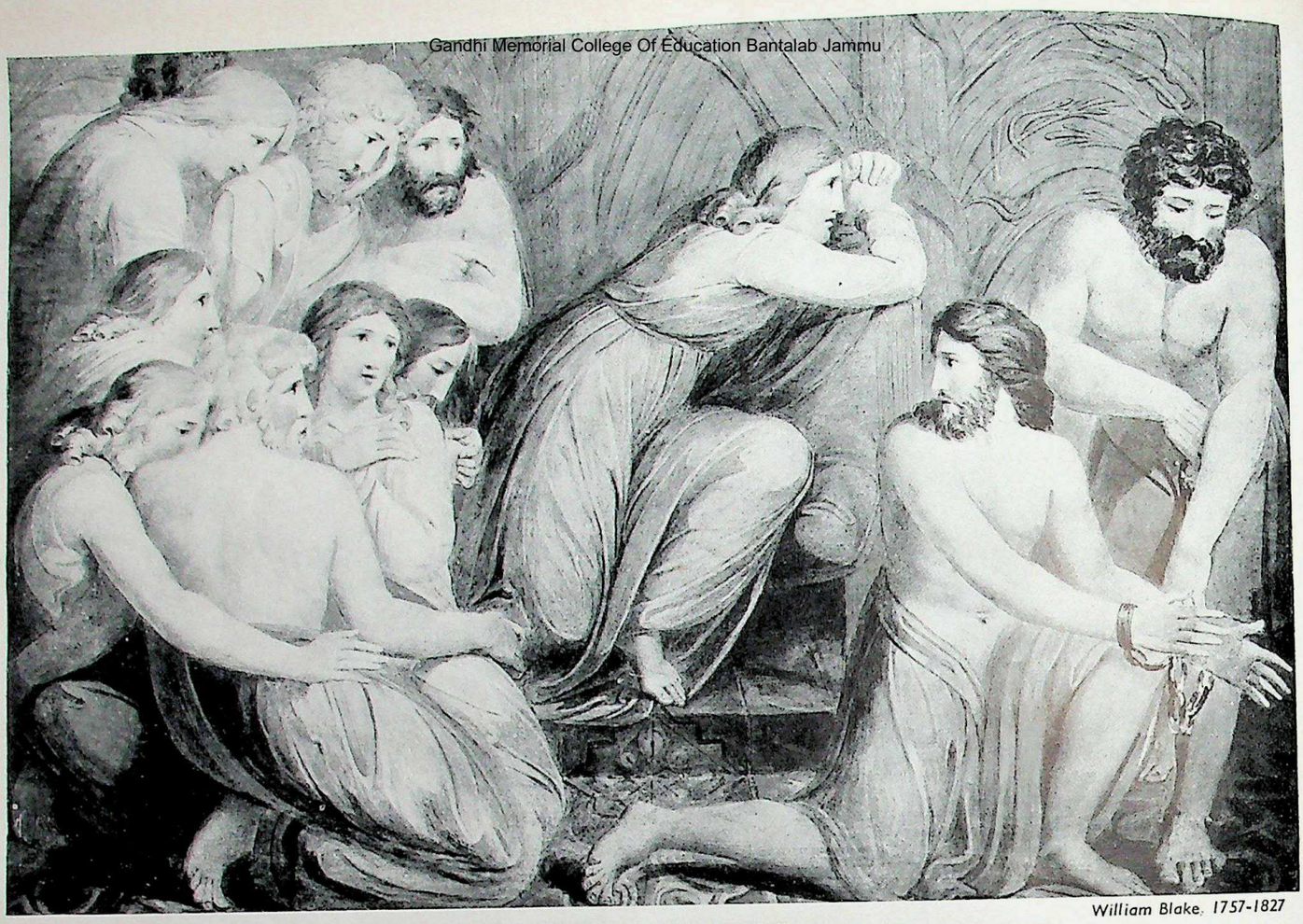

William Blake, 1757-1827

JOSEPH SAID, "LET ONE OF YOUR BRETHREN BE BOUND"

Ford Madox Brown, 1821-1893

"THEY TOOK JOSEPH'S COAT . . . AND THEY BROUGHT IT TO THEIR FATHER"

Here, as depicted by great British painters, we have two of the most poignant scenes in the cycle of stories recording the life of Joseph "whom Jacob loved more than all his children, because he was the son of his old age" (Genesis xxxvii, 3). The drawing by William Blake, Joseph Ordering Simeon to be Bound (Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge) expresses with rhythmic beauty of design the moment of poetic justice when, as "ruler over all the land of Egypt," Joseph misleads and punishes his brethren.

The Coat of Many Colours is a painting by Ford Madox Brown (Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool), a leader of the Pre-Raphaelite movement, the ideals of which inspired many religious pictures. Interest is skilfully focussed on the bloodstained garment. The eyes of the ruthless brethren are fixed on their aged father, who, in turn gazes in horror at the coat.

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James Tissot, 1836-1902

THE MEETING OF JOSEPH AND BENJAMIN IN EGYPT

The French painter, James Tissot, spent ten arduous years in Palestine in order to study Eastern types for his hundreds of water-colour drawings illustrative of incidents in the Bible. He has correctly pictured Joseph in the wig, jewelry and girdled skirt worn by the Egyptian noble of the time. He was thus disguised from his half-brothers, who years before had sold him into captivity. Humbly presenting Benjamin, they " bowed down their heads and made obeisance " (Genesis xliii, 28).

The other picture, The Discovery of the Cup in Benjamin's Sack (Dresden Gallery) by Jan Victoors, Dutch painter of the school of Rembrandt, shows a very different treatment. In accordance with the European custom in art before the 19th century, the painter has depicted people of his own period and country in these magnificently orientalized costumes of his day.

Jan Victoors, 1620-1673

" AND THE CUP WAS FOUND IN BENJAMIN'S SACK "

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"LET US ARISE, AND GO UP TO BETHEL"

The village of Beitin is identified with ancient Bethel—"house of God"—and the still more ancient city of "Luz, which is in the land of Canaan." Set on a hill, it is about ten miles north of Jerusalem. Today a place of few inhabitants, of lowly dwellings and a ruined tower, in Old Testament history it looms importantly. Here Abraham built his second altar; here Jacob had his vision of the heavenly ladder; here, twenty years later, he returned according to his vow, to set up an altar to the Lord (Genesis xxxv, 6, 7), "because there God appeared unto him, when he fled from the face of his brother."

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

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(*Continued from page* 54)

scholars that Genesis was originally written in the script and even the language of Babylonia.

HOWEVER, the general view is that Abraham and the Patriarchs were satisfied with the more flexible and scarcely less enduring vehicle of oral tradition. That is to say, they passed down their spiritual experiences and historical reminiscences by word of mouth from generation to generation as they watched by their camp fires in the desert, or lingered by the sheepfolds when the flocks were gathered in.

For the Hebrews of those early days were no lovers of city life, but wandering shepherds free as air, roaming from valley to valley, dwelling in tents, and confining their material possessions to as few and portable as possible. Babylonian writing tablets are heavy and bulky things for a nomadic tribe to carry about, even if clay were obtainable on the desert route; while documents inscribed on the "fleshy tablets of the heart" weigh nothing at all.

Moreover, the Bible itself says nothing about writing before the time of Moses. So that on the whole it seems probable that the beginnings of the Bible were for many centuries an unwritten tradition learnt by heart, and passed on only by word of mouth, each succeeding generation adding something out of its own experience to the growing deposit of sacred lore.

Thus the book of Genesis grew as it were organically, century after century, as the life-story first of Abraham, then of Isaac, then of Jacob was added to the prose-epic of Creation.

With the story of Joseph's dramatic career we enter for four centuries into a new environment, the Sojourn in Egypt, and, as is natural, the tradition is flavoured with many new words and phrases learnt in the Nile Valley. And so at last, about 1500 B.C., we come to Moses.

Was Moses the First Hebrew to use Writing?

THE Biblical tradition that Moses was the first of the Hebrews to make use of writing is so insistent that it cannot be disregarded. Whatever arguments can be used in favour of Abraham's ability to write, apply tenfold to the great Lawgiver. Learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, as the Bible tells us (Acts vii, 22), Moses would have at his command not only cuneiform, still the international script of the Near East, but Egyptian hieroglyphics, or even, as recent discoveries in Sinai and Syria have shown, the much handier invention of a primitive Semitic *alphabet!* From childhood he would be familiar not only with inscriptions on clay tablets and stone, but with pen and ink and paper, or papyrus as it was called.

He would be surrounded by every incentive of precedent, for by that time Egypt was littered with papyrus writings containing historical records, philosophy, psalms, moral treatises, and sacred legend. She, too, was evolving her Holy Scriptures, the celebrated "Book of the Dead," and so forth. Also during the years when he took refuge with Jethro in the Land of Midian in North Arabia, Moses would perhaps encounter one of those many steles, or tables of stone, containing the Laws of Hammurabi which had been broadcast from Babylon in her palmy days.

There seems little reason, therefore, to question the explicit statement in the Bible (Exodus xxxiv, 1) that the Ten Commandments were actually *written* or inscribed on tables of stone, which Moses carried about with him on the march in an ark or chest of wood specially made to contain them. It is not at all impossible that one day we may find them!

Yet Moses, too, during the most important period of his life, led a wandering nomadic existence, plodding from oasis to oasis, living solely in tents, and ministering to a people who, unlike himself, had been brought up in virtual slavery, ill-treated, over-driven, and most probably illiterate. The perils and problems of the Forty Years' Wandering would scarcely admit of education in the arts of peace. So that on the whole we must concur with the general opinion of scholars, that Moses, like Abraham, contented himself, *for the most part*, with oral tradition.

Changed Conditions after the Conquest

WITH the conquest of Canaan by Joshua, however, the circumstances of the Hebrew people entirely changed. No longer slaves, but warriors; no longer exclusively pastoral, but engaged in agriculture in the fields and vineyards for which they had fought; no longer building palaces for Pharaoh, but occupying cities and houses of their own, they gradually began to settle down in the land they had won.

Soon, no doubt, they learned anew from the Canaanite in their midst—a cultured and highly civilized people, as we now realize—the arts and crafts of civilization. Reading and writing became an ever more general accomplishment. Their chieftains would engage scribes and chroniclers, like other potentates of the day; their priests would emulate the sacred writings of the hierarchy in other lands. Little by little oral tradition would be supplemented by the written word—and at a date (we now believe) far earlier than was once thought probable. Modern scholarship, for instance, argues for the existence of contemporary Hebrew records even as early as Joshua and the Judges.

The supposition comes near to certainty when we arrive, about 1000 B.C., at the court of King David in Jerusalem. Here at last we have all the requisite machinery for a written record of Hebrew history and tradition—the fixed capital with its Court officials, royal palace, library, security, and an advanced state of civilization. Here, inevitably, the Court records would be scrupulously kept, and very soon those who read the "Chronicles of the Kings of Judah," would turn their attention to writing up the well-remembered chronicles of earlier Hebrew history, back to the beginning

Finally, the erection of Solomon's Temple, with its college of priests and temple servants, would add still further impetus to the task of compiling a complete account of Israel's origins and the working out of God's purpose through His chosen people.

Let us pause a moment to review the situation as it concerns the growth of the Old Testament, and especially of the Book of Genesis.

The date is the death of King Solomon, about 936 B.C. A mass of sacred tradition, passed down from age to age with that almost verbal fidelity characteristic of ancient peoples, has accumulated and is universally revered by Judaism as its divine heritage, which indeed it is. The official trustees, as it were, of this inheritance are the priests and prophets of the Lord. In the archives of Jerusalem and elsewhere we may perhaps assume the existence of many carefully-guarded documents, some in cuneiform, some in Egyptian, some in that early Hebrew script which had already made its appearance within the borders of the Palestinian Kingdom.

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All these documents have been lost, unfortunately, in the many catastrophes which overtook the Holy City. But some of them are mentioned in the Bible, such as the "Book of Jasher," and the "Wars of Jehovah."

At the date mentioned, the story covered by this well-established tradition was probably that of the creation and early history up to the death of Joseph, as contained in our Book of Genesis, together with the biographies of Moses, Joshua, the Judges, Saul and David. It included also a mass of common Law, ballads (like the lament of David for Jonathan), sacred poetry (like the song of Deborah) and religious legislation. The Word of God was already directing His chosen people on the way of life.

God's Word Becomes Holy Writ

WE now come to the final stage in the making of the Book of Genesis, when it was written down in the form in which we have it today.

After the death of Solomon began that unhappy partition of the Kingdom which was eventually to prove its ruin. North and south split asunder, Samaria being set up as a rival to Jerusalem. The prophets of Jehovah, now an increasingly numerous and influential body, were almost in despair as they foresaw the imminent fall of this house divided against itself, and the golden calves at Bethel set up in unholy competition with the divinely-appointed altar in Jerusalem.

They perceived at once that the sacred traditions of united Israel were in danger. It became an imperative necessity to write them down in black and white.

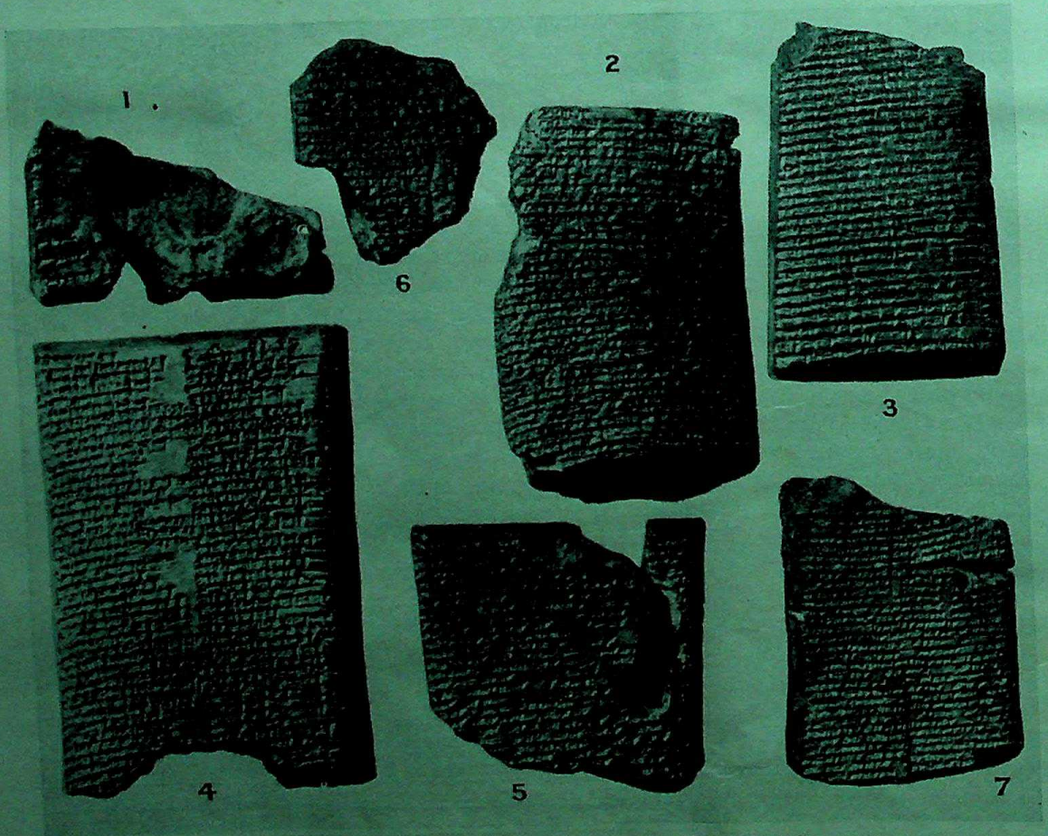
By this time the art of reading and writing, as well as convenient materials for the purpose, were an everyday feature of Hebrew life throughout the country. There were also plenty of safe buildings where written documents could be stored, and where colleges of scribes, like the manuscript-writers of the medieval monastery, could forgather. Above all, the spoken tongue of Israel had now passed through its early stages of growth to a glorious maturity of subtle inflexion, noble style, and opulent vocabulary. It was the Golden Age of Hebrew.

So God placed a pen in the prophets' hands and bade them write.

The result was the first edition, as we should call it, of the book of Genesis as we have it in our Hebrew Bible today, written and published about 850 B.C. by the disciples of Elijah and Elisha the prophets.

We still possess a long inscription in Hebrew written about the same time on the famous Stone of Mesha, otherwise called the Moabite Stone. But no actual page of the original papyrus or parchment manuscript of Genesis has survived, for the Hebrew writers out of reverence for the Holy Book, carefully destroyed their Bibles by fire as soon as they showed signs of dilapidation. The original manuscripts, however, were copied (by hand, of course) with a scrupulous fidelity to every jot and tittle of the text, so that not the most trifling error or variation should creep in. A similar reverential care has been shown both by the copiers of the Middle Ages, and by the printers of modern times, with the result that, in spite of the absence of archetypes, we know exactly what those old-time prophets wrote. There were further editions, however, of the Book of Genesis, as in due course need was felt, not for altering, but for supplementing the first draft. The prophetical writers never supposed for a moment that Revelation had ceased with Moses or Elisha; on the contrary, they believed that God's Holy Spirit was guiding them in those later days with a brighter light than ever. Day by day the Lord was unfolding new truths to them, which they published abroad both by word of mouth and in writing. The voice was the voice of Elijah, or Amos, or Isaiah, as the case might be, but the words were the Word of God—"Thus saith the Lord!"

A second edition, accordingly, appeared about 700 B.C. when the Fall of Samaria caused the fleeing prophets of the Northern Kingdom to join forces with their brethren in Judah. This led to a pooling, as it were, of written documents, and several ancient traditions which had been temporarily lost or omitted by the prophets of the South were now recovered and inserted in the narrative.



STORY OF THE CREATION CURRENT IN ABRAHAM'S DAY. Substituting Ashur for Marduk, the Assyrians borrowed from Babylon the story of the world's origin inscribed on the Seven Tablets of Creation. The copies of these which have been preserved to us are Assyrian, dating from the 7th century B.C. They describe (1) the primeval ocean-mass; (2) rebellion of Tiâmat, the sea-goddess; (3) the gods' council of war; (4) Marduk—Ashur in Assyria—elected champion of the gods, fights and slays Tiâmat; (5) creation of the stars; (6) creation of man; (7) praise of the gods: and conclude with commendation of the poem.

British Museum

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PAGAN WORSHIP IN "UR OF THE CHALDEES." Within the ruins of a temple at Ur, once devoted to the moon-god Nannar, were found the fragments of a great limestone slab decorated with bands of relief carving. The best preserved of these represents Ur-Engur, a Sumerian king, receiving instructions from the god to build the Ziggurat of Ur. Nannar, enthroned on the right, holds measuring rod, cord and adze. The king pours a libation into a vase containing date clusters and foliage. Left, the libation is being repeated before Nin-Gal, wife of Nannar and "Mother of Ur."

Courtesy of Joint Expedition to Ur

The book of Genesis was now almost complete, but a third edition had yet to come. In course of time, the fate of Samaria overtook Jerusalem also, the prophets' warning being fulfilled by Nebuchadrezzar's destruction of the Holy City and the transportation of most of its inhabitants to Babylon in 586 B.C. Thus began the Exile of which the Psalmist sings so sadly, "By the waters of Babylon we sat down and wept, when we remembered thee, O Zion" (Psalm cxxxvii).

But as their spirits revived and they began to look around them, the exiles remembered that Babylonia was not such a very "strange land" to them after all. Was this not the country from which Father Abraham had migrated some fifteen centuries earlier? Were not these the temples of Ishtar and Marduk, and this the very Tower of Babel, now rebuilt, under whose shadow the first Hebrews had been reared? In the more ancient and authentic of the Babylonian traditions could they not recognize several which had received the seal of Abraham's approval?

THUS it was that the priests of the Exile, dispossessed of their altar, but not of their sacred books, were able to insert certain explanatory details and supplementary matter into the earlier editions of Genesis—such as the introduction to the book (Genesis i–ii, 4), several passages in the Flood story, and so on.

The result of all this literary activity was that, after the Jews were restored to their beloved homeland, Ezra the scribe was able to appeal to a complete authorized edition of the five especially venerated "Books of Moses" which they called the LAW, the first of which was, of course, our Book of Genesis.

Such is the eventful story of the origin and growth of this wonderful book. Its subsequent history must not detain us long. Known for centuries only to the Hebrew-speaking world, it was translated first into Greek (the Septuagint) about 250 B.C., then into Latin (the Vulgate), A.D. 400, and finally into English (by Wycliffe), in A.D. 1383. One edition of the English Bible followed another, each more accurate than its predecessor, until we got the familiar Authorized Version in A.D. 1611. Last but not least we were privileged to receive our English Revised Version of 1885. Today it has been translated into a thousand different languages, so that all men may read the wonderful works of God.

AND so, after twice two thousand years, the Book comes down to you and me, to read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest.

Like most other things in life which are really worth while, the right approach to an understanding of Genesis is not easy. But God never gave us the Bible, nor any part of it, as a substitute for further thought.

There have been many ways of reading the Old Testament in the past, and through most of them without doubt men have found God. The humble peasant poring by candlelight over the sacred page as his finger moves from word to word has learned no less from it in his own way than the learned theologian with a heap of commentaries at his side. But though the Book is eternal, the method of approaching it may change, and each age will have its characteristic point of view.

Today we look on the Old Testament very much, after all, in the way that Jesus looked upon it—as a preface to Religion. Not one jot nor tittle of this Preface shall pass away, but it is fulfilled in the Volumes that follow. What the Old Testament allowed "for the hardness of men's hearts," and what "in the times of man's ignorance God winked at," was afterwards subjected to a more searching standard of human conduct, the standard set by Our Lord's own words: "It was said by them of old time . . . but I say unto you."

In modern parlance, the Old Testament is the divinely-inspired record of the development of moral and spiritual ideals as exemplified in the story of the most religiously progressive people on the earth.

From this point of view it will present no difficulty to the thoughtful reader. The Higher Criticism will unfold for him the literary evolution of the Bible as a book. Archaeology will exhume tangible evidence to corroborate and supplement the Biblical narrative. Ancient History and Anthropology will mount the jewel of Judaism in its proper setting amongst the world's nations and religions. And a more attentive study of the actual text will make clear how consistently the successive stages of spiritual and ethical progress are indicated in the Bible itself.

Thus Genesis, not only the book of beginnings but the beginning of the Book, forms a preface to the Scriptures from which we learn the combination which unlocks the whole, and opens the Holy of Holies to our view.

As such, it is obviously a Book of the very first importance to religion, which no earnest seeker will neglect.

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NATURAL HISTORY OF THE BIBLE. I

An A B C of Plants and Trees

THE natural history of the Bible may conveniently be divided into branches dealing respectively with plants, animals, birds, reptiles, and invertebrates, minerals, metals, and precious stones. The first to be considered will be the plants, a term that includes trees, shrubs, herbs and flowers.

OWING to the difference in local climatic conditions there is considerable range and variety in the botanical features of Palestine. The greater number of the plants seen today belong to the "Germanic" flora, but in high parts of the country, such as Lebanon or Hermon, Alpine plants are found, while vegetation of a semi-tropical character occurs in the Jordan valley, more especially in the basin of the Dead Sea.

BASED on the researches of experts, the following table presents information that is not only interesting but in some cases surprising, for it will be found that the names of certain trees and plants, familiar in their biblical context to all Bible readers, have been misinterpreted by the translators of the Authorized Version and are other than what they seem, for example, apple, chestnut, juniper, mulberry and sycamore.

Plant	*Scripture References*	*Notes*
Algum or Almug	I Kings x, 11-12; II Chronicles ii, 8; ix, 10-11	Wood used in building the Temple and for making musical instruments. Brought to Solomon from Ophir and Lebanon; that from Ophir was probably red sandal-wood
Almond, the tree and its fruit	Genesis xliii, 11; Numbers xvii, 8; Ecclesiastes xii, 5; Jeremiah i, 11	The Hebrew word for almond is Shâked, meaning "hasten"; in Jeremiah i, 11-12, a play on the word refers to the blossoms coming before the leaves
Aloe or Lign-Aloe	Numbers xxiv, 6; Psalms xlv, 8; Proverbs vii, 17; Song of Solomon iv, 14; John xix, 39	In Numbers xxiv, 6, reference is made to the cultivation of the tree; the other references are to the spice
Anise	Matthew xxiii, 23	Used in medicine and for seasoning
Apple: probably apricot	Proverbs xxv, 11; Song of Solomon ii, 3, 5; vii, 8; viii 5; Joel 1, 12	The climate of Palestine is too hot for apples. From the context of the various allusions, it is now thought that the orange is indicated
Ash	Isaiah xliv, 14	Wood used for making idols. R.V. translates it as fir or pine; probably Aleppo pine
Balm	Genesis xxxvii, 25; xliii, 11; Jeremiah viii, 22; xlvi, 11; li, 8; Ezekiel xxvii, 17	Formerly identified as the gum of *Balsamodendron gileadense*, the biblical balm is now thought to have been mastick
Barley	Exodus ix, 31; Deuteronomy viii, 8; Ruth i, 22; iii, 2; etc., etc.	The commonest and most easily grown grain; it preceded the wheat harvest and was reaped about April
Bay Tree	Psalms xxxvii, 35	Evergreen sweet bay, or bay laurel, a native of Palestine
Bdellium	Genesis ii, 12; Numbers xi, 7	Conjectured to be the fragrant amber gum found in the sands of Arabia and elsewhere
Beans	II Samuel xvii, 28	Common broad bean, *Vicia faba*
Bitter Herbs	Exodus xii, 8; Numbers ix, 11	Have been defined as lettuce, endive, chicory and two other herbs not identified
Box Tree	Isaiah xli, 19; lx, 13	Probably *Buxus longifolia*, which grows on Lebanon. The wood was used for inlaid work
Bramble, Briar, Thistle, Thorn	Job xxxi, 40; Isaiah, xxxiv, 13; lv, 13; Matthew vii, 16, etc., etc.	Unspecified prickly shrubs or possibly herbs. In hot dry climates all plants have a tendency to become spiny
Bulrush Flag Paper-Reed Reed Rush	Genesis xli, 5, 22; Exodus ii, 3; Job viii, 11; Isaiah ix, 14; xix, 15; Jonah ii, 5; etc., etc.	Varied translations of six Hebrew words, one of which indicates the papyrus of Egypt which, when dried and plaited, was used to fashion small boats. Among other plants indicated are a rush with edible tuber, and the common reed of Palestine
Bush, Burning	Exodus iii, 2-4	Small thorny acacia
Calamus or **Sweet Cane**	Exodus xxx, 23; Isaiah xliii, 24; Jeremiah vi, 20	Spice used in the anointing oil
Camphire	Song of Solomon i, 14; iv, 13	Henna, used in the East as a cosmetic
Cassia	Exodus xxx, 24; Psalms xlv, 8; Ezekiel xxvii, 19	Spice used in the anointing oil and extracted from the bark of trees allied to the cinnamon. Found only in, and east of, India
Cedar	Leviticus xiv, 4, 6, 49, 51, 52; II Chronicles ii, 8; Ezra iii, 7; Ezekiel xxxi, 3-18, etc.	In the Pentateuch this word indicates an aromatic juniper used in purification ceremonial; elsewhere it is the cedar of Lebanon
Chestnut	Genesis xxx, 37; Ezekiel xxxi, 8	The oriental plane tree
Cinnamon	Exodus xxx, 23; Proverbs vii, 17; Song of Solomon iv, 14	Spice prepared from the dried inner bark of *Cinnamomum zeylanicum*
Citron	Leviticus xxiii, 40	Supposed to be indicated by A.V. "boughs of goodly trees." The citron is still used in Jewish ceremonial.
Cockle	Job xxxi, 40	Unidentified; probably a weed of offensive smell
Coriander	Exodus xvi, 31; Numbers xi, 7	Plant allied to aniseed and caraway and used as a spice to flavour bread
Corn: translation of eleven distinct Hebrew words	Genesis xli, 49; Leviticus ii, 14; Numbers xviii, 27; Joshua v, 11; Judges xv, 5; Ruth ii, 2; etc.	Indicates variously standing corn, a sheaf, an ear, corn beaten out, etc. Grains cultivated in Palestine included wheat, barley and millet
Cucumber	Numbers xi, 5; Isaiah i, 8	Two species are grown in Egypt and Palestine
Cypress	Isaiah xliv, 14	Probably *Cupressus sempervirens* found in Lebanon, the wood of which is hard and durable
Elm	Hosea iv, 13	The terebinth; elsewhere translated oak or teil tree

(*Continued in page* 106)

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Genesis

III

The Land of the Book

How Archaeology Bears Witness to the Enduring Truth of Genesis

by SIR CHARLES MARSTON, F.S.A.

Vice-Chairman, British School of Archaeology in Egypt; Author of "The Bible is True," "New Knowledge about the Old Testament," etc.

THE value and importance of the earlier chapters of Genesis have often been obscured by theories concerning the origin and evolution of the world and civilization, which lack evidence, and are even contrary to evidence. A case in point which has an important bearing upon the earlier chapters of Genesis is the so-called evolution of Religion. The theorists evolved man's religion from dreams, fetishes, totemism and ancestor worship, polytheism and finally monotheism. The observed facts of the sciences of archaeology and anthropology reverse the process; they testify that monotheism, or the worship of One God, was the original Religion, and that the worship of more than one God, and all the rest, were degenerations. This discovery agrees with the early chapters of Genesis, and constitutes good basic evidence for their authenticity.

Streams that Ran in Eden

THE events which are described in those chapters are said to have happened in the neighbourhood of the River Euphrates. It is significant that there archaeologists find ample evidence of what is believed to be the most ancient civilization in the world. In considering the site of the Garden of Eden account must be taken of the great changes that have taken place on the surface of the earth since that time. Noah's flood alone, if it was a real event—and we know now that it was a real event—must have considerably affected the configuration, the climate, and the course of the rivers of Western Asia. According to Genesis ii, the Garden of Eden was watered by four rivers—the Pishon, the Gihon, the Hiddekel and the Euphrates.

The Pishon has been identified with an ancient river-bed. Part of its course is today marked by the Pallacopus Canal, which runs through Babylonia from the Euphrates towards the edge of the Arabian desert, a distance of about eighty miles. The land of Havilah means "the land of sand," and represents the region of North Arabia.

The Gihon has been identified with the modern Kerkhah, a river which flows down from Persia. In this connection the land of Cush has been identified with the land of Kas, where lived the Kossaeans, who are called Kassi on the cuneiform tablets.

The Hiddekel is the river Tigris. The word "idiqua" or "idigla" means "the encircling river" in the ancient Sumerian language, and justifies the description "that is it which goeth towards the east of the city of Assur," not "the land of Assyria" as translated in our Bibles. If these identifications are correct, a glance at the map will show that the Garden of Eden had a watershed spreading fan-shaped from the mountains of Persia on the north-west, to the desert of Arabia on the south-east; while from the north there came down the two great rivers, the Tigris and the Euphrates—all four streams making their way to the Persian Gulf. Such a conflux of rivers might indeed make a land that lay between them all a perfect Paradise, cool and moist and fruitful.

The oldest-known civilized race are the Sumerians; their records go back to 4000 B.C. Now the written poems of this most ancient people concerning Paradise have been deciphered and translated. They present an almost complete parallel with the Biblical account. They locate Eden at Dilmun, near the eastern shore of the Persian Gulf. In those very early times the head of this gulf ran much farther inland, for in course of ages it has silted up. On the other hand, the Sumerian and the later Babylonian and Assyrian accounts do not mention the four rivers. Although they resemble the Bible accounts, they are also polytheistic in character. It has been assumed that they represent the originals from which the account in the book of Genesis is derived. But the discovery that monotheism was the original religion reverses this assumption. It suggests that the Old Testament represents the original account, and that the polytheistic versions are derived from it. The mere fact that outside Holy Scripture no monotheistic version of the Creation has yet been discovered does not entitle anyone to assume that one never existed. The polytheistic accounts bear witness to the genuineness of the Bible narrative, but that is as far as it is safe to regard them in the light of our latest discoveries.

Confirmation of the Genesis Story

LIKE the Creation, the sacred narrative, scanty as it is, receives confirmation from outside sources. The references to Jabal, the father of tents and cattle; to Jubal, the father of musical instruments; and to Tubalcain, the first smith, are paralleled in Sumerian poems. (*See* illustration in page 31). In one of these Tubalcain figures as Tibir. In Genesis v we are given the list of names of the ten patriarchs who lived before the Flood. These correspond roughly with the names of the antediluvian kings which have come down to us from other ancient civilizations. Beside the Sumerian, the Greek, and the Phoenician, there are even the Indian and the Chinese stories. These widely-separate sources with many diverse details imply that the antediluvian patriarchs had an historical background. Adam, the first man, is known as Alulim in the Sumerian, and Alorus in the Greek, and has been identified with the Sivayambhuva of the Hindus, and Fohi of the Chinese.

Untenable since the discovery of original monotheism, the theory of the evolution of religion had also postulated an absence of belief in a future life in these primitive ages of the world. Such a speculation ran counter to the statement that "Enoch walked with God, and he was not, for God took him."

Ancient Origins of Mosaic Writings

BUT the accumulated evidences from the observed facts of both the sciences of archaeology and anthropology, beside bearing witness to original monotheism, also testify to a universal belief in a future life. The bread and water of eternal life figure prominently in Sumerian art, and link up sayings of Christ, recorded in St. John, with the most primitive beliefs of civilized man. There is a cuneiform tablet at the British Museum which is said to make reference to a king who "loved to read the writings of the age before the Flood." The later civilizations after the Flood claimed that these writings formed the basis of their moral laws, rituals, and ceremonies. Bible students have assumed that those in the Old Testament came through Moses; but archaeology is now revealing a far older origin, which takes them back to the original monotheism. The Commandments, the ritual and the legislation associated with Moses were, broadly speaking, a restatement and a codification of what had existed for thousands of years before his time. They appear in the books of Moses cleansed and purified from their polytheistic accretions and restored for the observance of the Israelites in connection with the Covenant made by God with them in the wilderness.

The reality of Noah's flood has been generally recognized since Sir Leonard Woolley found the deposits left by it at Ur of the Chaldees. Despite the

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documentary evidence that had been found, it had been relegated to the vague region of myths and legends, by scholars more alive to airy speculations than to studying the commonplace

A WORLD MAP FROM ANCIENT BABYLON. This clay tablet is inscribed with a map showing the ocean-encircled world as the ancient Mesopotamians conceived it. Babylon's position is marked on the Euphrates; also the mountains at the river's source and its deltaic swamps. The small circles denote the various cities.

British Museum

significance of the evidence of observed facts. As long ago as 1872, George Smith read his translation of the Chaldean account of the Deluge to a London audience.

Babylonian Stories of the Flood

THERE are several accounts of the Flood in cuneiform writing preserved in the collection in the British Museum. Poems concerning the event seem to have been a favourite subject in Sumerian, Babylonian, and Assyrian literature. One version represents the speaker to be Uta-napishtim or Nuh-napishtim, recounting the whole incident to Gilgamesh, the Babylonian Nimrod. It has been suggested that the word "Nuh-napishtim" means "rest of soul," and that of Noah signifies "rest," and so is an abbreviation of the longer name. Others have derived Noah from the Ethiopic word "nōha" meaning "of long duration," and connected it with his Sumerian equivalent Zui-sud-ra, which signifies "He who has life of eternal days." In the account of the flood written by Berosus, the hero is Xisuthrus, which is his rendering of this name Zui-sud-ra. Lastly, Father Burrows has genially pointed out that a version of the Flood story has been found in Asia Minor where the name is Nahmolel. This carries still closer identification to the Hebrew Noah.

Beside the cuneiform accounts of the Deluge, many cuneiform documents exist, which are dated many years after the Flood. There is also a Sumerian list of the six cities before the Flood: Eridu, Ellasar, Badtibira, Larah, Sippar, and Shuruppak. The last was placed as the scene of the building of the Ark. Thus one poem ran:

> Uta-napishtim said to him even to Gilgamesh
> Let me unfold to thee Gilgamesh, a secret story,
> And the decree of the gods let me tell thee!
> Shuruppak there is, a city which thou knowest
> It lies on the banks of the Euphrates
> That city was old, and the gods within it,
> Even the great gods, were urged in their hearts to make a Deluge.

Then a deity addresses Uta-napishtim's house; presumably Uta-napishtim was inside:

> O reed house, reed house, O wall, wall,
> O reed house listen, wall understand.
> O man of Shuruppak—son of Ubar-Tutu
> Destroy the house, build a ship
> Desert possessions, seek life,
> Forsake property, life preserve
> Bring seed of all living things into the ship, etc.

It was thought that the discoveries of the Flood deposits were made simultaneously at Kish and Ur of the Chaldees in the winter of 1928–1929. But those at Kish proved to belong to a later inundation, and the original ones were subsequently discovered nineteen feet below them. These corresponded with the Ur deposits, and consequently Sir Leonard Woolley deserves pride of place as the first finder. His account of the discovery as described in his book "Ur of the Chaldees" so well portrays the fascination of work in the field of Biblical archaeology that the temptation to quote a few lines is irresistible:

> The shafts went deeper and suddenly the character of the soil changed. Instead of the stratified pottery and rubbish we were in perfectly clean clay, uniform throughout, the texture of which showed that it had been laid there by water. The workmen declared we had come to the bottom of everything, to the river silt. . . . I sent the men back to deepen the hole. The clean clay continued without change until it had attained a thickness of a little over eight feet. Then, as suddenly as it had begun, it stopped, and we were once more in layers of rubbish full of stone implements and pottery. . . . The great bed of clay marked, if it did not cause a break in, the continuity of history; above it we had the pure Sumerian civilization slowly developing on its own lines; below it there was a mixed culture . . . . no ordinary rising of the rivers would leave behind it anything approaching the bulk of this clay bank; eight feet of sediment imply a very great depth of water, and the flood which deposited it must have been of a magnitude unparalleled in local history. That it was so is

SUMERIAN STORY OF THE FLOOD. The adventures of Gilgamesh, a legendary king of Erech, are related on a series of twelve tablets discovered at Nineveh. On the eleventh tablet, shown above, is inscribed what is generally known as the Babylonian account of the Deluge. In the epic of Gilgamesh this story is told by Uta-napishtim, who, instructed to build an ark, was rescued with his family from the great flood.

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further proved by the fact that the clay banks mark a definite break in the continuity of the local culture; a whole civilization which existed before it is lacking above it and seems to have been submerged by the waters . . . there could be no doubt that the flood was the Flood of Sumerian history and legend, the flood on which is based the story of Noah.

The various English translations of the Hebrew Bible represent the Flood to have occurred only two hundred and ninety-two years before the birth of Abraham. Evidence will shortly be advanced to prove that this patriarch was born in 2160 B.C.; in that case the Flood would have happened in 2452 B.C. But the Septuagint, or Greek version, dates the event 1072 years before Abraham. This would make the Flood to have occurred in 3232 B.C. Archaeological evidence favours this latter date. Thus the Weld Blundell cuneiform clay prism, at the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford (*see* page 71), after referring to incidents before the Flood continues:

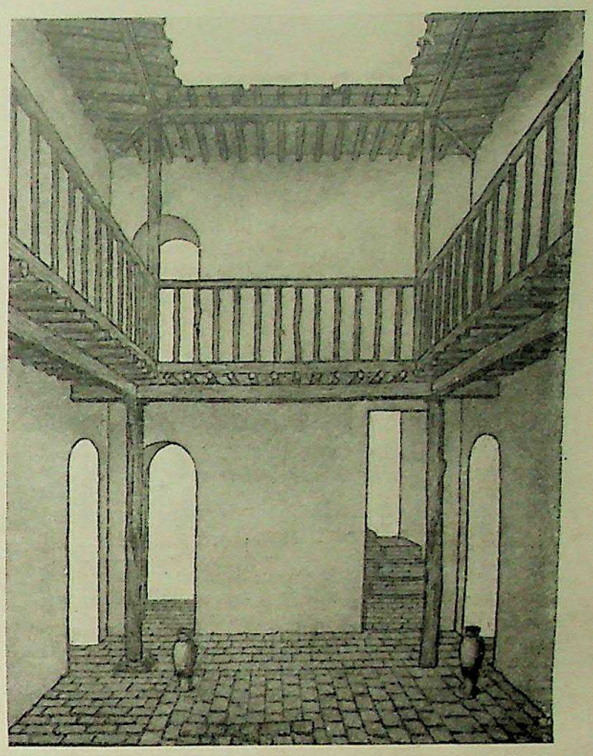
The Deluge came up (upon the Land)
After the Deluge had come,
The Rulership which descended from heaven (sic!).
At Kish there was the rulership
At Kish . . . Gaur
Became king.

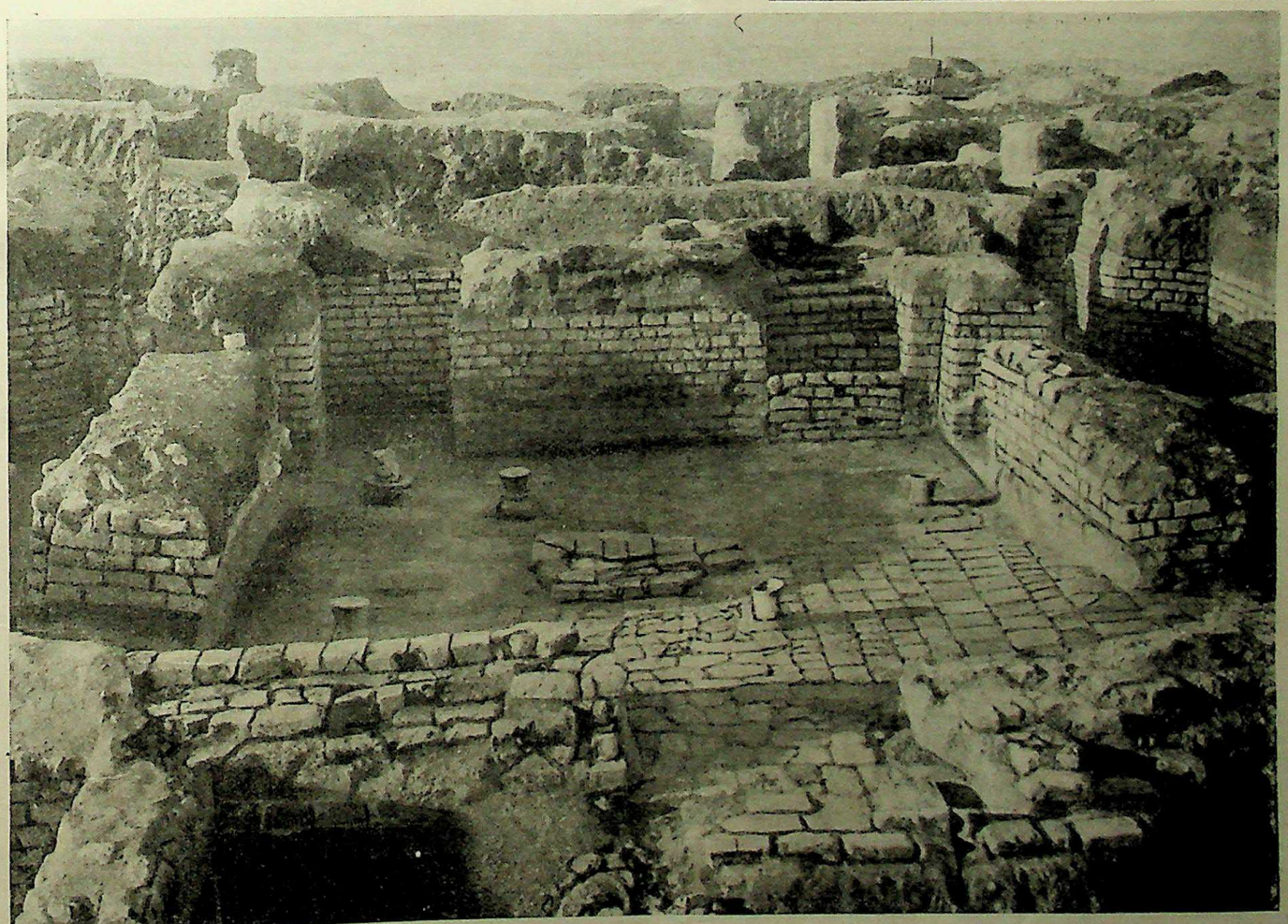
At the present time the commencement of the first dynasty of Kish is dated to about 5500 B.C., and that of Ur to about 4100 B.C. Neither of these cities is said to have been in existence before the Deluge. It is interesting to notice that the clay prism, from which the above extract has been quoted, was written about 2050 B.C., during the lifetime of Abraham.

Another subject on which there remains doubt is the extent of the Flood. Sir Leonard Woolley seems content to regard it as a great local inundation, but there are elements which suggest that it was a far wider catastrophe.

Legends of a great flood seem spread all over the world, and while attempts have been made to explain them away, yet nevertheless they are not without significance.

Taken as a whole, the dispersion of the descendents of Shem, Ham, and Japheth, the three sons of Noah, constitutes remarkable testimony to the magnitude of the Deluge. According to the Genesis narrative the Ark grounded somewhere in the neighbourhood of





SUCH A HOUSE AS ABRAHAM LIVED IN. Excavations outside the wall of the Sacred Area of Ur, the Biblical "Ur of the Chaldees," (Genesis xi, 31), uncovered a residential quarter which was extant in 2000 B.C. Abraham's period is so fully represented by ruins of domestic architecture and historical tablets that the reconstruction drawing of a town house, such as he might have occupied, has been possible. It should be compared with the photograph of the actual remains of a dwelling below it, showing the courtyard off which the rooms open. Though streets were narrow, houses in them were spacious.

Courtesy of Joint Expedition to Ur

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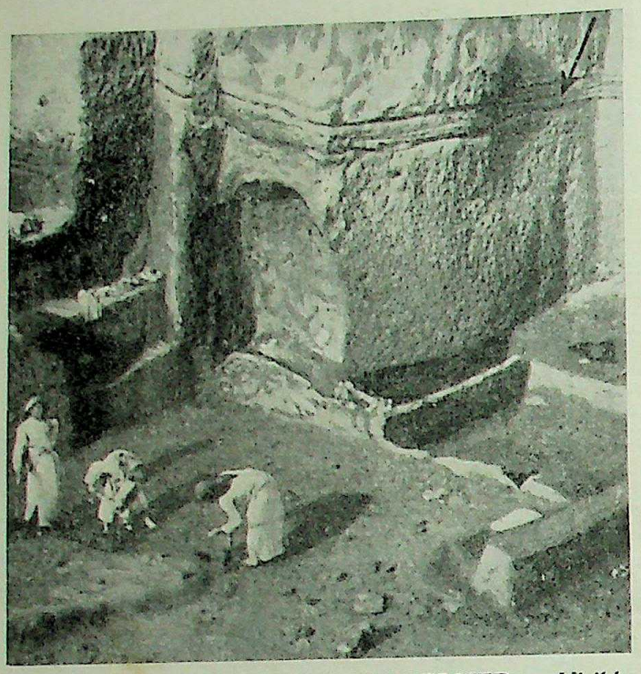


STORY OF THE DELUGE CONFIRMED. Visible proof of the Deluge is afforded by the stratum, 8 feet deep, of clean river sand or clay (marked above by the arrow) revealed at Kish, near Babylon, by excavations in 1929. Above this alluvial soil were found relics dating from about 3000 B.C.; below it were the remains of an earlier civilization, which had been submerged by the great flood.

Courtesy of Joint Expedition to Ur

the Caucasus, and it is to this part of the earth's surface that the civilized races of today trace their origin. Ample evidence exists that the Egyptians came from there; indeed the geography of the Egyptian "Book of the Dead" is the geography of the eastern extremity of the Caucasus, and of the Caspian Sea.

Even to the present day three main races of mankind can be traced, and no more satisfactory name for our Western races has been found than Japhetic; while the descendants of Shem and Ham, Noah's other sons, are not in doubt.

The story of the building of the Tower of Babel succeeds the account of the Flood in the book of Genesis. The scene is laid in the land of Shinar, and local tradition has identified the site of this edifice with Birs Nimrud, the ruins of Ezida, the great temple of Nebo at Borsippa near Babylon. This tower still stands more than one hundred and fifty feet above the plain. The ruins of the temple of E-Sagilla, which means "reaching to the clouds" in Babylon itself, have been suggested as an alternative site. Both these temples were built in seven stages.

There is, however, evidence which suggests that the Tower of Babel may not have been at Babylon at all, but at Calneh. This very ancient city, known today as Nippur, was partly excavated under the auspices of the University of Pennsylvania between 1889 and 1900. Its ruins first revealed to the modern world the extreme antiquity of Babylonian civilization. Another proposed identification for the Tower of Babel was a brick structure, known as "Aqarquf" or "Agarguf" about ten miles west of Baghdad. An old traveller described its bricks as half a yard thick, and three-quarters of a yard long, with courses of reed matting between them. Modern writers reduce the measurements of the bricks to eleven inches square, by four and a half inches thick, but they testify to the reed matting at intervals of three feet. The tower still rises to over one hundred feet above the ruins at its base. The confusion of tongues which stopped the building of Babel must be associated with the attempts that have been made to show that human languages all originally sprang from one source.

Tablets Unearthed at Ras Shamra

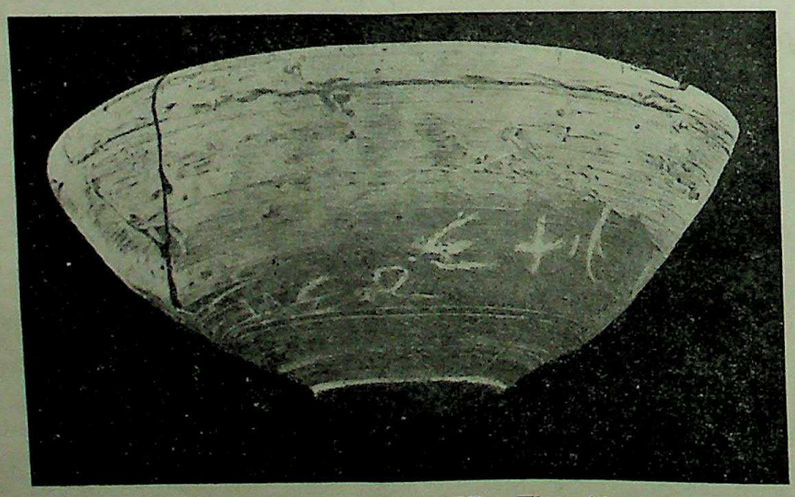
AT Ras Shamra on the coast of Syria, opposite the island of Cyprus, the French have found a whole temple library of clay tablets in eight different languages. The tablets that concern us are written in Archaic Hebrew. The script employed is an alphabetical one, using cuneiform characters for the signs. The writing is dated between 1400–1350 B.C. A whole series of archaeological discoveries, which only limitations of space forbid recording, have fixed 1400 B.C. as the year of the death of Moses, and the ritual and ceremonies recorded on some of these tablets, although of a polytheistic character, testify to the existence then of the Mosaic ritual and ceremonies, as recorded in Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy.

BUT the tablet selected for the purpose of this chapter, describes events more or less of a legendary character, referring to a period immediately before the life of Abraham. There Keret king of Sidon engages in a great battle in Southern Palestine, with an army of invaders under the leadership of Terach, the moon god. There is good reason to suggest that these invaders were Hebrews; for the tablet associates them with the tribes of Zebulun and Asher, and the people of Edom, who, about the time the tablets were written, were actually conquering Canaan under Joshua. These Israelites and Edomites sprang from Abraham the Hebrew, and his father was Terah, or Terach. Further than that, we know that Terach came from Ur of the Chaldees, the centre of worship of the moon god.

There are in existence a considerable number of what may be described as additional apocryphal books of the Old Testament. One of these represents Terah, the father of Abraham, to have been a great soldier, and a commander of the army of the king of Babylon. The age of Terah and Abraham was the age of the Hyksos or Shepherd Kings, who conquered Syria, Palestine and Egypt. There is evidence that some at least of these Hyksos were Hebrews; for before the time of Abraham the Hebrews were mercenary soldiers fighting for Babylon or Assyria.

To sum up then, this Ras Shamra tablet seems to refer to a Hyksos or Hebrew invasion led by Terah, Abraham's father, from Babylonia: and to link up the incident with the invasion of Abraham's descendants under Joshua, some seven centuries and more later. Thus archaeological evidence is beginning to testify to the authenticity of the Abraham narrative.

Old Testament history has been considerably distorted since the beginning of this century in order to fit into the ideas of evolutionists. For example, an article in a well-known periodical



SCRIPT MOSES MAY HAVE USED. The white letters painted on this red pottery bowl of about 1300 B.C., found during the excavations by the Wellcome Archaeological Research Expedition of the Biblical city of Lachish, belong to the oldest known alphabetical writing. Read from left to right after inverting the bowl, the inscription was translated by Dr. Langdon, late Professor of Assyriology at Oxford, as "His righteousness is my hand (or support)." He affirmed that the sentence is in archaic Hebrew. It is considered to be evidence that the Penta-

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recently described Abraham as "a herdman." This designation suggests a man who lives in the country, and is lacking in education. Such an impression of Abraham is entirely incorrect. It is quite clear from the book of Genesis that Abraham was an *employer* of several hundred herdmen; in other words, he was what is known today as a great Sheikh. So far as his education is concerned, Sir Leonard Woolley's excavations at Ur of the Chaldees have revealed the cultural environment of the period when Abraham lived there. Cuneiform tablets were found among the ruins of the houses; the contents of some were historical, others were hymn books, while yet others were treatises on mathematics. Among the latter were formulae for extracting both square and cube roots. Here, then, is evidence that confirms the traditional accounts of Abraham's learning, and dissipates the "herdman" fallacy.

Artistic Treasure Found at Ur

THE excavations of this ancient city of Ur furnish food for thought in other directions. Few of the tombs laid bare by the archaeologist's spade contain such evidences of art and culture as are found in the tombs at Ur of the Chaldees. And these have been left behind by men and women who ruled a thousand years before Abraham. Such relics as the golden helmet of Mes-kalam-dug, the head-dress of Queen Shub-ad, and the fluted gold bowls and flower vases from the tombs, are object lessons for those who have replaced the evidence of tradition, and of history, with crude evolutionary conjectures.

The Call of Abraham to leave the elaborate civilizations clustered round the moon god worship, first at Ur of the Chaldees, and then at Haran, was a call from the Unseen. The materialism of the end of last century has caused us all to regard anything to do with the Unseen with suspicion. But science is now accepting it; and there is plenty of evidence of its reality throughout world history.

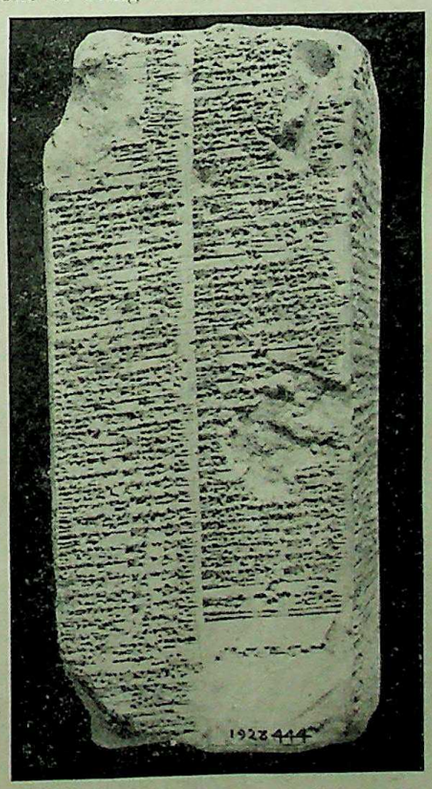
At the age of 75, Abraham the Hebrew entered Canaan, the country which became known as "the land of the Hebrews." The story of Abraham's life in Palestine has been verified to some extent by location of the various places associated with him. Examinations have been made of the ruins of many of them, and the pottery system of dating has enabled archaeologists to certify that they were inhabited before 2000 B.C.

Was Amraphel Hammurabi?

AN incident in the life of Abraham is associated with a battle waged by a confederacy of Babylonian kings against the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah. The battle was fought near the Dead Sea, probably close to Jericho. It is of peculiar importance because the narrative in Genesis xiv begins with the words: "And it came to pass in the days of Amraphel king of Shinar." This statement is the clue to evidence independent of the Bible for the date of Abraham. And this will be seen to agree precisely with the chronology derived from the books of Genesis and Exodus based on the date of Joshua's destruction of Jericho (1400 B.C.) as ascertained through Professor Garstang's excavations of that city. (*See* page 79).

Amraphel King of Shinar has long been identified by scholars with the great Semitic Babylonian king, Hammurabi. The date for this king has been accurately ascertained, both through archaeological evidence at first hand, and through astronomical evidence based on the rising and setting of the planet Venus, as recorded for twenty-one years in the reign of one of King Hammurabi's immediate successors. Hammurabi, or Amraphel, ruled from 2067 to 2025 B.C. Abraham on the other hand, according to the intervals of time given in Genesis and Exodus, was born in 2160 B.C. and entered Canaan in 2085 B.C., and the final destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah occurred in 2061 B.C. This is a date which falls right into Amraphel's reign.

ROYAL FINERY FROM ABRAHAM'S CITY. Recovered from a deathpit in the royal cemetery at Ur, this headdress belonged to Queen Shub-ad, buried, amidst the bodies of her maids of honour, more than a thousand years before Abraham lived. One of the oldest specimens known of the goldsmith's art, it is also an example of the astonishing height of achievement already reached by the forerunners of craftsmen who were contemporary with the Patriarch. It may be seen today in the British Museum.



ANOTHER "FLOOD" RECORD. Written in cuneiform script, near Ur, when Abraham was actually alive, the Blundell prism (above) affords evidence of the current traditional belief concerning the period of the Deluge. The catastrophe was held to have happened long before the Patriarch's time.

Ashmolean Museum, Oxford

SUCH a remarkable confirmation of Old Testament chronology beginning with Abraham, is only the first of a series which cover the succeeding eleven hundred years. They terminate with the fifth year of Rehoboam, son of Solomon, which coincides with the last year of the reign of Shishak, king of Egypt, according to entirely independent Egyptian chronology.

The many distractions associated with modern Bible study seem to have hindered the realization of this striking confirmation and settlement of Old Testament chronology, and the consequences that flow from it. For example, while before Abraham everything is vague and indefinite and the dates uncertain, yet from this patriarch onwards the sacred history is on much firmer ground, and supplies considerable evidence that it was carefully kept. There is a Jewish tradition that Abraham was actually the inventor of the alphabet.

The reference to the cities of the Plain, Sodom and Gomorrah, etc., furnishes food for inquiry as to whether their sites have been located. This cannot be said to be the case, although the Dead Sea and its surroundings supply evidence for the occurrence of the cataclysm which

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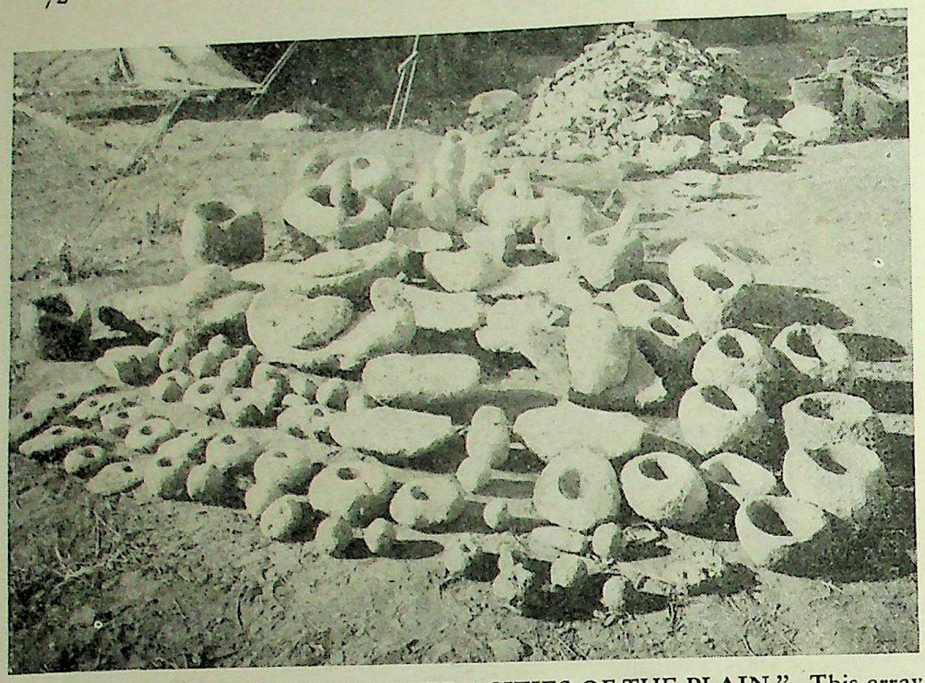
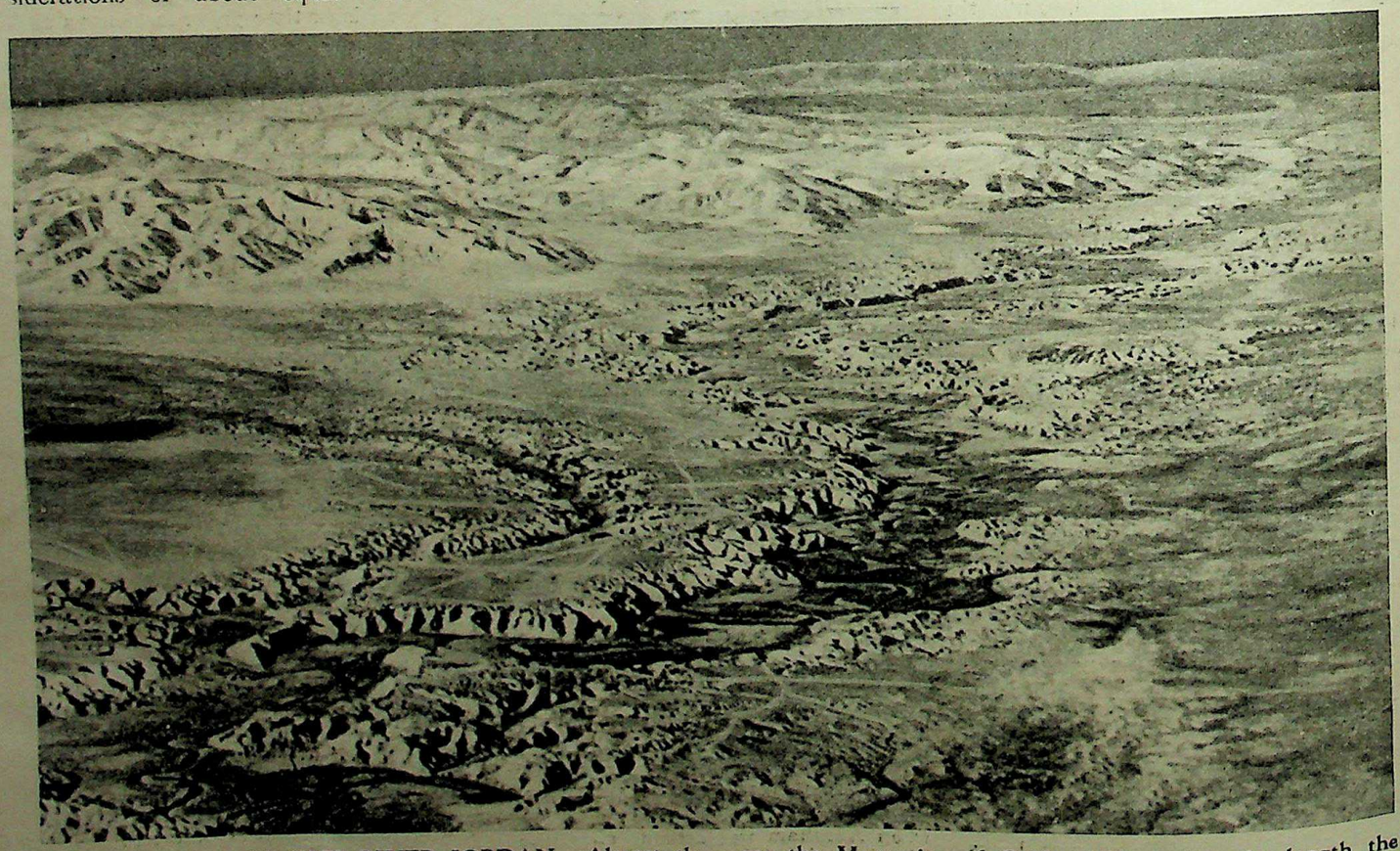


RETRIEVED FROM THE DESTROYED "CITIES OF THE PLAIN." This array of stone mortars, pestles, and other tools, was found on what may be the site of Sodom. Research and excavation have established that this part of Palestine was peopled and prosperous when Abraham came there shortly before its destruction. Then, as recorded in Genesis xix, 24, 25, "the Lord rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah, brimstone and fire . . . and he overthrew those cities and all the plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and that which grew upon the ground."

marked their disappearance. The fact of the matter is that the problem whether these cities were situated at the north end of the Dead Sea, or at the south end, is balanced by considerations of about equal value. The waters of the Dead Sea are becoming of increasing commercial importance in the extraction of bromine, potash, and other chemicals, and there is also talk of a sanatorium and bath house. It is possible, therefore, that as we become more familiar with its shores someone may light upon evidence of the remains of the Cities of the Plain. There is no doubt from the archaeological evidence that the whole Jordan valley, from the lake of Galilee downwards, was in a very prosperous condition in Abraham's time, before the cataclysm descended upon the lower end of it.

The impression one derives of the apparent barrenness of Canaan today is a very different one from the description in the Old Testament. People now talk derisively about "a land flowing with milk and honey." And yet there is plenty of evidence that once upon a time the country may have answered to that description. The cutting down of the timber on those now bare hills, which once were shaded by oaks, olives, and fig trees, caused both the depletion of the rainfall and the erosion of the soil. During the last five years the excavations of the Bible city of Lachish in south Palestine have been supplying object-lessons concerning the past and future possibilities of the surrounding low hill country. The prevalence of cup-shaped hollows, antedating Abraham, in the rock surfaces, suggests that olives once covered these barren hills, for the cups may have been hollowed out for extracting the oil from the berries. The valleys are now choked with the eroded soil from the hills, which would not have been washed down if there had been tree-roots to retain it. The deep and wide but dry river beds



AERIAL VIEW OF THE RIVER JORDAN. Almost the whole of the Jordan Valley is included in this panorama. The foreground is part of the deepest depression where it ends in the "round plain" north of the Dead Sea; in the far distance on the right, nearly 70 miles away, is the Sea of Galilee. Beyond are the Mountains of Galilee. Throughout its length the Valley lies below the level of the Mediterranean. The river, swift-flowing and winding, is but a narrow, turbid stream for most of the year. About April, it is flooded by the melting snows of Anti-Lebanon to a width of about seventy yards.

Photo. "The Times"

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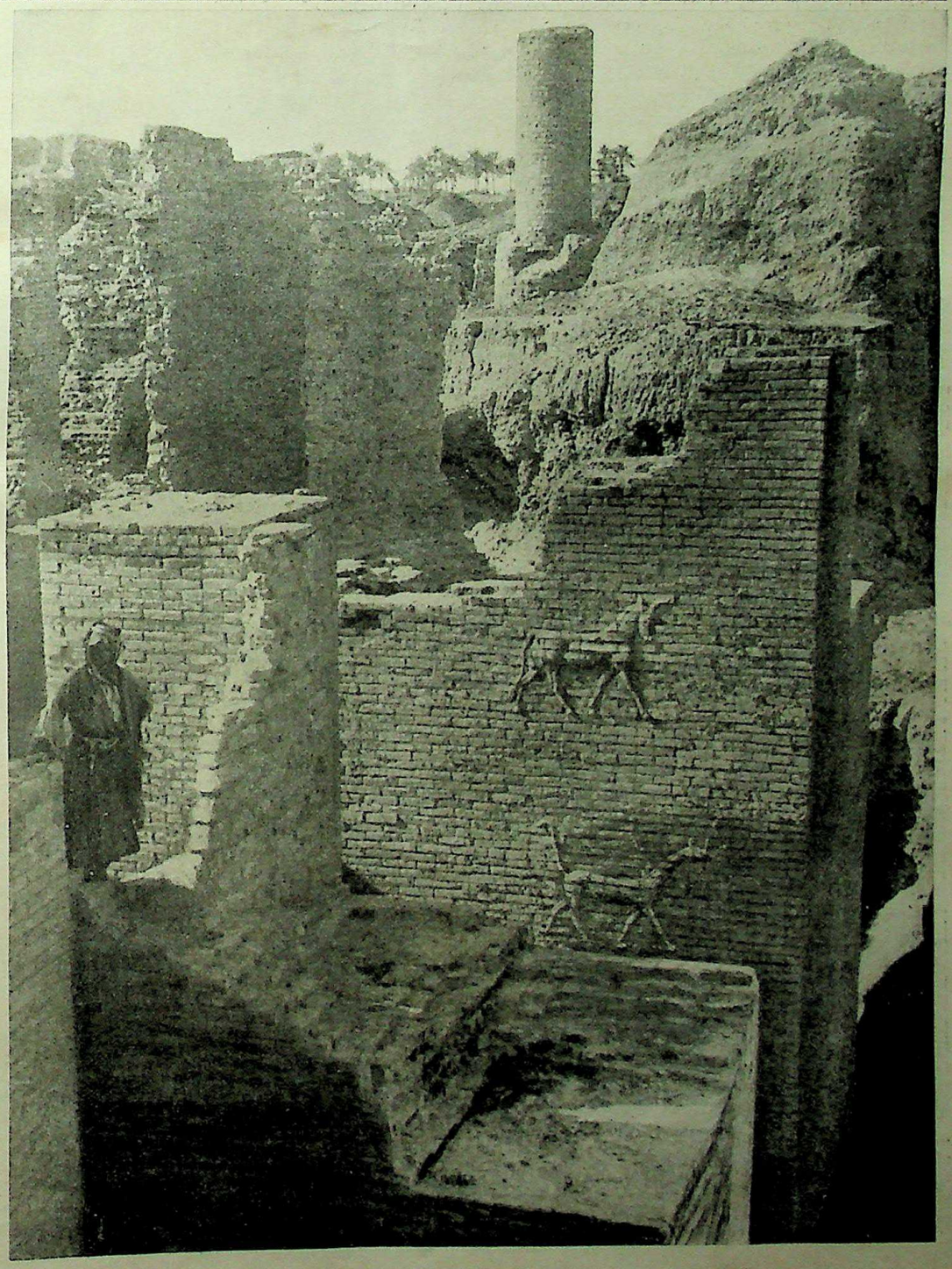

SITE OF BABEL

Pictured above is the ruined ziggurat, south of Babylon, known as Birs Nimrûd. Rising from the plain to a height of 150 feet, this jagged pile of masonry is sufficiently impressive to render plausible an identification with the Tower of Babel—"a tower whose top may reach unto heaven" (Genesis xi, 4).

Since the beginning of the 20th century, however, authorities are generally agreed that the site of Babel is within Babylon itself, that the Tower is the E-temenanki of E-Sagila, temple of Marduk, the crumbling walls of which are here seen on the right. Of the E-temenanki nothing is left but its moated base. There is record of its repair in Nebuchadnezzar's time (early 6th century B.C.): "I raised the summit of the Tower of stages at E-temenanki so that its top rivalled the heavens."

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supply evidence that there was once plenty of water. In Abraham's time his vast herds of sheep could have fed in abundance on green hills whose colours today, unclothed with vegetation, are yellow pink, and orange.

The mystery of how the irrigation of the Promised Land used to be conducted is solved by a visit to Java and Bali in the Dutch East Indies. When tourists approach these islands from the sea, they are struck by the prevalence of what appears to be snow on the summit of hills far below the line of perpetual snow. As the distance diminishes, the snow is seen to be white fleecy clouds. A brief stay in the islands familiarizes visitors with the tropical downpours of rain which descend from these clouds on the tops of the hills, and are guided down their slopes on to artificially-constructed terraces and channels. The prophecy concerning the future of Palestine is a guide to its past prosperity: "Upon every lofty mountain, and upon every high hill, there shall be rivers and streams of water" (Isaiah xxx, 25).

The ancient inhabitants of Canaan were fellaheen like the Egyptians, and like the Egyptians they carried out schemes of irrigation, which were simpler than those employed in the flat lands of Babylonia or the Nile.

But Abraham and his small army of herdmen kept to the grassy lowlands; he even seems to have shunned the civilization of the cities. Sir Flinders Petrie's excavation of Old Gaza, the seaport which traded with Egypt, and the neighbouring island of Crete, has revealed evidences of an advanced civilization which may be compared with that of Ur or of Haran. But Genesis makes no mention of it; or of any visit there from Abraham, although he would seem to have sojourned at one time and another but a few miles away.

Where the Patriarchs Are Buried

ON the outskirts of the city of Hebron is the Mosque of Machpelah, built over the cave which Abraham purchased from Ephron the Hittite, for the burying place of his wife Sarah, for that of himself and of his descendants. The legal procedure and even the legal document by which Abraham acquired this property are recited in Genesis xxiii. It will be seen that besides the cave Abraham purchased the field, and the trees that were in it. Some eleven or twelve centuries later, Shishak king of Egypt conquered Palestine. Among the list of places which he claims on his inscription to have captured is the "Field of Abraham." It is probable that the reference is to "the field of the cave of Machpelah."

For many generations the Mosque and its cave have been jealously guarded by Mahomedans, who venerate the memory of the "Father of the Faithful." King Edward VII, when he visited the Holy Land as the Prince of Wales in 1862, was permitted as a great privilege to enter the Mosque, but no one within the memory of man had ever been supposed to enter the cave beneath. A problem which once aroused a great deal of interest was, whether the bodies of the patriarchs still lay there undisturbed. In the case of Jacob, we read that he was embalmed in Egypt before burial at Machpelah.

Now the bodies of Egyptian Pharaohs and nobles who died as long ago as Jacob have been so preserved by this embalming that their faces are still recognizable. So there seemed a possibility that some of us might yet gaze upon the features of the patriarch Jacob. The opportunity occurred in the Great War, but under circumstances which did not admit of advantage being taken of it. The following extract from the diary (dated November 28, 1917) of Colonel Meinertzhagen, one of Lord Allenby's

"THE PLACE OF SICHEM." In the well-watered valley between Mount Gerizim and Mount Ebal, in Samaria, lies the town of Nablus where once Sichem, or Shechem, was situated. It is the most ancient of the sacred sites associated with the history of the Patriarchs. There Abraham built his first altar; there "his tent had been at the beginning" (Genesis xiii, 3,4); and there he "called on the name of the Lord." Jacob also encamped temporarily at Shechem, and to its green pastures his sons led their flocks. The present town is chiefly noted for its soap manufactories and as a centre of Moslem fanaticism.

Photo: American Colony in Jerusalem

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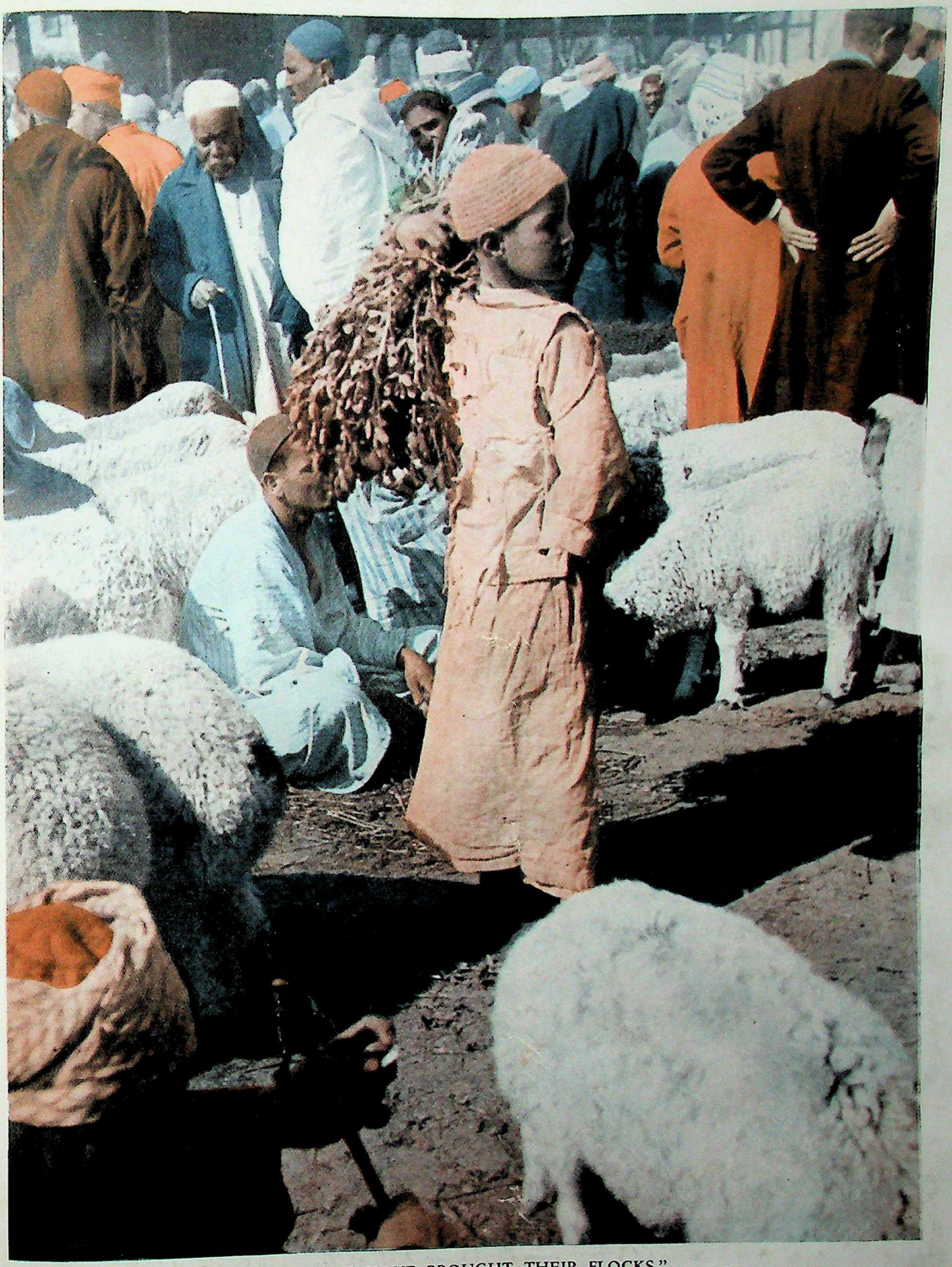

"THEY HAVE BROUGHT THEIR FLOCKS"

A bunch of herbage for his sheep is carried by the boy in this picture of the cattle market at Cairo. The flocks arrive from pastures near and far. Some of the finest grazing is on the still uncultivated salt marshes of what was once part of the Land of Goshen, north of Heliopolis (On). It was to this district that Jacob came with Joseph's brethren when they arrived in Egypt, after the famine in Canaan, and there they settled. The land was given them by Pharaoh when they told him (Genesis xlvii, 3) "Thy servants are shepherds, both we, and also our fathers."

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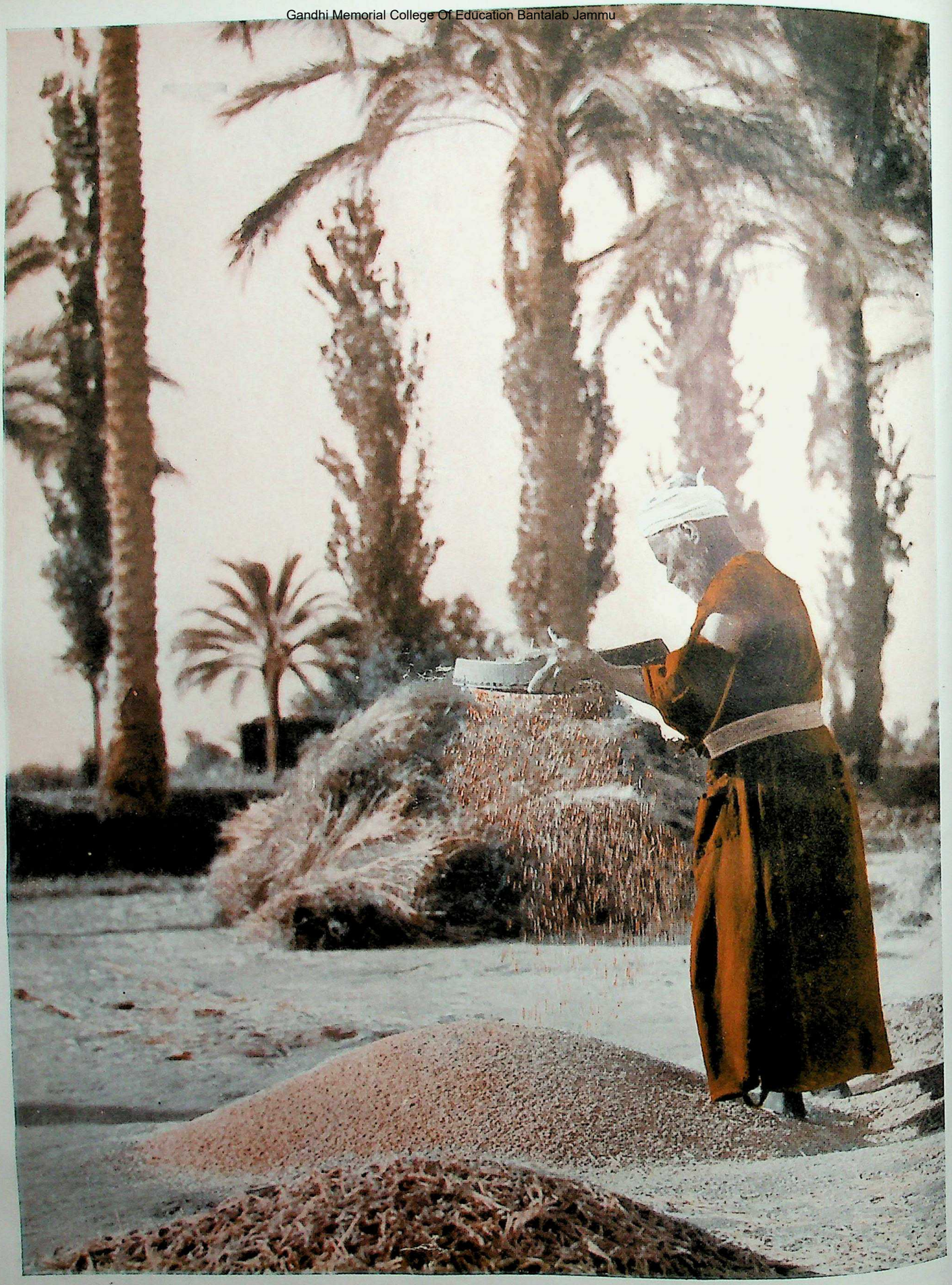

"BEHOLD, I HAVE HEARD THAT THERE IS CORN IN EGYPT"

This Egyptian farmer is sifting corn in the large shallow sieve used since the days of antiquity for this purpose. He stands on the open-air threshing-floor, scantily shaded by palms from the sun in the heat of harvest. The process of sifting is distinct from that of winnowing, or separating the crushed straw and chaff from the wheat or barley. Sifting is, as a rule, a household task in the Bible lands, performed by the women preparatory to grinding corn on a handmill before bread-making. The sieve is shaken vigorously until the remaining weeds, dust and chaff rise to the surface, are collected and heaped from the heap of refuse. After that the corn is picked over by hand.

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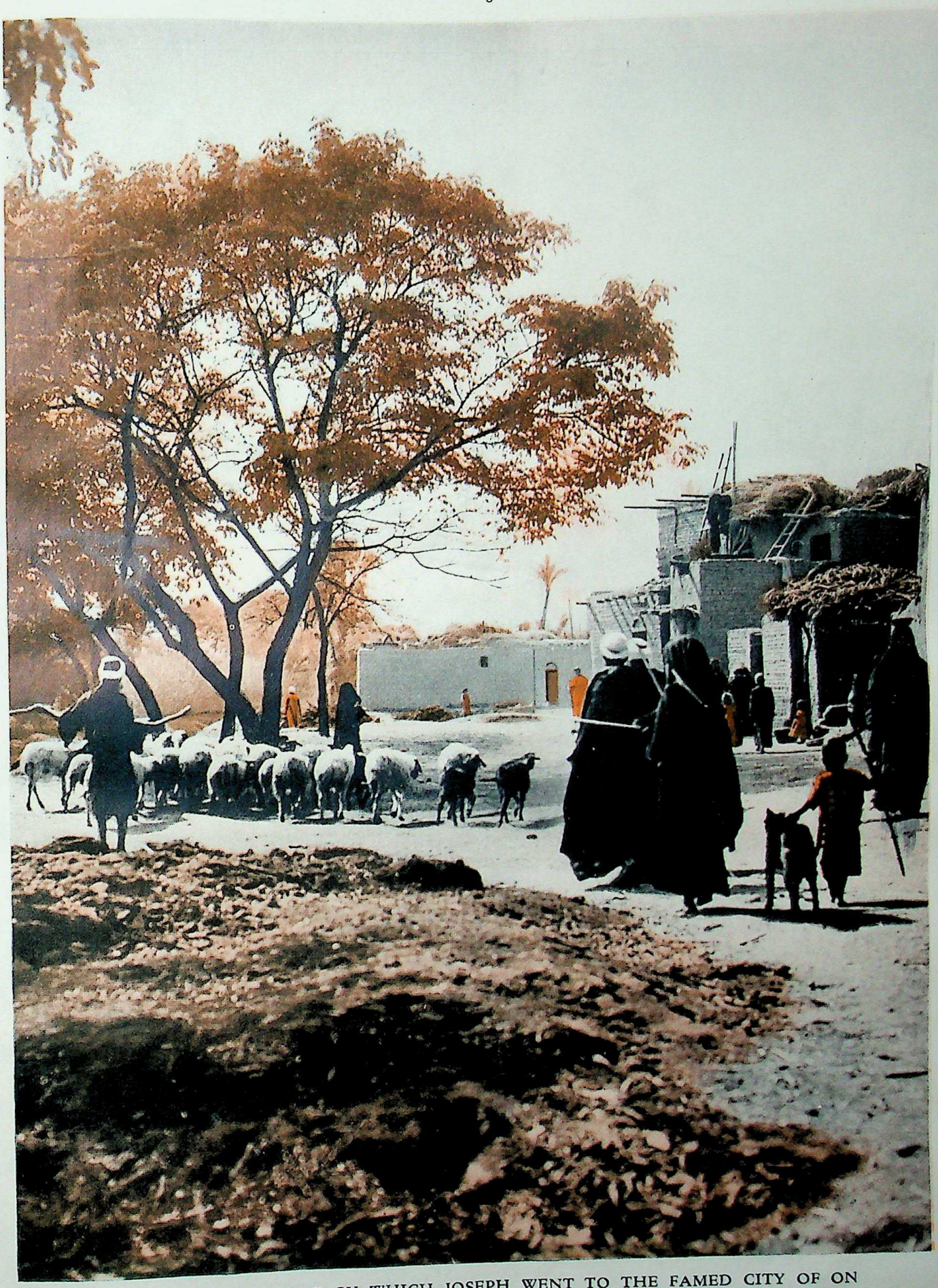

ROAD BY WHICH JOSEPH WENT TO THE FAMED CITY OF ON

When Pharaoh made Joseph viceroy of Egypt, " he gave him to wife Asenath the daughter of Poti-pherah priest of On. And Joseph went out over all the land of Egypt " (Genesis xli, 45). He probably traversed in his chariot this very road. Identical with Heliopolis, seven miles north-east of Cairo, On was a great seat of learning and centre of the worship of Ra, the sun-god. Attached to the temple was a renowned university, and the high-priest was an ecclesiastical dignitary of exalted position. In the eyes of the Egyptians, Joseph was therefore greatly honoured by his marriage to Asenath, who became the mother of his sons Manasseh and Ephraim.

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"AN HUNDRED MEASURES OF OIL" IN THE MARKET PLACE

A busy scene in Bethlehem is pictured here. The olive is still extensively cultivated in Palestine, as in Biblical times, and the oil, expressed from the fruit, is sold in metal containers. So valuable for practical usage in the East, oil is associated as a symbol of joy and gladness and in the ritual of the priestly code has a permanent place. Thus in Exodus xxv, 6, it is mentioned as one of the contributions to be demanded from the people by Moses in the appeal for materials for the service of God in the tabernacle: "Oil for the light, spices for anointing oil." The wild olive, available to the Israelites during their wanderings, yields a small and inferior fruit.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

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chief officers, has been most courteously supplied to the author

Motored through Beersheba and up the Jerusalem road to Hebron, my object being to try to get some sort of administration set up in this important centre immediately after our troops enter it. Our troops were holding a line just outside the town, but hearing that no enemy were within I went boldly into Hebron in my car and at once tried to find out where were the elders of the city. It was like a City of the Dead. I eventually got hold of a Jew and he told me all the city notables were hiding in the Mosque, so thither he conducted me but refused to pass beyond the entrance.

I walked in and found the building apparently deserted. Passing up a passage in the massive building I entered a court and on the left was a mosque vulgarly decorated with the usual ornaments. It appeared to be only half furnished, for I expect most of their good stuff had been hidden away. Finding nobody about I shouted out and, thinking I heard voices through an iron grid floor-door, I pulled it back and passed down a stone staircase into a chamber which was pitch-dark. Having only matches I could see little, but by lighting match after match, I searched all round for people, finding nothing but a stone coffin with spiral columns at each corner, all in stone. I sat on the coffin, lit my pipe, but was soon driven out by the unventilated atmosphere.

When things became normal in Hebron an examination of the Mosque was made by experts, but the Moslem guardians, now returned under British protection, refused to allow anyone to enter the cave again. Whether the bodies of the patriarchs are yet there still remains an open question.

There are no stories more perfect in the literature of our modern world than those of the Old Testament. Those concerning Joseph and his brethren are some of the most outstanding. They contain such an intimate knowledge of Egyptian life as illustrated on the monuments and tomb paintings that have survived about 4,000 years, that they must have been written at a very early period

The old idea that the Israelites were not a literary people has been thoroughly exploded by the recent excavations at Lachish. The earliest-known alphabetical script was long ago located in the peninsula of Sinai, where Moses led the Israelites after the Exodus from Egypt Specimens of it have now been found at Lachish, associated with objects which date it to within little more than a century of the death of Moses (*see* page 70)

It seems to be fairly obvious that when the Israelites under Joshua conquered Canaan they brought the Sinai script with them Taken in conjunction with the discovery of the Phoenician Hebrew script also at Lachish, it begins to look as though the Israelites always possessed facilities for literary expression superior to those of the other civilized races of antiquity

According to the chronology to which references have been made, Joseph must have first stood before Pharaoh about the year 1879 B.C. The narrative tells us that he was then thirty years old (Genesis xli 46), and we gather from Genesis xlvii, 9 that nine years later Jacob came down into Egypt. This event is placed in our chronology as having occurred in 1870 B.C., which would fall into the 16th Dynasty. But there is no evidence as to which of the Pharaohs was ruling at the time. The dates of the succession of the Hyksos kings are uncertain, but according to Petrie they ruled Egypt from 2371 to 1583 B.C. When the Hyksos were driven out of Egypt after the latter date, then the Pharaoh arose who knew not Joseph (Exodus i, 8) And well it might be so, for the Israelites were Hebrews by descent, and were thus distant relatives of the hated Hyksos, from whom the Pharaohs of the 18th Dynasty delivered the native Egyptians. On this basis the chronology given in the adjoining column is based.

A CHRONOLOGY OF THE PENTATEUCH

	B.C. (about)
The Flood	3200
Abraham born	2160
Abraham left Haran (Genesis xii, 4)	2085
Sodom and Gomorrah destroyed (Genesis xvii, 1)	2061
Isaac born (Genesis xxi, 5)	2060
Isaac married Rebekah (Genesis xxv, 20)	2020
Jacob and Esau born (Genesis xxv, 26)	2000
Abraham died (Genesis xxv, 7)	1985
Death of Isaac (Gen. xxxv, 28)	1880
Jacob went into Egypt (Genesis xlvii, 9)	1870
Children of Israel in Egypt (Exodus xii, 40)	
The Exodus from Egypt	1440
The Wandering in the Wilderness (Deut. ii, 7)	
Jericho destroyed by Joshua	1400

The above table has been compiled by Sir Charles Marston in accordance with the statements given in the Bible and taking as a starting-point the date given by Professor Garstang as being approximately that of the Fall of Jericho, i.e. 1400 B.C. In his view, astronomical calculations and archaeological evidence go to show that Hammurabi (the Amraphel, King of Shinar, of Genesis xiv, i) reigned 2067-2025 B.C., and so his reign would fall within the life of Abraham.

The Geography of Genesis

by REV. S. L. CAIGER, B.D.

MODERN methods have entirely revolutionized the study of geography. Let anyone who doubts this assertion compare the geography examination papers of today with those of twenty years ago, and he will be amazed at the huge folder with its maps, diagrams, photographs, and coloured charts which replaces the single sheet of printed questions familiar in his youth. There is a strange new fascination about the modern science of geography, a point and purpose which completely revitalize it as one of the most attractive handmaids to the science of life itself.

For geography is no longer a matter of memorizing physiographical outlines, finding places on the map, or learning off lists like "Lancashire, Lancaster, on the Lune." Today it is an appreciation of the earth on which we live as a real factor in the lives of men Through geography we learn to realize the influence of earth's natural features upon the progress of mankind, to observe how their energies have been so largely controlled by the mountains, rivers, seas, and climate of their environment, to trace in the dust of the world's immemorial highways the tramp of multitudes long silent, or to forecast the direction, now "Mankind has struck its tents and is once more on the march," which that march will probably take.

Our present purpose is to reconstruct the geographical background against which the great characters and peoples of Genesis lived, and moved and had their being. There is a unique importance about the study from this aspect. Like nothing else, it gives us a close-up view of those old-time saints and warriors. This little house we live in, is the one they lived in too. For though in most other respects the surroundings of today are so different from theirs, yet in its main geographical features the scene is very much the same

The "hills which stand about Jerusalem" now must have looked the same to Abraham four thousand years ago: the "River, that great river Euphrates" would still be recognized by him as a familiar friend: so would "the great and wide sea also," and the "valleys that stand so thick with corn that they laugh and sing" and the wilderness of sun-baked sand and the green pastures of Jordan and the moon and the stars above our twentieth-century heads. The self-same sun still rises in the same place over the mountains of Moab the same stars still guide the shepherds of Israel, and—for is it not the "unchanging East"?—it is still very much the same old world as that in which the Jew and Arab of the Old Testament strove for the vital wells and pasture lands of Palestine.

It is all "as old as the hills"!

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Yet the shape of the world *does* change, however slowly. Though the Book of Genesis is in the main concerned with the story of the Hebrews commencing with Abraham four milleniums ago, during which period changes in the earth's surface have been comparatively inconsiderable, yet in the first eleven chapters of introduction the book goes back far beyond Abraham, beyond the Flood, beyond the Garden of Eden, beyond Adam, right back to God alone knows how many thousands or millions of years before the dawn of history. During those incredibly remote aeons, of course, the whole surface of the globe and everything upon it changed completely, catastrophically. The very thought of a "geography" of the early chapters of Genesis is fantastic!

At this remote period we can be certain of nothing. Neither the Bible nor modern science has given us any definite information, for example, as to the precise locality where human life first emerged. We know enough to realize, however, that a map of the world as it was in the era of the First Man would have been utterly useless to a traveller in the days of Abraham. Since the beginning of life, vast cataclysms have shaken and torn the earth's crust, lands once joined have been sundered by the sea, whole continents of which the very memory has perished, have been submerged beneath the waves.

Lost Continent of Atlantis

FOR instance, a persistent tradition of Egyptian origin tells of a vast Lost Continent, named Atlantis, which once teemed with life in the middle of the now blank Atlantic. There are those who accept this tradition, and look upon the prehistoric Cro-Magnon race, whose remains have been found in the caverns of France and Spain, as the sole survivors of an incredible catastrophe which drowned their native land beneath the sea.

Great creeping glaciers, at any rate, were continually changing the geographical features of prehistoric days, carving deep valleys, levelling mountain peaks, propelling vast avalanches of molten ice and tumbled boulder upon the quivering plains. Although it is usually agreed that the Flood of Genesis was that historic river-inundation whose mark has been discovered by Woolley in Babylonia, yet there are some who think that so world-wide a devastation could only have been caused by a sudden dissolution of the glaciers from the North. It is impossible to say.

Where was the Garden of Eden?

ALL memory of the geographical features of those remote ages seems to have perished even from the earliest traditions of men. When the Book of Genesis first explicitly mentions a locality by its geographical name, we seem to have reached a period at which the human species has settled down, in a comparatively advanced stage of development, somewhere upon the sub-tropical parallel running through North Africa, Egypt, Arabia, and Mesopotamia. Here at last, after endless migrations, humanity seems to have found a nursery and a home.

The Biblical tradition to which we refer is found in the delineation of Eden in Genesis ii, 10-14. This may well be the product of a dim memory of the delight with which Primitive Man, weary of his reindeer and mammoth-hunting in the icebound North, alighted like a dove upon the fertile valleys and grassy pasturelands of his new home "eastward in Eden."

The attempt has often been made to locate the Garden of Eden upon a definite site, as though it were a sort of rose-garden on a gentleman's estate. But the indications in Genesis seem to support the interpretation that Paradise was an extensive tract of country where humanity could spread itself at ease. The rivers of Eden, so we are told in Genesis ii, 11-14, watered the "whole lands" of Havilah, Cush, Assyria, and Mesopotamia.

One of the difficulties of interpreting ancient place-names, however, is that those names have often changed beyond recognition in the course of the centuries. If within a few short years we can witness St. Petersburg change to Petrograd and again to Leningrad, what wonder if the names in Genesis should have lost their identity? Sir Charles Marston has suggested one or two solutions of this vexed question of the site of Paradise. We venture to add yet another.

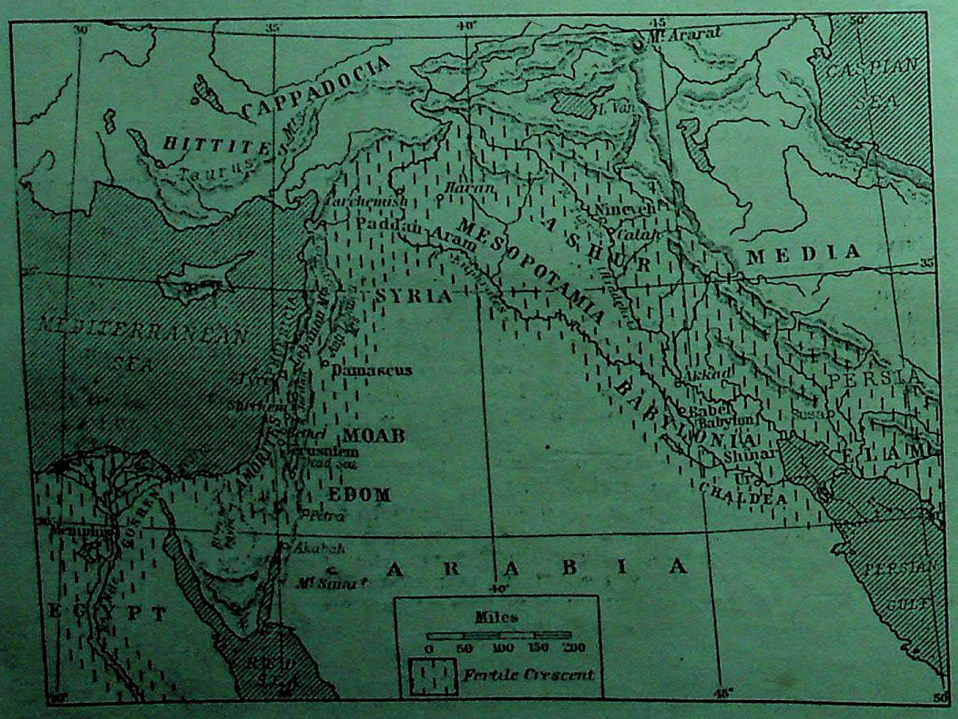
The Garden of Eden, we are told, was watered by four rivers, all of which originated in one great Unnamed River, apparently intended as the divine source of all fresh water, the "waters that were above the firmament." These four rivers (Pishon, Gihon, Hiddekel, and Euphrates) appear to be regarded as the principal rivers of the then inhabited world. On the East and North flow the Euphrates and the Hiddekel (Tigris), which water Babylonia and Assyria. On the West and South (presumably) are the Gihon "which compasseth the whole land of Cush," and the Pishon, "which compasseth the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold."

The identity of these two latter rivers is uncertain, but Cush in the Bible usually stands for Upper Egypt or Ethiopia, and is so translated in Genesis, and the Gihon is most probably the Nile. Havilah is coupled with it more than once, so that the Pishon may be somewhere not far away. Perhaps as a parallel to Tigris and Euphrates, we are to understand the Blue Nile and the White.

In those days, as Sir Charles Marston remarks in his chapter on the Archaeology of Genesis (p. 67), the country included within these rivers was far more like a paradise on earth than it is today. The barren deserts which we now associate with this tract of land were then well-watered forest and pasture-land, where man found life ideally easy to sustain.

After the Flood Had Subsided

THE next geographical indication given in Genesis is that Noah and his family descended from the ark, after the subsidence of the Flood, upon a peak of Ararat, in the Taurus mountains in Armenia. Tradition finds the resting place of the ark on the 17,000 foot peak of Mount Massis,



The Fertile Crescent around the desert from the Persian Gulf to the Nile

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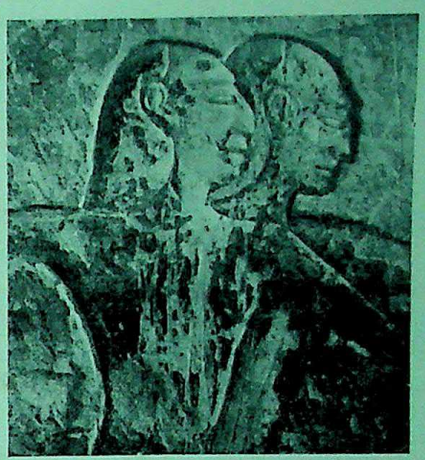
still called by the Persians "The mountain of Noah." From this centre Noah's sons Shem, Ham, and Japheth, spread South, East, and West to replenish the earth with its various races of men (*see* chapter x). These descendants of Noah, and their further progeny, are noted as the "eponymous ancestors" of the race or tribe named after them. Shem, for example, is the father of the Shem-itic, or Semitic race.

We are now on the threshold of historical geography, and the names given in the Bible become more certainly identifiable. Nimrod, for instance, is said to have founded the cities of Babel (Babylon), Erech, and Calneh in the land of Shinar (Mesopotamia), as well as Nineveh and Calah in Assyria. All these sites have now been excavated, and their exact location is well known. Incidentally, the excavations have revealed the almost incredibly remote date of their foundation, preceding Abraham by many centuries. And we can now point to the actual foundation stones of the Tower of Babel, the great E-temenanki near the E-Sagila, within the walls of Babylon itself, and perhaps the oldest temple in the world. Remains of this temple are illustrated in page 73.

With Abraham we enter upon the definitely "historic" period of Genesis. Henceforward the Biblical narrative is supported and supplemented quite remarkably, as Sir Charles Marston has shown in the previous chapter, by archaeological research. The world has settled down into a configuration very much the same as that of our own times. A modern atlas would have proved quite useful to the patriarchs in all their wanderings. Perhaps, indeed, they had maps of their own already. An Egyptian map of the Sinaitic peninsula, drawn on papyrus, and dating from a time anterior to Moses, is still extant. At all events, the unmistakable tracks of trade routes and much evidence of the far-flung net of ancient commerce which has been recently discovered by excavation, all provide proof that men had a useful working knowledge of the geography of the ancient world during the second millenium B.C.



CONTEMPORARY PORTRAITS OF "THE SONS OF HETH." Coming from the cold uplands of Eastern Cappadocia, the warlike Hittites in their early self-sculptured portraits are shown warmly attired. They wear close-fitting jerkins, high woollen caps and snowshoes with upturned toes As portrayed by Egyptian artists they appear to have had the type of beardless face, with high cheekbones and prominent nose, seen on the right. Their power reached its zenith in the reign of Rameses II.

Berlin Museum; photo, right, Liverpool Institute of Archaeology

Abraham's native city, Ur of the Chaldees (*see* page 69), is now located on clear archaeological evidence at El Mughair (El Mukkayar), on the lower Euphrates in Southern Babylonia. We must be prepared, however, to find that ancient coast-lines, especially at the estuaries of great rivers, have changed considerably in more modern times. The silting of gravel and mud at the mouth of the Euphrates during a period of four thousand years has pushed the northern shore of the Persian Gulf much further South than it used to be. The ancient Ur, in fact, must then have been nearer to the sea, and virtually at the base of what has been vividly termed the "Fertile Crescent" of the ancient world (*see* page 80).

Look at a map of the Near East, tinted in colours by preference, and you will notice a great green curve of riverine lowlands stretching first North along the valleys of the

"THE MOUNTAINS OF ARARAT." The traditional landing place of the ark is the larger snowclad summit of the Massis, called by the Persians Koh-i-Nuh, the mountain of Noah. In Genesis viii, 4, we read: "the ark rested in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, upon the mountains of Ararat." By a misunderstanding of the text the name of the district of Ararat, later part of Armenia, was transferred to the two peaks of this mountain. Great Ararat rises to a height of about 17,000 feet, while Little Ararat's summit is 4,000 feet lower. They are about seven miles apart.

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THE OAK OF MAMRE. Nothing is left but the branching trunk of the traditional "Oak of Abraham," revered since the 16th century and believed to mark the site of the patriarch's encampment "in the plain of Mamre, which is in Hebron." There he dispensed hospitality to the heavenly visitors and said to them "rest yourselves under the tree" (Genesis xiii, 18; xviii, 4).

Photo American Colony in Jerusalem

Euphrates and Tigris, then bending westwards along the Upper Euphrates until it joins the descending stream of the Orontes, is continued along the defile of the Jordan, and finally plunges into the opulent valley of the Nile. This is the famous "Fertile Crescent" of the modern geographer.

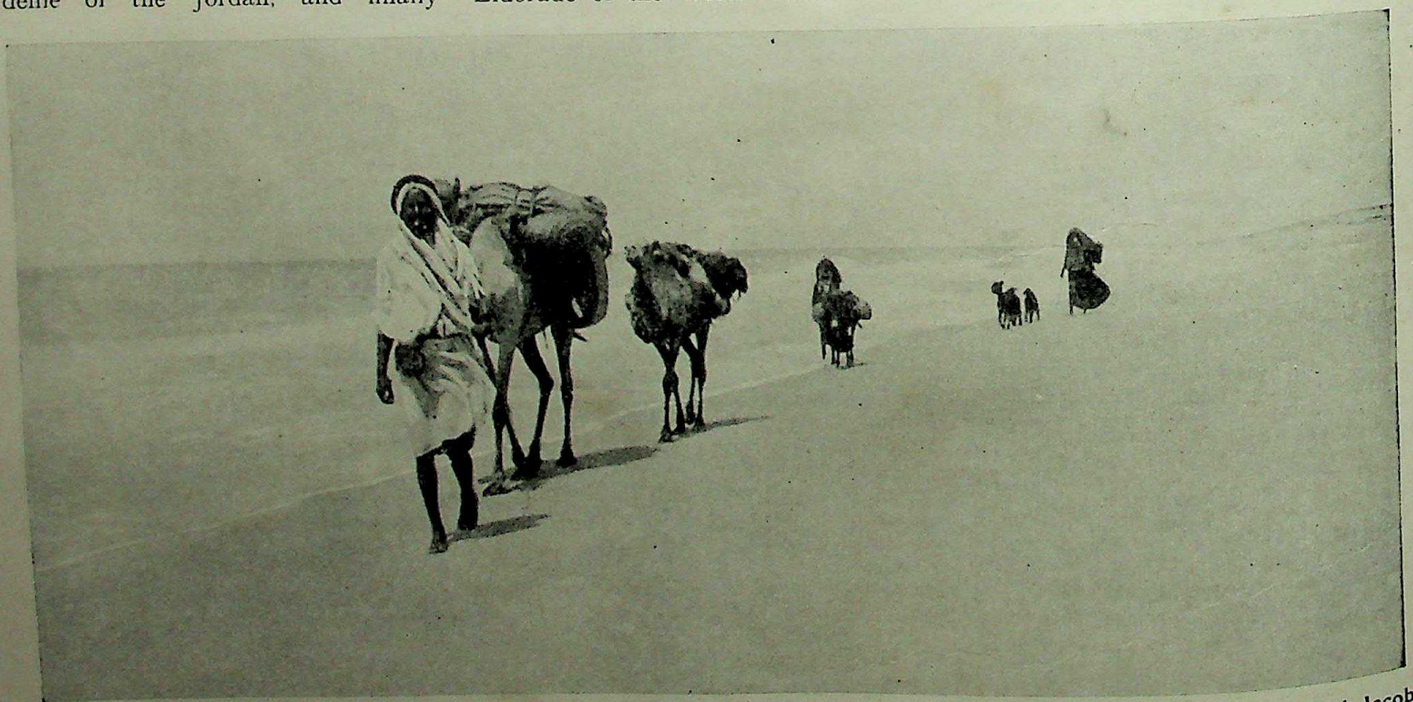
It is bounded on either side, you will notice, by almost impassable barriers such as the yellow desert, brown mountains, or the deep blue sea. It formed, therefore, a natural avenue along which the waves of prehistoric man flowed to and fro in his search for food, pasturage, and the society of his kind. In later times it remained the obvious corridor connecting East and West, where the great highway from Egypt to Babylon continually resounded with the tramp of armies or the tinkle of the merchants' caravans. Thus the Fertile Crescent—it is more like a horse-shoe or a pot-hook, really—furnishes the key to a great deal of the history of the ancient world.

Notice, for example, with what unconscious verisimilitude the story of Genesis shows us Abraham's Hebrews trekking along this well-worn path from Babylonia to the Eldorado of the West. From Ur he drives his caravan northward along the Euphrates valley to Haran in Syria, thence across to the green strip of Jordan, and so to Shechem and Bethel in the land which was then (whatever it may be today) veritably a "land flowing with milk and honey." Then "Abram journeyed, going on still towards the South" (Genesis xii, 9), until he came to Hebron and Egypt, thus completing his circuit of the Fertile Crescent.

We read of him afterwards returning to the pleasant plains of the Negeb, where he became "very rich in cattle, in silver, and in gold" (xiii, 2)—a statement which can only mean that he engaged in that active commercial intercourse with the surrounding peoples of which archaeology has discovered so many proofs at a hundred trading-stations along this crowded Broadway of the East. For centuries previous to Abraham, indeed, the Canaanites' a highly organized nation of agriculturalists and city-dwellers had traded with Babylonia and Egypt. Already Palestine had become the viaduct or bridge between the two greatest rival nations of antiquity—an excessively uncomfortable position, as she found to her cost, whenever, as frequently happened, one or other of the rivals decided to blow up the bridge. No wonder that Palestine, with such a geography, became "the cockpit of the ancient world"!

Sodom and Gomorrah

POSSIBLY it was an attempt to gain control of this bridge which occasioned the Palestinian campaign of King Amraphel (Hammurabi) and his Mesopotamian allies, of which we read in Genesis xiv. The earliest



THE OLD ROAD EAST OF EGYPT. An Arab and his family plod the highway which from time immemorial has linked Palestine with Egypt. Their pace is set at about 2½ miles an hour, by the first camel's easy shambling trot. At the rear a woman drives the goat, indispensable for milk. On this road Joseph's brethren went down to buy corn, and Jacob journeyed with all he had "in the wagons which Joseph had sent to carry him" (Genesis xlv, 27) into Egypt. There he died, and back by this same road a great company went to bury him in the sepulchre of Machpelah, at Hebron in Canaan.

Photo, courtesy of Major O. S. Jarvis

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cuneiform records mention similar expeditions from Babylonia to the "Great Sea of the Setting Sun" (the Mediterranean), and the naive interest with which those Eastern monarchs saw "sea-horses" (dolphins ?) for the first time in their lives, and hunted them from boats. The "Land of Amurru" (Amorites) was indeed well worth raiding, with its many prosperous cities, its granaries, vineyards, olive gardens, flocks, and the accumulated riches won by commerce.

The site of this battle, in the Vale of Siddim, which was "full of slime-pits" (xiv, 10), may perhaps be located at the lower end of the Dead Sea (*see* page 82). At that time it extended much further south than it does today, and petered out indeterminately in a terrain of brine-sodden morass, which would certainly have embogged the chariots of Chedorlaomer's Elamite cavalry.

There are difficulties, as Sir Charles Marston points out, in the identification of Sodom and Gomorrah, but on the whole it seems probable that they too were situated not far from the Vale of Siddim at the southern extremity of the Dead Sea. It may well be that the reason why modern excavation has so far failed to identify these Lost Cities is that their ruins lie buried beneath the waves.

The site of Melchizedek's Salem (xiv, 18) is of course well-known, for it is none other than Jerusalem, the Uru-Salem of the Tell-el-Amarna Tablets. Excavation on the southern area of Jerusalem, the "Ophel" of David's city (now outside the city walls), has established the existence of a city upon this rocky eminence founded early in the Bronze Age, long before the days of Abraham. Indeed Jerusalem is named in Egyptian records as early as 2500 B.C., when it was already of importance, not only as a military post but as a Holy City. For Uru-Salem means the City of the God of Peace, a God in whom, as Genesis tells us, Abraham recognized many of the attributes of his own Jehovah.

The Homeland of the Hittites

AMONGST the nations with which the patriarchs came into contact were the "Children of Heth," otherwise called the Hittites. These must have been an advance-guard of the great Hittite invasions which soon afterwards swooped from the north Hun-like upon this Italy of the East.

The re-discovery of this long-forgotten people is one of the major triumphs of modern excavation, and carries our discussion of the geography of Genesis far up into the wild mountains of Cappadocia, not hitherto reckoned as among the "Bible Lands." Discoveries at Boghaz Keui (the Hittite capital on the river Halys), Kara Eyuk, Senjirli, Carchemish on the Upper Euphrates, and many other outlandish sites have almost embarrassed the scholar with information about the people whose women-folk made Jacob's mother "weary of her life" (Genesis xxvii, 46).

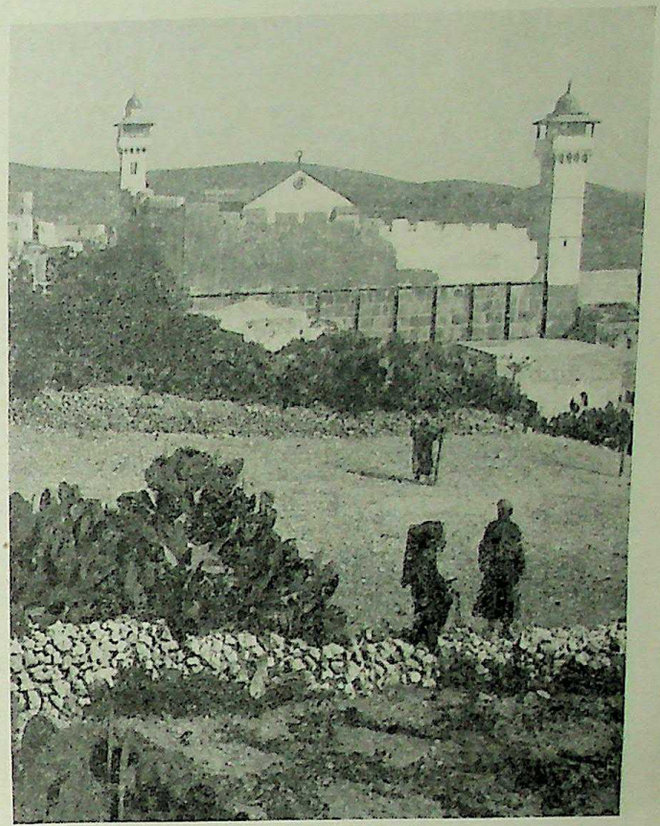
Contemporary portraits (*see* p. 81) show the Hittites as a sturdy muscular folk, clean-shaven, with Mongolian cheek-bones and a Jewish nose, heavily armed, and wearing the peculiar snow-shoe with upturned toe, and the fingerless mittens, still favoured by the mountaineers of Cappadocia.

No wonder the denizens of those bleak and barren uplands should look with covetous eyes upon the "Land flowing with milk and honey," and still more upon the tempting prize which Egypt offered to their glittering swords. It is believed, in fact, that Hittites formed a strong element among the Hyksos "shepherd-kings" who, about the time of Abraham, invaded and for some centuries actually held possession of the kingdom of Lower Egypt.

With the story of Joseph we are taken back once more—and this time for a long sojourn of four hundred years—to the Land of Egypt. By this time the reigning Pharaoh was undoubtedly one of the Hyksos or Shepherd-Kings above mentioned, whose capital, where Joseph spent so much of his time, was fixed at Avaris (near Pelusium) on the Nile Delta.

In this position, the Hyksos fortress commanded that famous highway, the "Way of the Philistines," which led from Egypt along the Maritime Plain of Palestine through the Valley of Jezreel to Damascus and so down the Fertile Crescent to Babylon itself. One of the most interesting volumes still waiting to be written would deal with the Roads of the Bible and their influence on history. And of all these roads none would receive greater attention than this primeval highway from Egypt to the East, this crowded corridor of merchandise and war, this vital artery of inter-communication whose surface has been cemented for six thousand years with the blood of men who died for its control.

From a rise in this Great North Road Joseph in chains first saw the gleaming pinnacles of Pharaoh's palace; along it wended the caravans of Jacob and all his family, seeking a new home under the shadow of the king's favourite. Back by this same road, saluted no doubt by the many vassal fortresses which protected it en route, moved the sad yet stately equipage which bore the mummified corpse of Jacob, and later the mortal remains of Joseph himself, to their last resting place in the Old Country.



THE MOSQUE OF MACHPELAH. Above the cave of Machpelah where Sarah was buried by her husband, and subsequently Abraham himself, Isaac, Rebekah, Leah and Jacob were interred, is a walled enclosure within which is a mosque, parts of which are said to date from the 12th century. (*See* illustrations, pp. 33,43). The entrances to the cave are in the floor of the building.

Photo. American Colony in Jerusalem

SO Genesis closes, leaving the Ten Tribes of Israel after Joseph's death still sojourning in the "Land of Rameses." At this time, under the kindly rule of their kinsmen the Shepherd-Kings, the Israelites were hospitably treated by their hosts, being settled in the pleasant pasture-lands of Goshen (*see* page 114).

The "Land of Goshen" was that well-watered district between the lower reaches of the Nile and the modern Suez Canal, now called the Wady Tumulat. Here was every comfort and necessity of life both for man and beast. Here were the only corn-lands of the ancient East which never failed, the granary of the world whither all men fled in time of famine, as many of the hieroglyphic records tell. And great was the power of the Pharaoh's Grand Viziers who, like Joseph, had the privilege of dispensing the staff of life.

Here too was pasture for the sheep and goats and cattle which the Children of Israel still loved to tend. Very appropriate in this connection is the inscription on an Egyptian tomb, where a drove of cattle imported into Egypt is given this promise: *Once ye trod the Syrian sands: now here in Egypt ye shall feed in green pastures.*

So our study of the geography of Genesis helps us to visualize the shape of things that were, and to foreshorten the long centuries which divide us from the past. We are linked with Abraham by the everlasting hills.

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LITERARY BEAUTY OF THE BIBLE. III

Majestic Words from Exodus

IN addition to prose narrative and poetry, the early literature of the Hebrews took another form. The first Biblical records of a code of law are contained in Exodus. The Ten Words or decalogue are powerfully uttered at the beginning of the "Book of the Covenant," contained in chapters xx-xxiii. The ideals set forth in this are the ethical source and authority of the vast bulk of rabbinical writings frequently alluded to in the Bible as "the law."

EXODUS has been called the world's greatest epic of deliverance. Divided into two principal parts—adventurous travel history of the Israelites from Egypt to Sinai, and the promulgation of the Ten Commandments—the book is a well organized compilation. Continuing the narrative of Genesis, the national life is described with religious fervour and perceptive passages of inspired beauty. Cloud and fire, quake and thunderstorm enhance the solemnity of the giving of the law. Concentration upon the idea of God's direction throughout, and the outstanding portrayal which emerges of Moses, as leader of his people and greatest of Hebrew law-givers, unifies the two main sections of the book.

A FINE poem, part of which is quoted below, celebrates the rescue of the Israelites from their Egyptian pursuers across the Red Sea. Use of short similes is a feature of Biblical poetry. In this triumphal song of praise we have, for instance, "as a stone," "as stubble," "upright as an heap." Corporeal figures of speech are employed to express the omnipotence of God. In such phrases as "with the blast of thy nostrils" and "Thou didst blow with thy wind," burst forth the primitive poet's exultant personification of sublime majesty.

THE BURNING BUSH

iii, 1—6

NOW Moses kept the flock of Jethro his father in law, the priest of Midian: and he led the flock to the backside of the desert, and came to the mountain of God, even to Horeb. And the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush: and he looked, and behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed. And Moses said, I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt.

And when the Lord saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here am I. And he said, Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground. Moreover he said, I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moses hid his face.

RED SEA SONG

xv, 1—11

I WILL sing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously:
The horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea.
The Lord is my strength and song,
And he is become my salvation:
He is my God, and I will prepare him an habitation;
My father's God, and I will exalt him.
The Lord is a man of war:
The Lord is his name.
Pharaoh's chariots and his host hath he cast into the sea:
His chosen captains also are drowned in the Red sea.
The depths have covered them
They sank into the bottom as a stone.
Thy right hand, O Lord, is become glorious in power:
Thy right hand, O Lord, hath dashed in pieces the enemy.
And in the greatness of thine excellency thou hast overthrown them that rose up against thee:
Thou sentest forth thy wrath, which consumed them as stubble.
And with the blast of thy nostrils the waters were gathered together.
The floods stood upright as an heap,
And the depths were congealed in the heart of the sea.
The enemy said, I will pursue, I will overtake,
I will divide the spoil; my lust shall be satisfied upon them;
I will draw my sword, my hand shall destroy them.
Thou didst blow with thy wind, the sea covered them:
They sank as lead in the mighty waters.
Who is like unto thee, O Lord, among the gods?
Who is like thee, glorious in holiness,
Fearful in praises, doing wonders?

THUNDERS OF SINAI

xix, 16—19; xx, 18—21

AND it came to pass on the third day in the morning that there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud: so that all the people that was in the camp trembled. And Moses brought forth the people out of the camp to meet with God; and they stood at the nether part of the mount. And mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire: and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly

And when the voice of the trumpet sounded long, and waxed louder and louder, Moses spake, and God answered him by a voice.

And all the people saw the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking; and when the people saw it, they removed, and stood afar off. And they said unto Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die.

And Moses said unto the people, Fear not: for God is come to prove you, and that his fear may be before your faces, that ye sin not.

And the people stood afar off, and Moses drew near unto the thick darkness where God was.

THE DECALOGUE

xx, 1, 3—17

AND God spake all these words, saying,

Thou shalt have no other gods before me.

Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; and shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.

Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.

Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.

Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.

Thou shalt not kill.

Thou shalt not commit adultery.

Thou shalt not steal.

Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.

Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's.

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Exodus

I

The Book in Outline

Israel's Departure from the Land of their Oppression

by REV. ALEXANDER J. GRIEVE, M.A., D.D.

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IN the second book of the Pentateuch we are on firmer historical ground than in the first. The sacred writers who compiled the traditions of the Hebrew people have now advanced from the dim and misty age of the patriarchs and reached that stage where Israel begins to be conscious of its divine destiny. One of the most significant words spoken by Jehovah to Moses is found in iv, 22, "Thus saith the Lord, Israel is my son, even my firstborn." This conception of the Hebrew tribes as a "peculiar people" is developed as the book proceeds. It is for His "firstborn" that Jehovah performs His "mighty acts"—in His overthrow of the Pharaoh, the miraculous deliverance at the "Red" Sea, and the equally marvellous means by which the host was sustained in the wilderness.

These experiences naturally made an indelible impression on the Israelites and were handed on from generation to generation, finding immortal expression in several psalms. Added to them was the revelation at Sinai—"Who is there of all flesh," says Moses in a later book (Deuteronomy v, 26), "that hath heard the voice of the living God speaking out of the midst of the fire, as we have, and lived?" In return for all this, Jehovah asked of Israel recognition of Himself as its only deity, obedience to His commandments, loyalty and good faith. One of the most striking features of the book is its revelation of the nature of Israel's God—"merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin" (xxxiv, 6f). And the dominant note of the whole book is the covenant made between Jehovah and His people (cf xxiv, 6–8, xxxiv, 10).

Greatest Leader of the Hebrew People

THE gain in historicity is obvious also when we compare the figures of the patriarchal age with the outstanding personality of Moses. The narrative shows clearly the impress of this great man not only upon his own age but upon the whole history of his people. He is represented not only as their fearless spokesman and champion, their guide and generalissimo, but also as the author, under God, of all their legislation, moral and ritual. The other figures in the story, Aaron and Miriam, Jethro and Hur, and even Joshua are quite overwhelmed by his commanding stature.

Exodus falls into two clearly marked divisions: the departure of Israel from Egypt and its journey to Sinai (Chapters i-xviii); and the giving of the law at Sinai (Chapters xix-xl).

It will be seen even from the synopsis given in page 87 that the material of the book is of varied character. In addition to the narrative strata we have large blocks which are concerned with ethical and ritual injunctions and these are not always kept apart from the story proper. In Chapter xii, for example, the particular interest of one of the many editors who had a share in the record (for the growth of the Pentateuch, including that of Exodus, may be compared to that of a great cathedral church) has led him to weave into the story of the final plague (the death of the firstborn), the ceremonial minutiae of Passover and *Mazzoth*. It is in the latter half of the book that this interweaving of history and law makes analysis most difficult.

A New King which Knew not Joseph

THE opening chapter discloses a scene very different from that of the end of Genesis. Instead of a people enjoying prosperity and honour, we find a people oppressed and subjugated by the new dynasty that now ruled in Egypt. "And the Egyptians made the children of Israel to serve with rigour: and they made their lives bitter with hard bondage in mortar and in brick, and in all manner of service in the field." To break their spirit they were subjected to forced labour, and to check their numbers a royal edict enjoined the Hebrew midwives to kill all new-born boys. This edict being disregarded, a more general order was issued that all Hebrew male infants were to be drowned in the Nile.

Two parents (Amram and Jochebed), after hiding their baby for three months, consigned him to the river in a little crib made of papyrus leaves. He was found by the king's daughter, who adopted him, engaged his mother as a nurse, named him Moses, and brought him up as her own son. Grown to man's estate, he one day found an Egyptian striking a Hebrew; and, making sure that he was unobserved, killed and buried the bully. But such an act could not remain a secret, as he found, when on the morrow he interposed in a dispute between two Hebrews. News of it reached the Pharaoh's ears, and to avoid his wrath Moses had to flee the country. He went eastward to Midian, and, through rendering assistance to some women drawing water, found a home with Jethro (or Reuel) their father, the ruling priest of the district. For some time he served as Jethro's shepherd, and he married his daughter Zipporah.

While following his occupation a divine visitation summoned him to the task which his parentage, upbringing and character had all foreshadowed. He

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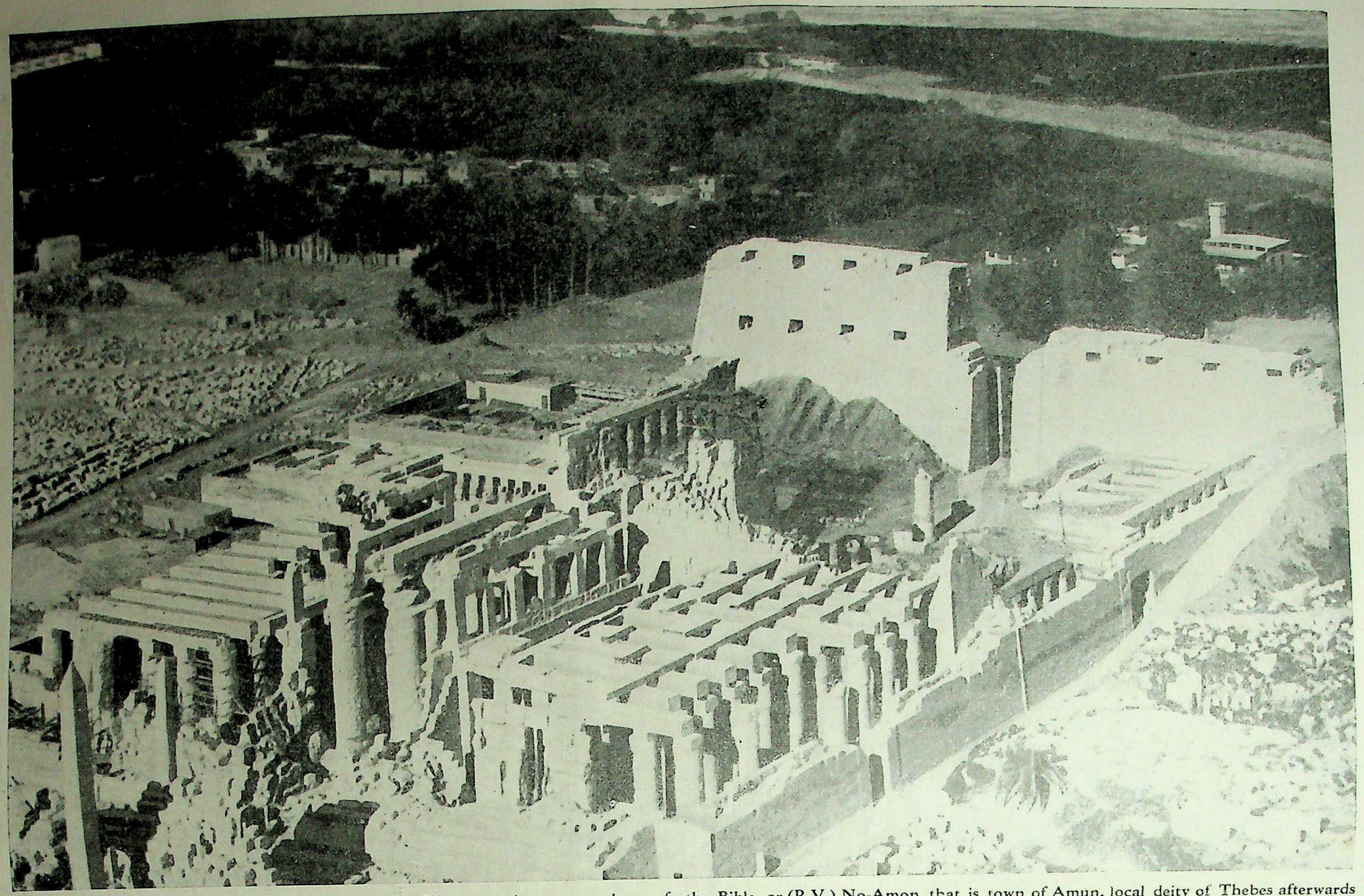

RAISED BY PHARAOHS OF THE BIBLE. The most important place of worship in Egypt for six centuries from 1550 B.C. was the temple of Amūn at Karnak. The modern town on the east bank of the Nile has risen over some of the buried remains of Thebes, glory and capital of Egypt, under the 18th Dynasty. It is called No in the Bible, or (R.V.) No-Amon, that is town of Amun, local deity of Thebes afterwards identified with Ra the sun-god. In this air view of the temple one of the two obelisks set up to mark the jubilee of Queen Hatshepsut—the queen considered by many to have been the rescuer of Moses—can be seen in the foreground beyond the one on the extreme left.

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saw a bush on fire yet unconsumed, and heard a voice telling him the place was a sanctuary, and, furthermore, that the plight of his fellow-countrymen in Egypt had not escaped the divine notice. They were to be delivered from bondage and led to a fertile land whose people they would dispossess, and the human agent in this divine redemption was to be none other than Moses himself. As an attestation of his commission to the people, he was vouchsafed a new revelation of the divine name, namely Jehovah. He and the elders of Israel were to ask the Pharaoh to allow them to go into the wilderness to worship their God. This request would be refused, but, nevertheless, the deliverance was assured and the Egyptians would be plundered.

When Moses objected that the Hebrews might not receive him in his new capacity, God gave him three signs by which to convince them; the sign of the staff and serpent, of the leprous hand, and the turning of (Nile) water into blood. In reply to a further objection that he was no speaker, he was reprimanded and told that his brother Aaron would make good any of his deficiencies in that rôle. Moses took leave of his father-in-law and set out for Egypt with his wife, his two sons and the "rod of God." On the way he was attacked by Jehovah (i.e. he fell seriously ill), apparently for some offence connected with circumcision, but the peril in which he found himself was averted by his wife's quick action in circumcising her son as a symbolic substitute for her husband. On arrival amongst the Israelites, Moses was met by Aaron, and together they announced their commission and performed the signs in the sight of the people, who were thereby convinced of the authenticity of their mission and worshipped Jehovah.

Soon a dispute took place between Moses and the Pharaoh, though it was nothing more than a preliminary skirmish. The request of the brothers that the Hebrews might hold a festival in the wilderness was met by an accusation of sabotage and the intensification of the corvée or forced labour; henceforward the serfs must find the straw for the bricks they make. The people's appeal to the Pharaoh was in vain, so they reproached Moses and Aaron; Moses in turn remonstrated with Jehovah and was reassured. At this point in the narrative (vi, 2—vii, 7) we have another account of the call and commission of Moses (and Aaron) parallel to that in Chapter iii, and including the revelation of the name Jehovah. Into this is inserted (vi, 14-27) a genealogical table, the purpose of which is to define the position of Moses and Aaron among the descendants of Jacob.

Moses and Aaron in a further interview with the king were asked to show a sign, whereupon Aaron performed the staff and serpent portent. But the Egyptian magicians hastened to follow suit, and although Aaron's rod (or serpent) swallowed up theirs the Pharaoh's "heart was hardened", he declined to free the Hebrews. Stronger measures were thereupon threatened, and the ten plagues (also called in Hebrew, "heavy blows," "signs," "portents," or "marvels") followed. These calamities are closely connected with the actual conditions prevalent in Egypt; the wonder lies in the unusual severity of the stroke and "the opportune moment of its occurrence." First, the Nile, to which Egypt owes its life, was polluted (cf. iv, 9—by the red marl brought down from the Abyssinian mountains); next, the land was overrun with frogs (a similar intensification of a natural phenomenon); the third and fourth plagues were of lice (rather gnats or mosquitoes) and flies—perhaps variants of the same affliction, as the stories come from different sources. We may note that the Egyptian magicians here threw up the sponge, that the plague did not affect the Hebrews in Goshen, and that the Pharaoh gave permission for the wilderness festival but withdrew it.

Plagues (5) and (6)—murrain and boils—may also be variants of the same calamity. As the mosquitoes follow the inundation of the land and the flies the corpses of the frogs, so an outbreak of skin diseases would follow the mosquitoes and flies. The cattle of the Hebrews escaped, and the Egyptian magicians not only failed to produce boils but were themselves covered with them.

The Pharaoh was still stubborn, however, and God declared His intention of sending further plagues to

EXODUS: A SYNOPSIS

Israel in Egypt

	Chapters
Subjugation of the Children of Israel	i
Moses—his Preparation and Call ...	ii-iv
Struggle between Moses and Pharaoh	v
Second Account of Moses' Call ...	vi
Moses and Aaron before Pharaoh ...	vii
The Plagues of Egypt	viii-xi
Institution and Rites of the Passover	xii, 1-28
Firstborn of Egypt, Man and Beast, slain	xii, 29-30

The Departure from Egypt

Israelites Flee from the Land ..	xii, 31-39
Passage through the Red Sea ..	xiv
Songs of Moses and Miriam	xv
Journey to Sinai	xvi-xviii

The Giving of the Laws

God's Chosen People	xix
The Ten Commandments	xx, 1-17
The Book of the Covenant	xx, 22-xxiii, 33
The Law of the Tabernacle	xxv-xxxi
Aaron makes a Golden Calf	xxxii
Moses breaks the Tables of the Law. .	xxxii
Second Version of the Commandments	xxxiv-xxxv, 3

The Tabernacle of the Congregation

How the Tabernacle was Made ...	xxxv, 4-xxxix
Erection and Anointing of the Tabernacle	xl
Aaron and his Sons Sanctified ...	xl

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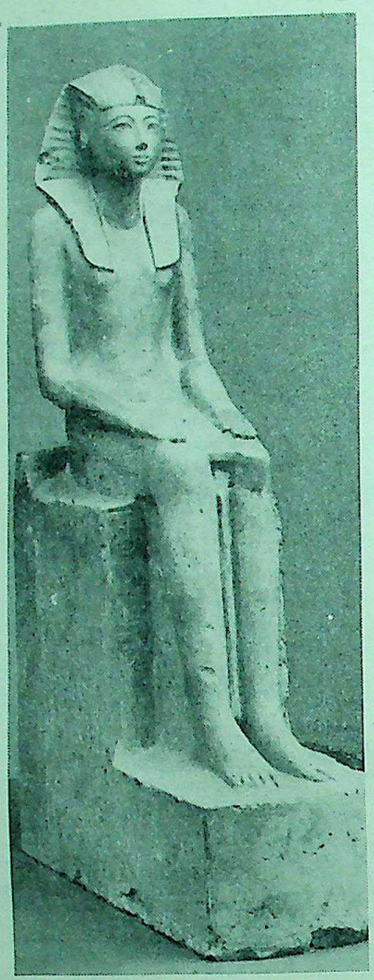
force the king and the world into recognizing His supremacy. The Pharaoh was advised to bring his cattle into shelter; some of his people did so, and thus (like Israel) escaped the loss of their herds in the great hail and thunderstorm. Then in fear the monarch confessed his guilt ("I will let you go"), but Moses was not to be deceived. The threat of the next plague (locusts) induced the court officials to appeal to the Pharaoh to yield, and he went so far as to permit the *men* to go to the festival. Whereupon, the locusts were followed by the great darkness, caused by a sandstorm (the Khamsin wind). The Pharaoh now offered to let all the people go, provided they left their flocks and herds as a pledge of their return. Moses replied that they must take these with them and that the Pharaoh must provide the sacrificial beasts, a proposal that only stiffened the royal obstinacy. Jehovah then announced to Moses the final plague (the death of the firstborn) and bade him tell the Hebrews to borrow gold and silver jewels from the Egyptians.

The great hour was now at hand. God gave Moses regulations for the observance of the Passover—the choice of a lamb on the tenth day of the first month (Abib), its slaughter on the afternoon of the fourteenth, the application of its blood to the lintel and door posts of the houses, and its hasty and total consumption along with unleavened biscuits and salad, while the people were equipped for a journey. Also by divine injunction a week of *mazzoth* (unleavened bread), begun and ended by an assembly at the sanctuary, was to be observed in all future years.



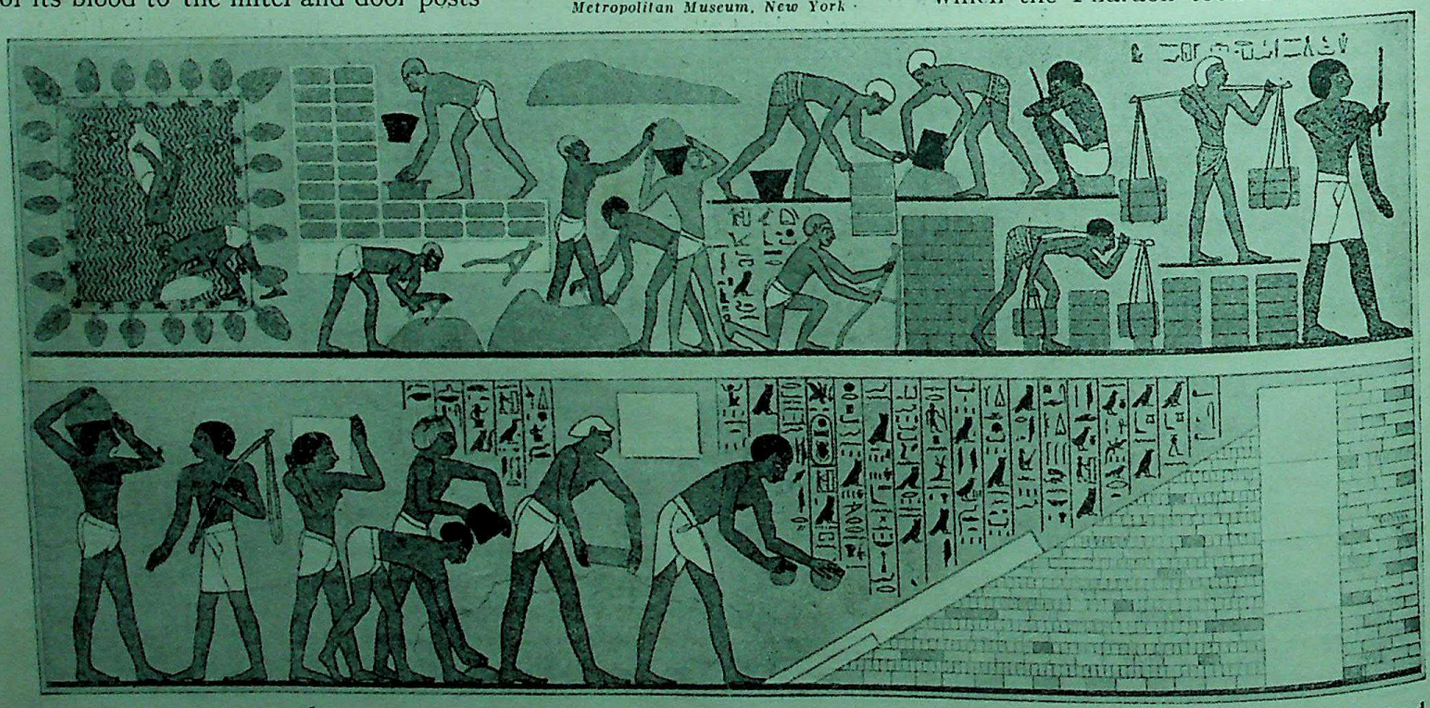
"PHARAOH'S DAUGHTER." Many authorities hold that the correct date of the Exodus is 1447 B.C. If so, the princess who discovered the infant Moses "by the river's brink" was Hatshepsut, most celebrated woman in Egyptian history.

Metropolitan Museum, New York

Moses passed on the instructions (in different terms—the source differs from that of xii, 1-13) through the elders, and they were carefully carried out. At midnight all the firstborn of the Egyptians, men and cattle, were mysteriously slain. The Pharaoh, aghast at the slaughter, was stricken into submission. Summoning Moses and Aaron, he bade them go with all their people, their flocks and their herds.

The Hebrews wasted little time on their preparations but departed with their bread unleavened, their "borrowed" jewels and accompanied by a mixed multitude, i.e. non-Israelites.

"And the children of Israel went up harnessed out of the land of Egypt . . and the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light." After an explanation of the route marked out by God and this reference to the guiding pillars of cloud and fire, the narrative states that they were deliberately led into a position of extreme peril, of which the Pharaoh took advantage.



"THEY BUILT FOR PHARAOH." This wall painting, representing Semites making and laying bricks for the temple of Amūn at Karnak, was found in the tomb of Rekhmira, vizier of Thothmes III, at Thebes. It is of particular interest in showing that the gang labour of the Israelites in Egypt under the Pharaoh of the oppression—identified by many with Thothmes III—was not unusual and was fully organized. "Therefore they did set over them task masters to afflict them with their burdens. And they built for Pharaoh treasure cities, Pithom and Raamses. And they made their lives bitter with hard bondage, in mortar, and in brick" (Exodus i, 11, 14). The slaves were rigorously forced to work under the lash.

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"And it was told the king of Egypt that the people fled: and the heart of Pharaoh and of his servants was turned against the people, and they said, 'Why have we done this, that we have let Israel go from serving us?' And he made ready his chariot, and took his people with him: and he took six hundred chosen chariots, and all the chariots of Egypt, and captains over every one of them."

He pursued the Hebrews and overtook them camping by the "sea of reeds" (so the Hebrew, not "Red Sea" as in our translation). The Hebrews were naturally terrified and turned on Moses with bitter reproaches. He was undismayed, however, and was confident in his assurance that Jehovah would fight for them. Straightway a strong east wind laid bare the ground beneath the water, the multitude crossed in safety, and then the sea, returning to its usual place, overwhelmed the advancing hosts of the Egyptian army. (Here it may be noted that another account, more miraculous, has been interwoven, telling of the waters as a wall on each side of the Hebrews.) Seeing the destruction of their enemies, the Israelites expressed their faith in Jehovah and His servant Moses, and Moses broke out into a triumphal ode. "I will sing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously, the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea. The Lord is my strength and song, and he is become my salvation: he is my God, and I will prepare him an habitation; my father's God, and I will exalt him . . . Pharaoh's chariots and his host hath he cast into the sea: his chosen captains also are drowned in the Red Sea . . ." In this, one of the finest examples of Hebrew poetry, two motives are dominant—the destruction of the Egyptians by the mighty power of God, and the divine guidance of Israel to the land of Canaan and a sanctuary (in Jerusalem)—and so the song in its present form must date from after the settlement in Palestine. Nevertheless, it "breathes the fire and enthusiasm" of the great deliverance from the oppression and terror. Another short song is attributed to Miriam (sister of Aaron and Moses) as an accompaniment to the joyous tambourine dance.

BY THE BRINK OF OLD NILE. Elephantine Island, not far from Cairo, is associated with the spot where Moses was found in the bulrushes, when the daughter of Pharaoh "and her maidens walked along by the river's side" (Exodus ii, 5). An interesting object, shown in the photograph, is the nilometer recently restored. It dates from the Ptolemaic period (305-31 B.C.) but the Egyptians measured and recorded the annual rise of the river from earliest times. Beginning in June, this reaches the highest point in October.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

The Egyptian bondage now ended in so decisive a fashion, the Hebrews entered on an altogether novel experience. The narrative goes on to record their journey to Sinai, a journey which brought to light on the one hand the instability of their faith, on the other the "omnipotent and paternal bounty of their God"

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—of Jehovah who heals the brackish waters of Marah, satisfies their hunger by the provision of quails and manna (cf. Numbers xi), provides them with water from a rock (cf. Numbers xx) and enables them to defeat the Beduin Amalekites. We may remark that in the contest with Amalek we are introduced to Joshua; and Moses, whose hands are uplifted as a banner ("Jehovah nissi"), is an old man. The incident may, therefore, really belong to a late stage of the wanderings, and the same remark applies to chapter xviii (cf. Deuteronomy i, 9-18), which tells how Jethro visited his son-in-law, and, after a sacrificial meal, advised Moses to appoint a number of competent God-fearing and upright men to adjudicate in minor cases between contending parties, retaining for himself under divine guidance the more serious matters. A parallel account is found in Numbers xi, 24-30.

Called to Be a Chosen People

THE people at length reached Sinai, and there were informed of God's intention to make them "a people to himself" (xix, 5f.). In preparation for the covenant they were "sanctified" by ablutions and abstinence from anything that would make them "unclean."

The Hebrew tradition connected the giving of the Law with an exhibition of Jehovah's power in nature. The theophany, or manifestation of God, described in chapter xix is marked by tempest and volcanic activity. The mountain is taboo to all except Moses (xix, 20) and Aaron (xix, 24), the former of whom alone receives the divine revelation. This begins with the Ten Commandments, representing the claims of Jehovah on the people He had redeemed. Five religious duties—the prohibition of idolatry and of images, the misuse of the divine name (in magical practices), the observance of the Sabbath (because God rested on it after the Creation), and the honouring of parents—are followed by five ethical duties: the prohibition of murder, adultery, theft, false witness and covetousness (note that the wife is the property of the husband).

The section xx, 22; xxiii, 33 is known as the "Book of the Covenant" (xxiv, 7). It is a very old code, analogous on the civil side to the Babylonian laws of Hammurabi, and intended as a collection of expositions and amplifications of the Decalogue or Ten Commandments.

It begins with the prohibition of images and the construction of altars—which might be erected at any place marked by the divine favour (e.g. a victory or a theophany) and on which any Israelite might sacrifice—and then we have a series of "judgements" (i.e. civil and criminal statutes) presented in conditional form. These provide for the maintenance of freedom and the rights of Hebrew slaves of both sexes;

"THEY FILLED THE TROUGHS." If unable to take his sheep to an ordinary watering place, the shepherd leads them to a rain-filled cistern by which stone troughs are set up. The desert rule is for the first-comer to water his flock first—a rule insisted upon to the point of fighting, since such wells run dry. Easily understandable, therefore, is the gratitude of Jethro's daughters for the help of Moses. He delivered them from the shepherds, who had driven them away after they had "filled the troughs to water their father's flock" (Exodus ii, 16), in the land of Midian, whither Moses had fled from Egypt.

Photo. American Colony in Jerusalem

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"HER HANDS HOLD THE DISTAFF"

Belonging to a class that is a blend of peasant and desert-dweller, this woman wears a garb that pertains to both. The black veil over her head is similar to that worn by the village women in many districts of Palestine; the flowing drapery of her dress is Beduin in style. For agricultural work she girds it up away from her feet. As she walks she is engrossed with her task of spinning yarn from the fleece. Her contented expression calls to mind the words from Exodus xxxv, 25: "and all the women that were wise hearted did spin with their hands."

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

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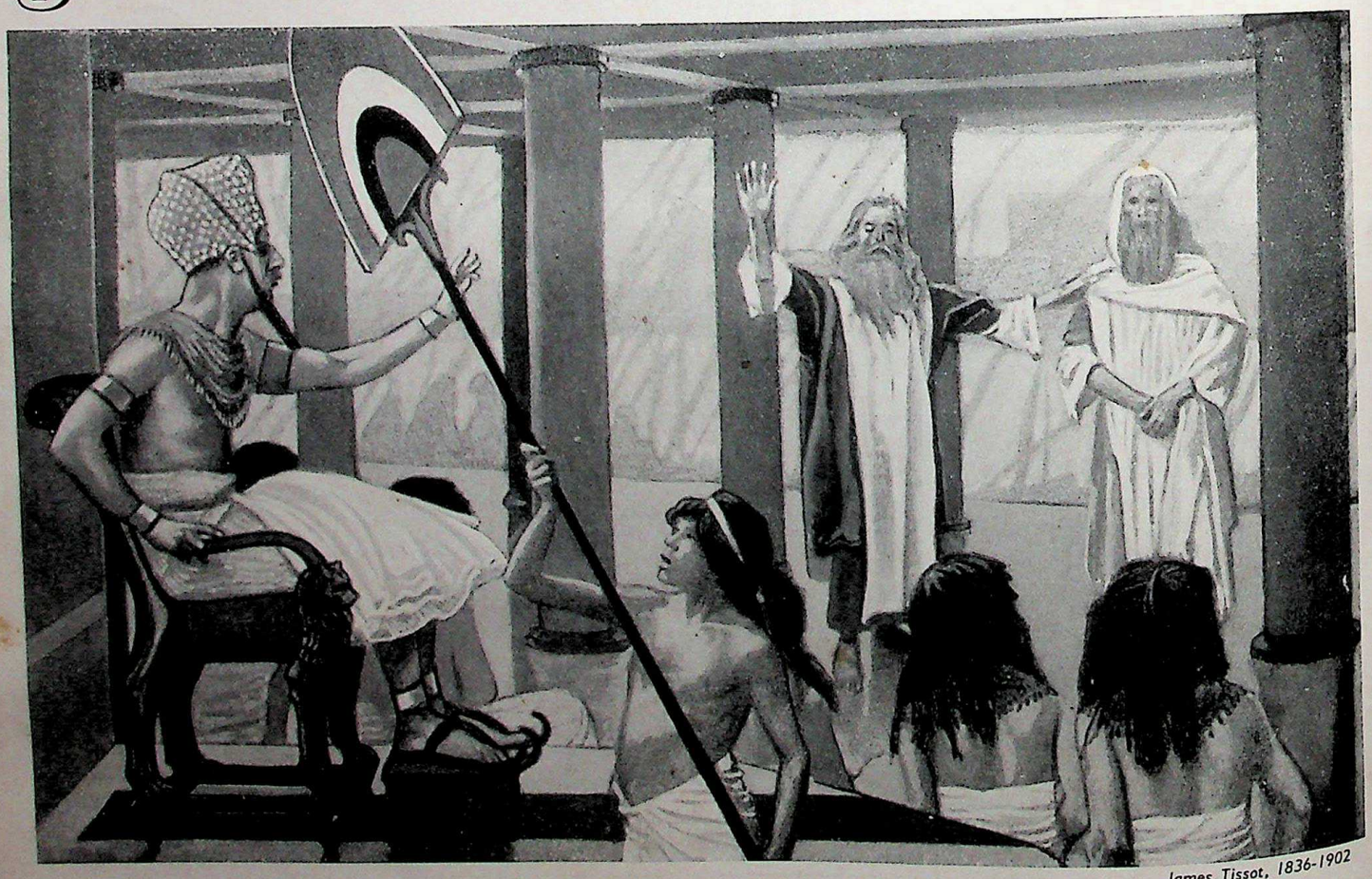
Hippolyte Flandrin, 1809-1864

"BEHOLD, THE BUSH BURNED WITH FIRE"



James Tissot, 1836-1902

"MOSES AND AARON WENT IN UNTO PHARAOH"

The history of Moses, greatest law-giver of Israel and divinely-commissioned deliverer of his people from Egyptian bondage, abounds with pictorial subjects. One of the most sublimely poetical of these is the theophany of the Burning Bush. Exiled from Egypt, Moses was shepherding his father-in-law Jethro's flocks when he heard the Voice of God: "Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standeth is holy ground" (Exodus iii, 5). In a mural decoration of the church of St. Germain-des-Prés, Paris, Hippolyte Flandrin has thus painted Moses. Another French painter, James Tissot, pictures the scene of his subsequent appearance before Pharaoh. Supported by Aaron, he demands his people's freedom.

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Sir John Everett Millais, 1829-1896

"AND AARON AND HUR STAYED UP HIS HANDS"

With the precision of his early Pre-Raphaelite thoroughness, Millais painted every detail veraciously in his dignified picture, Victory, O Lord, which is now in the City Art Gallery, Manchester. Specially significant is the head of the arrow embedded in the rocky height, just below the heroic group. It implies the nearness of the battle raging against Amalek under the leadership of Joshua. "And it came to pass, when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed, and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed" (Exodus xvii, 11, 12). But as the day wore on the aged leader's hands and the staff, symbol of victory, had to be supported by Aaron and Hur "until the going down of the sun," when victory was assured.

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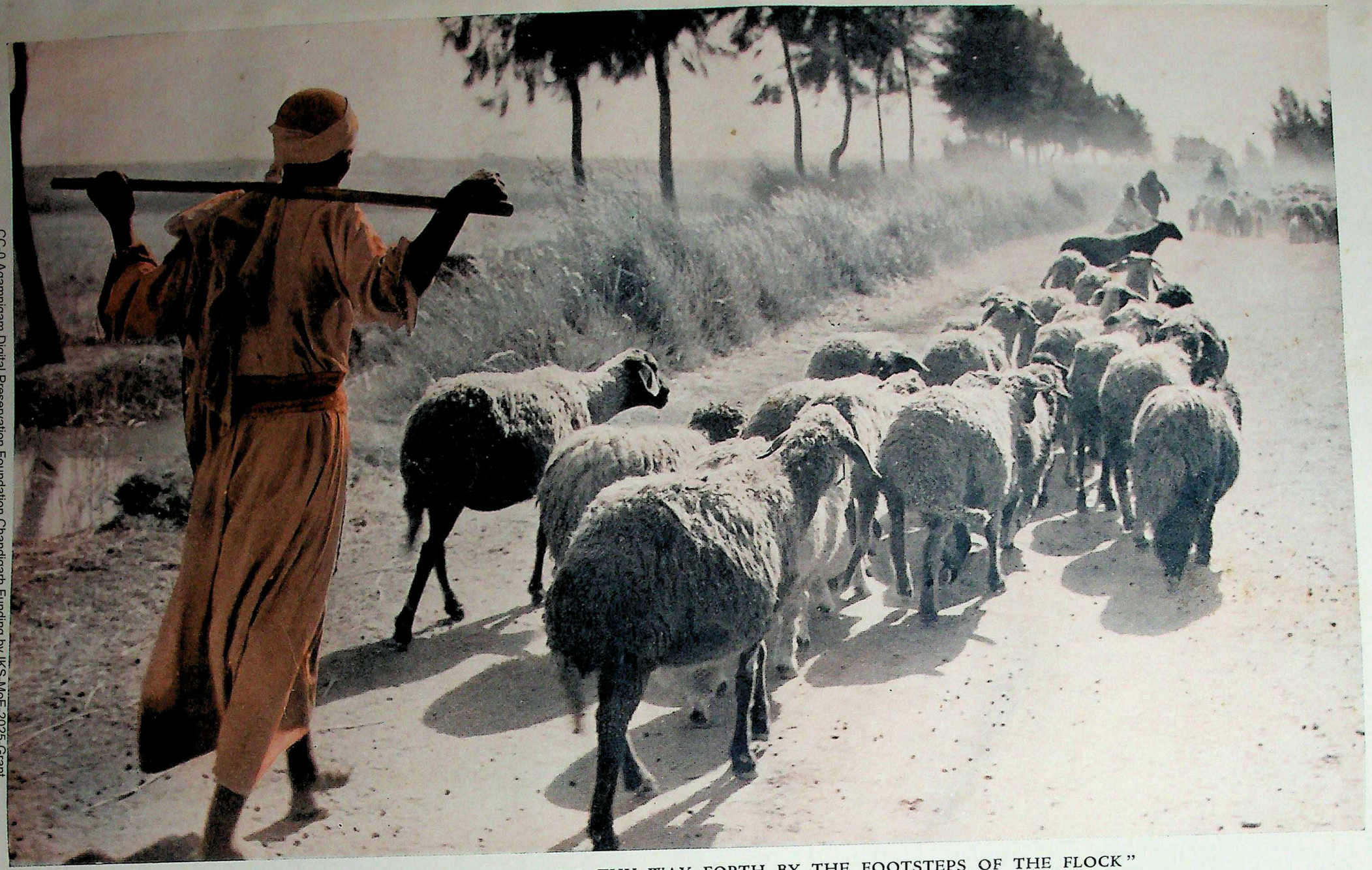

"GO THY WAY FORTH BY THE FOOTSTEPS OF THE FLOCK"

Driving his sheep to market along a dusty road in Egypt, this youthful shepherd walks with a swinging gait. His shoulders and head are finely poised as he carries his staff behind them. It is easy to picture one of the Israelites in the land of Goshen, before the oppression, shepherding his flock to the market at Zoan—the modern San-el-Hagar and ancient royal city—in just such a carefree way. Before "there arose up a new king over Egypt, which knew not Joseph" (Exodus, i, 8) the Hebrews were leading their tranquil pastoral life, freely going beyond the district allotted to them.

Photo, Dorien Leigh

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for the preservation of life, and the punishment of murder, manslaughter, striking or cursing a parent, kidnapping and injury; and the safeguarding of property from injury to live-stock by negligence or theft, from injury to crops by fire, etc., from losses in cases of deposit and loan, and from injury to a father by the seduction of his daughter.

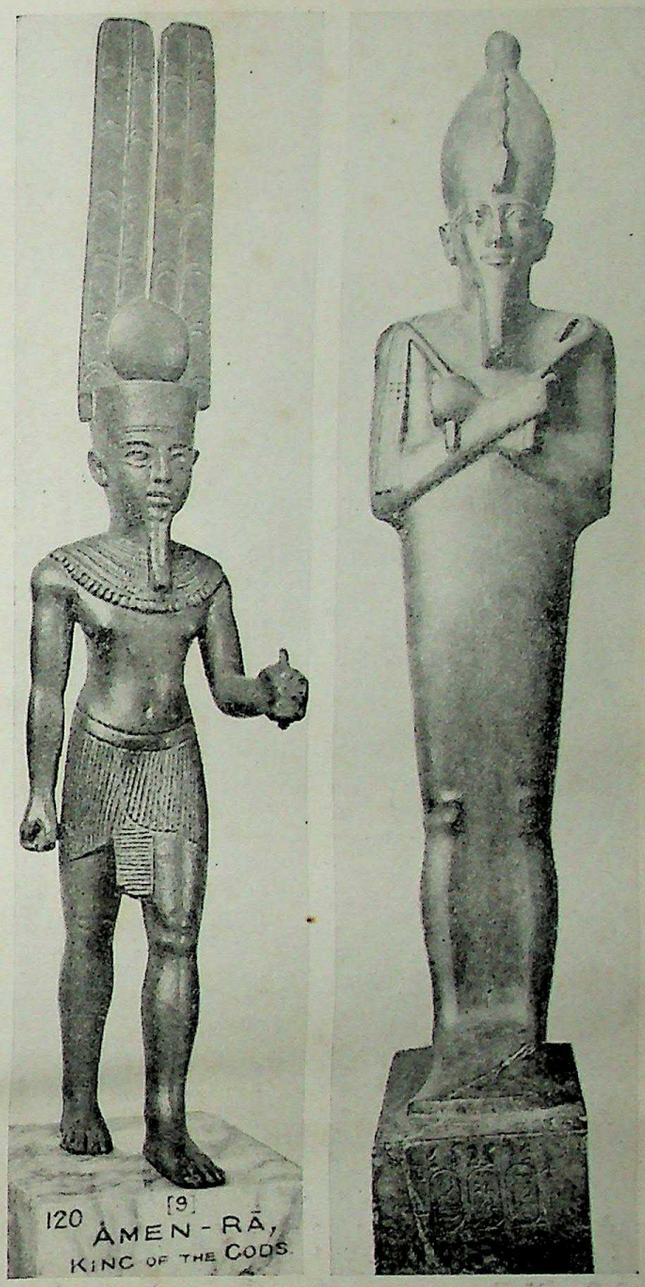
There follow a number of religious and moral laws. Sorcery, bestiality and idolatry are prohibited, as is also harsh treatment of the poor. God is not to be reviled nor a ruler cursed, the first-fruits and the first-born males (of men, oxen, and sheep) are to be given to Jehovah, and meat torn by wild beasts is not to be eaten (xxii, 18-31). A section on law-suits (xxiii, 1-9) stresses the duty of veracity and independence in a witness, and of upright administration in a judge. Sandwiched between these is an injunction to protect an enemy's beast.

Jehovah's Promise of Ultimate Victory

THE final section comprises a festal calendar, defining the Sabbatical year and the Sabbatical day (instituted on humanitarian grounds), and the three annual feasts—of unleavened bread, first-fruits, and harvest. Two regulations (xxiii, 18) guard against the contamination of a sacrifice, and the "Book of the Covenant" concludes with the promise of a guiding angel who is to be implicitly obeyed, and a promise of prosperity, health, and longevity, victory over the peoples of Canaan, and a great extension of territory. The people are again warned against the ever-present and insinuating seductions of idolatry.

"I will deliver the inhabitants of the land into your hand; and thou shalt drive them out before thee. Thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor with their gods. They shall not dwell in thy land, lest they make thee sin against me: for if thou serve their gods, it will surely be a snare unto thee."

At this point (Chapter xxiv) there is a most valuable and interesting account of a vision of Jehovah vouchsafed to Moses, Aaron, Aaron's sons Nadab and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel. There are subsidiary data in the chapter which exercise the skill of biblical experts, but the outstanding feature is the vision. Behind the story seems to be an old tradition that heaven itself was at the summit of this mountain. "And they saw the God of Israel, and there was under his feet as it were a paved work of a sapphire stone, and as it were the body of heaven in his clearness. And upon the nobles of the children of Israel he laid not his hand: also they saw God and did eat and drink" (xxiv, 10, 11), i.e. in a covenant feast. This unqualified statement stands out in marked contrast to the normal conception that to see God meant death (cf. xxxiii, 20). Previous to this unique experience Moses had performed a covenant ceremony of peculiar significance. After sacrificing burnt offerings and peace offerings, he had taken the blood of the victims and distributed it—half against the altar (representing the deity) and half on the assembled people. The significance of this finds a possible



"GODS OF EGYPT." At the time of the Exodus, with the increased importance of Thebes as the centre of administration, the local deity Amūn, or Amen, had risen to the supreme place among Egyptian gods. Identified with Ra the sun-god, he is represented wearing a crown with conventionalized feathers. The statue of Osiris, right, shows the dread judge of the underworld sculptured as a mummy, except for his arms and hands. He holds whip and crook.

Left photo, Mansell

explanation in the primitive ceremony of blood-brotherhood, in which two men wishing to conclude a sacred covenant drink a little of each other's blood from incisions in the skin. After the vision Moses alone remained on the mountain top; after six days the Lord, whose glory appeared to the people "like devouring fire," called him into the cloud where he remained for "forty days" (a Hebrew phrase which should not be taken literally but as meaning a considerable time), receiving the instructions detailed in the next section.

The law of the tabernacle (the central sanctuary of the "wanderings"), and its priesthood are set forth in Chapters xxv–xxxi. All well-inclined Hebrews

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"BLOOD UPON THE LINTEL." The Samaritan still regards as essential to the Passover ritual the act of dipping a bunch of hyssop in the blood of the sacrifice and sprinkling with it the entrance to tent or dwelling-place. This memorializes the promise "when I see the blood I will pass over you" (Exodus xii, 13), given to the Hebrews before the night when the tenth plague destroyed "the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast."

Photo, Shepstone

are invited to contribute the necessary materials for the structure and its furnishing (xxv, 1-9). The sanctuary is to be constructed according to a model shown to Moses on the mount, but before the tabernacle itself is described instructions are given about the Ark (a chest made of acacia wood, overlaid with gold and surmounted by the golden "mercy seat" with its symbolic cherubim), which was to be the repository of the Law; the table for the "shewbread"; and the seven-branched golden lampstand. The tabernacle was an oblong, flat-topped, Beduin-shaped tent, made of tapestry with three outer coverings spread over and supported by a wooden framework, and divided into two compartments—the Holy of Holies, a perfect cube of ten cubits (about 15 feet) where the Ark was housed, and the Holy Place, twice as long as the Holy of Holies and separated from it by a "veil," where the shewbread table and the golden lampstand were placed. Directions are given for the altar of burnt offering, the court surrounding the sacred tent, and the oil for the light.

IN the descriptions of the vestments of the sanctuary personnel we learn that Aaron, the high priest, is to have an ephod (a kind of apron or skirt) with a belt or sash, a pouch for holding the oracular Urim and Thummim, a tunic (with little bells on the skirt) and a turban, on the front of which was a gold plate with the inscription "Holy to Jehovah." The other priests (Aaron's sons) wear tunics, sashes and caps, and all have linen drawers. In the ritual for the consecration of the priests, a bath is followed by the investiture and the anointing of the high priest and the simple investiture of the others. This is followed by a threefold sacrifice, a "sin offering," a "burnt offering" and a "peace offering." Instructions are given for the daily (morning and evening) burnt offering, and these are followed by the promise of Jehovah to dwell in the sanctuary and among His people (xxix, 43-46).

Next we have directions for the altar of incense, and then we are told of the poll tax (half-shekel) for the maintenance of worship, the bronze laver, the ingredients of the holy oil and incense. Bezaleel and Aholiab are designated as chief constructors, while Moses is ordered to observe the sanctity of the Sabbath as a token of the covenant, and is given two stone tablets on which the Decalogue is inscribed (xxiv, 12).

After this ecclesiastical parenthesis (Chapters xxv–xxxi) the historical narrative is resumed. During the prolonged absence of Moses the people had imperilled their covenant relationship with Jehovah by worshipping Him in the form of a young bull (cf. the action of King Jeroboam I, 1 Kings xii)—possibly an Egyptian but more likely a Semitic, emblem of divine vigour. Aaron was deeply involved in this affair, and Jehovah is shown as resenting it so strongly as to threaten to consume the people. The divine wrath was averted, however, by the intercession of Moses, who, on reaching the camp and seeing the festival, broke the stone

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WEARY AND HEAVY LADEN. Great quantities of papyrus, the bulrush of the Bible, grow in the swamps of Lake Huleh, a triangular basin of the Jordan, north of the Sea of Galilee. These Beduin women, barefooted in the mud, have pulled the long stems, bound them in bundles, and are carrying them to their homes. There they will weave the reeds into tenting and mats. Formerly the papyrus grew in Egypt on the banks of the Nile and from very ancient times was manufactured into paper, light vessels and baskets. Of such reeds was the "ark of bulrushes" (Exodus ii, 3) made by Moses' mother.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

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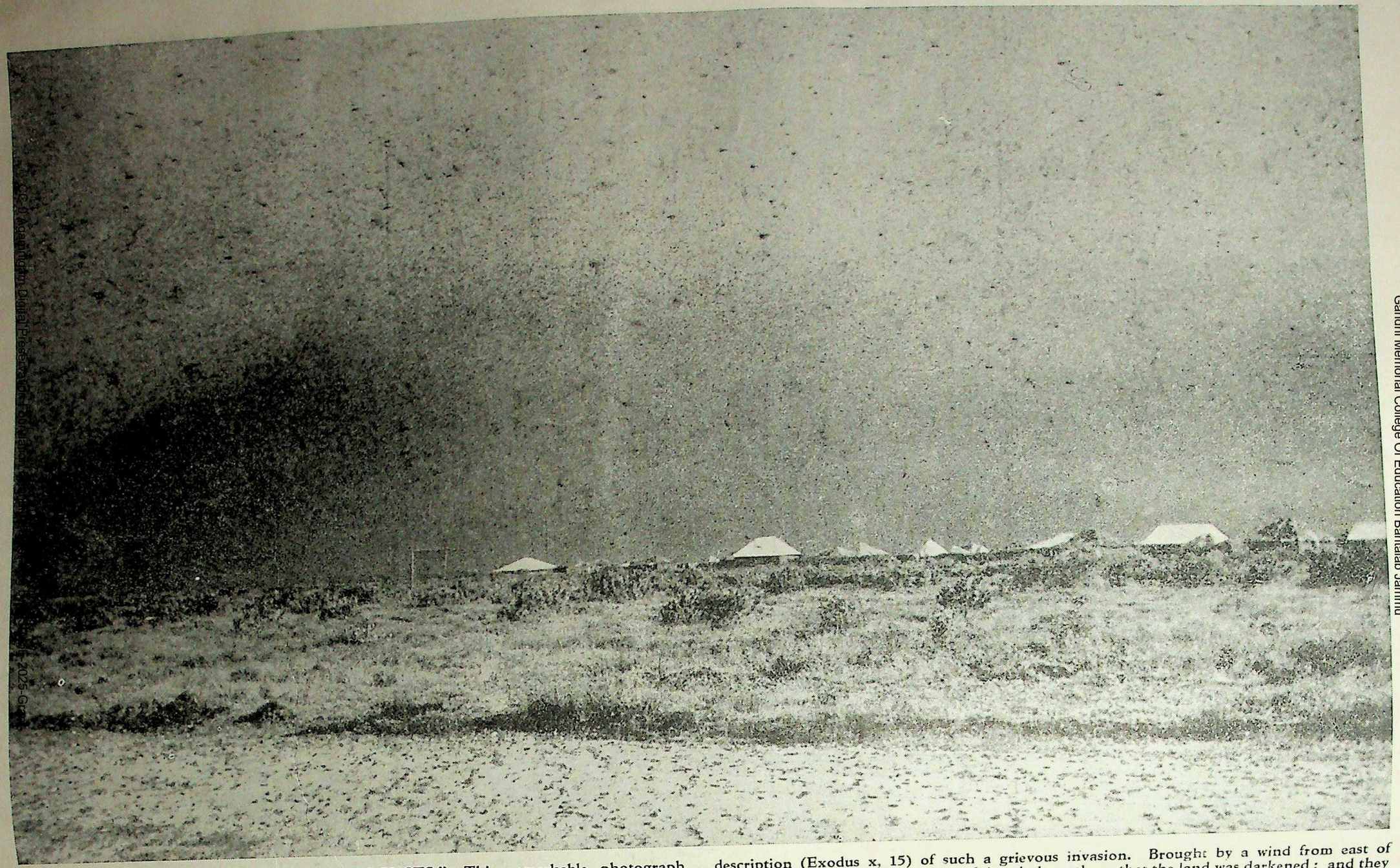

"THE EAST WIND BROUGHT THE LOCUSTS." This remarkable photograph shows a swarm of locusts in Africa, so big that it took a whole day to pass a given point. The black spots in the picture are insects, detached from the cloud of locusts which darkens the sky and flying nearer the camera. The record of the eighth plague in Egypt contains a perfect description (Exodus x, 15) of such a grievous invasion. Brought by a wind from east of Suez the locusts "covered the face of the whole earth, so that the land was darkened; and they did eat every herb of the land, and all the fruit of the trees which the hail had left: and there remained not any green thing in the trees, or in the herbs of the field, through all the land."

Photo. "The Times"

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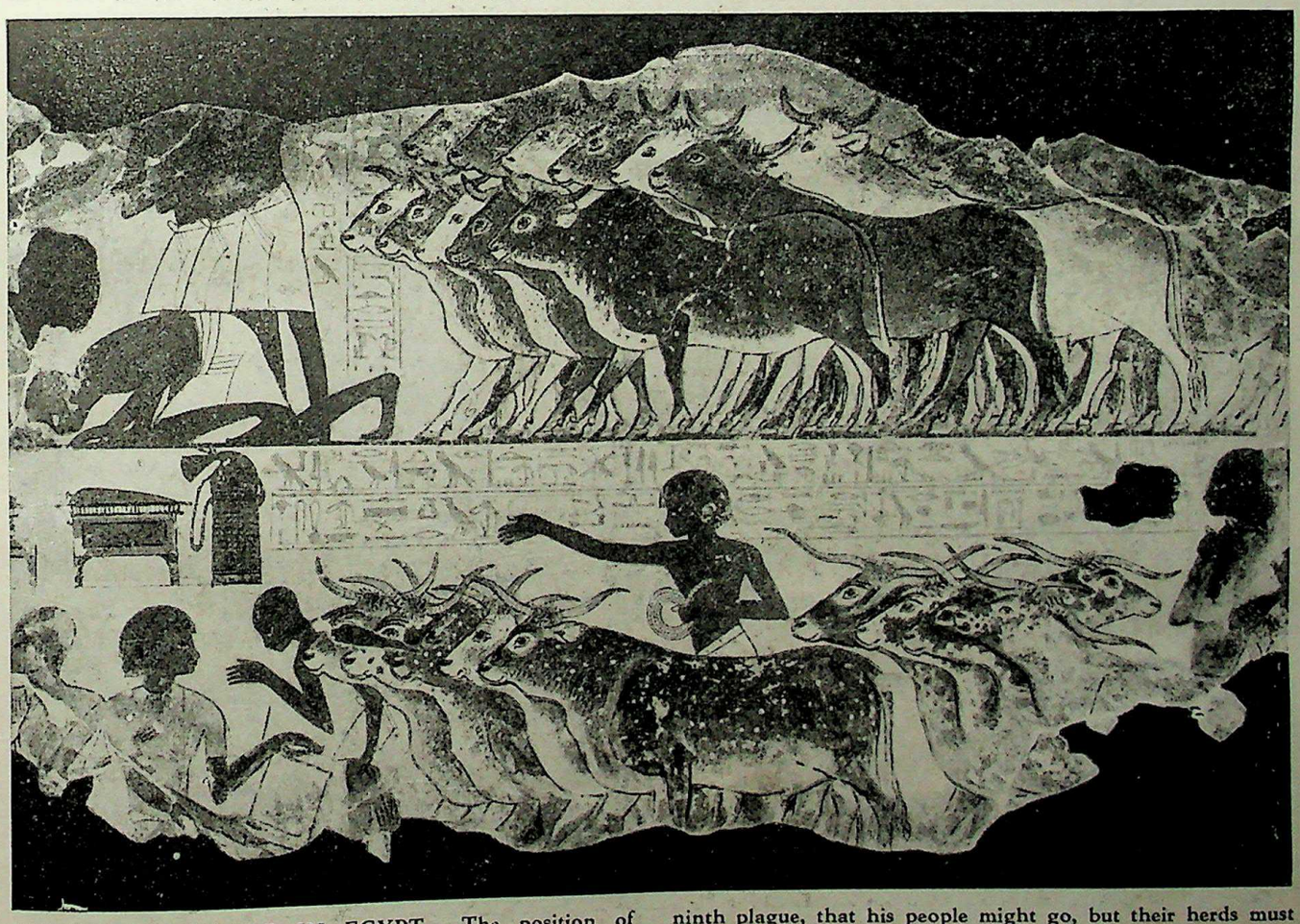
tablets in his anger and made the people grind the golden calf into powder and mix it with their drink. Aaron hastened to excuse himself for his part in the transaction ; and the tribe of Levi executed vengeance on three thousand of the recusants, being rewarded for their zeal with the priesthood. Moses was deeply distressed at the people's apostasy, and is shown as offering his own life to Jehovah in return for the pardon of the people. He was assured that the righteous should not suffer, and that he himself should lead the people to Canaan under the immediate guidance of Jehovah's " angel." The people, for their part, cured for the nonce of their back-sliding, mourned contritely for their misdeeds.

NOW follows a remarkably vivid scene, in which we are shown the great leader communing with Jehovah in the " tent of meeting," (the tabernacle had not yet been constructed), while all the people, " every man at his tent door . . . looked after Moses " and watched with fear and longing the " cloudy pillar " that stood at the door of the holy tent into which Moses had entered.

" And the Lord spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend " (xxxiii, 11). In the course of this conversation Moses obtained from Jehovah a promise that, reversing the decision arrived at on viewing the people's apostasy, He would Himself go with them into Canaan. Then Moses, greatly daring, asked a special favour of the Lord. " I beseech thee," he said, " shew me thy glory."

PHARAOH'S CHARIOT. This vivid representation of Rameses the Great driving his chariot furiously into battle is from a mural painting, commemorating his conquests, which decorates a Nubian temple. The first mention of such a vehicle in the Bible is in Genesis xlvi, 29 : " And Joseph made ready his chariot." In the Egyptian army the chariot force took the place of field artillery.

Photo. Mansell



CENSUS OF CATTLE IN EGYPT. The position of registrar of cattle was an exalted one in ancient Egypt. The herds were of great value. Pharaoh honoured some of Joseph's brethren by saying " make them rulers over my cattle " (Genesis xlvii, 6). The Pharaoh of the Exodus told Moses, after the ninth plague, that his people might go, but their herds must remain (Exodus x, 24). This wall painting from a tomb at Thebes shows an inspection of cattle by Nebanūm, an official in the era of the 18th Dynasty. At his feet the first drover prostrates himself. Below, subordinates number the cattle.

British Museum

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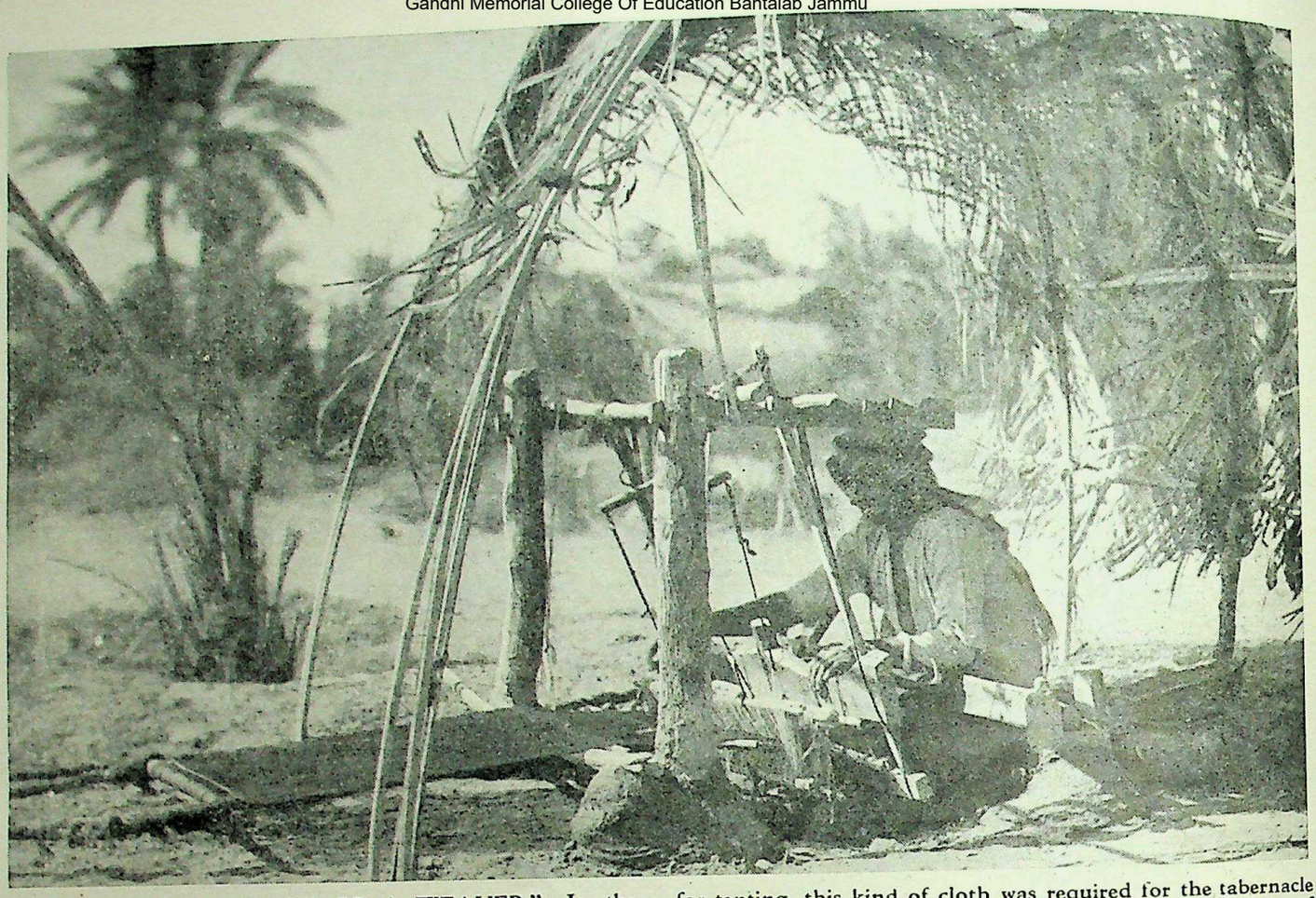
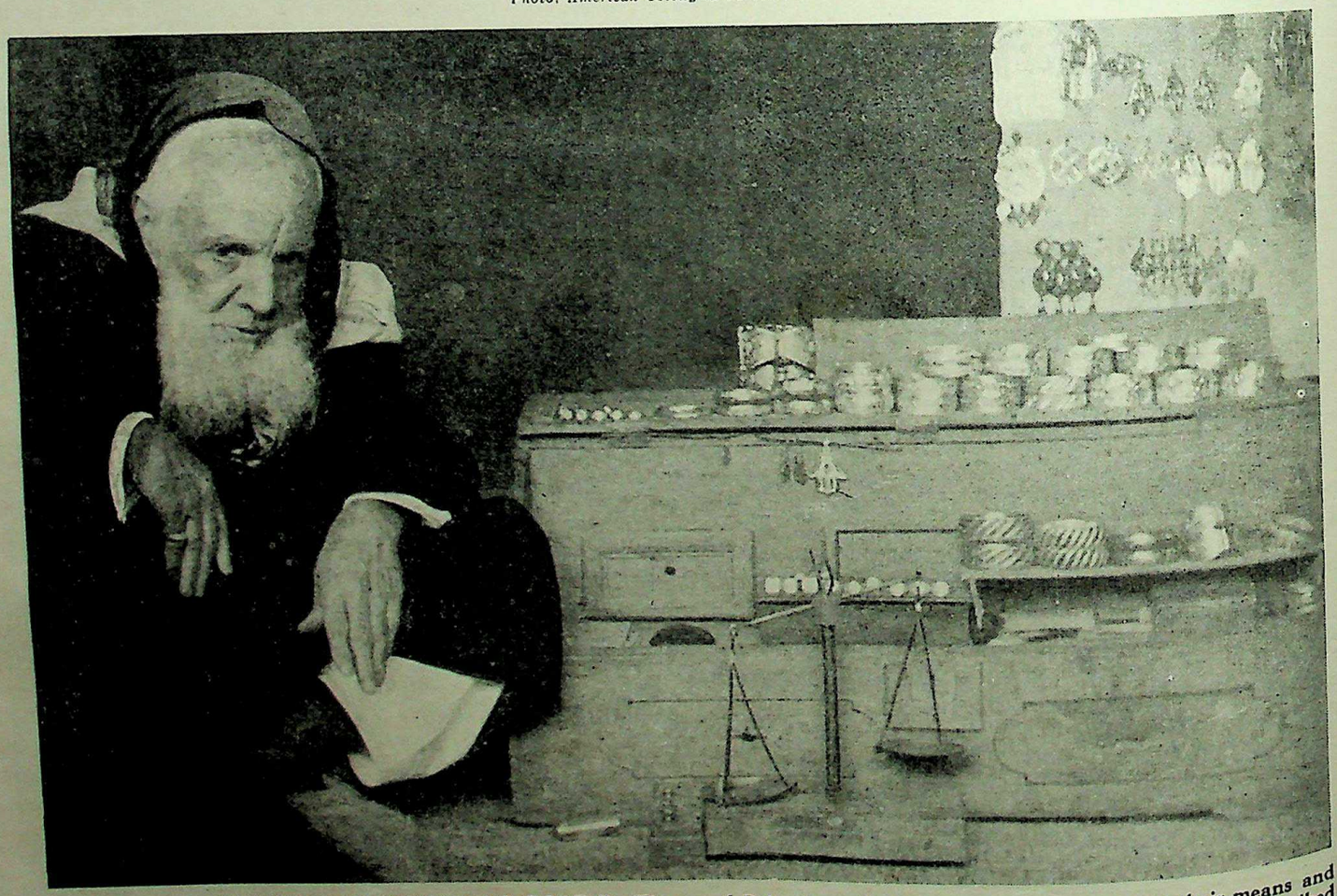


"TO WORK THE WORK OF A WEAVER." In the grateful shade of a simply-constructed canopy of dried papyrus reeds this Arab weaves goats' hair cloth on his primitive loom. In present demand for Beduin cloaks and, of coarser texture, for tenting, this kind of cloth was required for the tabernacle in the wilderness. The men that worked "for the service of the sanctuary" (Exodus xxxvi, 1, 14) wove eleven "curtains of goats' hair for the tent over the tabernacle" as an offering.

Photo. American Colony in Jerusalem



"JEWELS OF SILVER AND JEWELS OF GOLD." The oriental love of adornment ensures a brisk trade for this old Jewish trinket dealer and working jeweller seated at ease in his little store. Bangles and ear-rings are in demand by the women of Palestine, who buy as many ornaments as their means and status permit. His more fragile wares are fashioned as described in Exodus xxxix, 3, when the goldsmiths "beat the gold into thin plates, and cut it into wires to work it" in Aaron's ephod.

Photo. Frank Fowler

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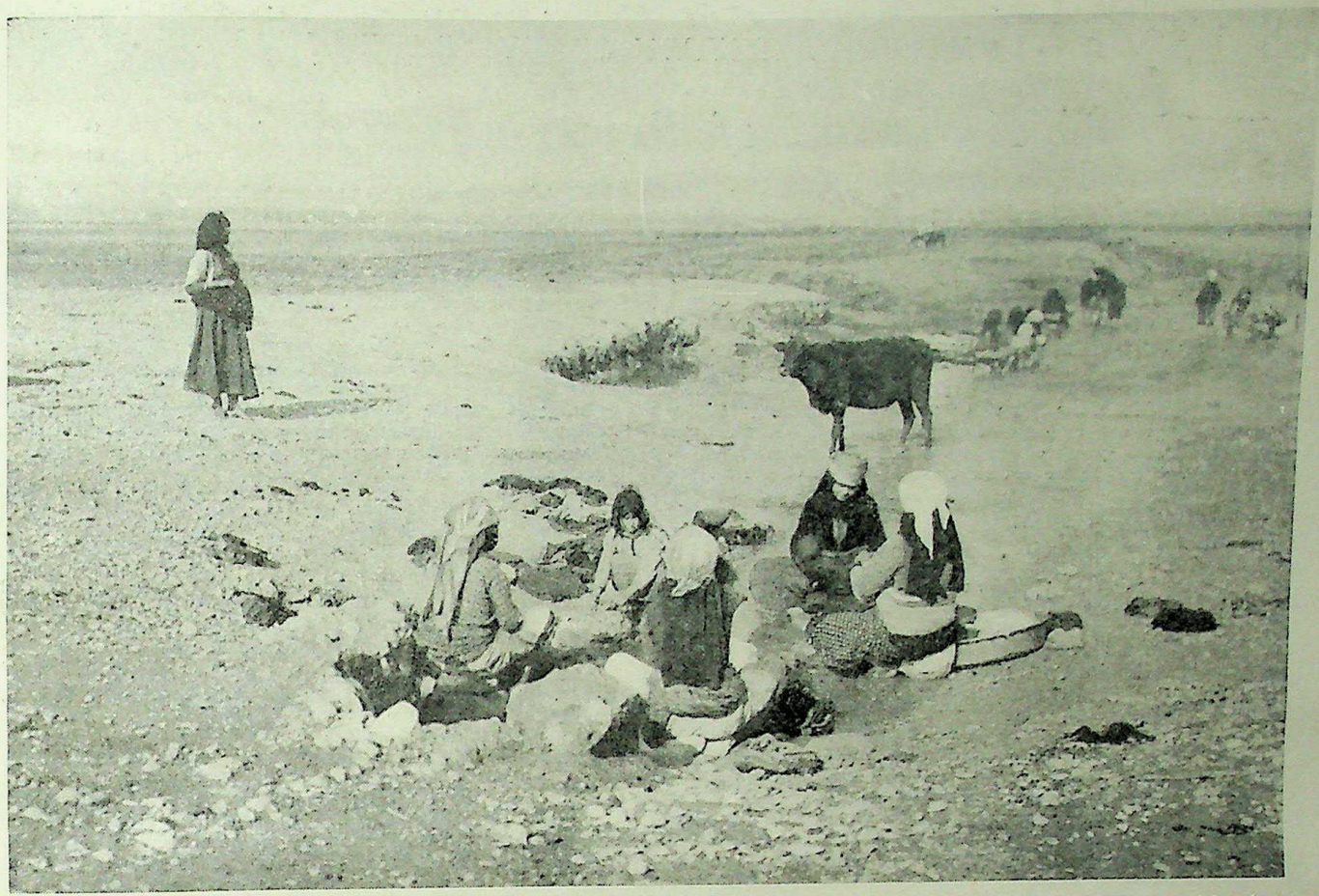

"AND THEY WASHED THEIR CLOTHES." This peaceful scene is near Baalbek, which lies on the east of the valley of the Litani river. The poorer native women turn the waterside into a primitive laundry. In Syria tradition dies hard; the same methods were age-old when Moses gave the command to the people to "sanctify them to day and to morrow, and let them wash their clothes" (Exodus xix, 10). The Greek name for Baalbek was Heliopolis; the ruins of the temples of the Sun and of Bacchus, finest antique buildings in Syria, are world-famous. It was on the great highway from Damascus to Tripoli.

Photo. Emmerson

But such a vision would be too bright for mortal eyes. "Thou canst not see my face; for there shall no man see me, and live." But, added the Lord, "Behold, there is a place by me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock: And it shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a clift of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by . . ." (xxxiii, 18–22).

God's Majesty Revealed to Moses

FROM the dazzling revelation Moses turned, at Jehovah's command, to a renewal of the tablets of stone; and on the morrow he was made the recipient of a proclamation of the moral glory of Jehovah, and was notified of the (re)establishment of the covenant. "Behold I make a covenant: before all thy people I will do marvels such as have not been done in all the earth, nor in any nation, and all the people among which thou art shall see the work of the Lord; for it is a terrible thing that I will do with thee" (xxxiv, 10).

At this point we have another version of the Decalogue: (1) Jehovah alone is to be worshipped; (2) molten gods are prohibited; (3) all the firstborn belong to God; (4) every worshipper must bring an offering; (5) the Sabbath is to be a day of rest; (6) the three festivals must be observed; (7) the blood of the (Passover) sacrifice is not to be offered with leavened bread; (8) nothing of the Passover sacrifice is to remain till morning; (9) first-fruits of the earth are to be sacrificed; and (10) a kid is not to be seethed in its mother's milk. These injunctions are ritual rather than ethical, and agree largely with xiii, 13f, xxiii, 12, 15–19. After engraving them on the tablets Moses descended the mountain and spoke first to Aaron and to all the rulers of the congregation. He then charged the people. We are told that his countenance was so transfigured that he was compelled to veil it except when going into the tent of meeting to consult Jehovah.

The later chapters (xxxv–xxxix) of the book describe the carrying out of the instructions that have already been given to the people, beginning with the observance of the Sabbath. These chapters are in substance a repetition of Chapters xxv–xxxi, past tenses taking the place of future tenses, with some slight changes and omissions. Finally (Chapter xl) we read that the tabernacle was erected on New Year's Day—nine months after reaching Sinai—and was filled by the glory of Jehovah. "Then a cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle . . . And when the cloud was taken up from over the tabernacle, the children of Israel went onward in all their journeys: But if the cloud were not taken up, then they journeyed not till the day that it was taken up."

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NATURAL HISTORY OF THE BIBLE. I

An ABC of Plants and Trees

(Continued from page 66)

THE forests of ancient Palestine were probably more extensive than they are today. Four trees in particular were represented: cedars in the Lebanon district; oaks in Bashan and Syria; pine-trees in Gilead and the region of Mt. Hermon; and the acacia (shittah-tree) in desert regions. In the Old Testament mention is often made of conspicuous, isolated trees.

LEBANON is still well wooded in parts, but only small groves of cedar have survived, the most famous being the group of about 400 trees near Kadisha. Oak woods are to be found on the slopes of Carmel and Tabor, the finest variety being Quercus coccifera, the evergreen or holm oak; while dwarf oaks form a large part of the thick bush that is a prominent feature in the landscape of the Holy Land today.

OTHER dwarf or shrub-like trees contributing to these areas of brushwood are the myrtle, terebinth, juniper, pine and wild olive. Stunted date palms are found in the valleys east of the Dead Sea, but their cultivation is neglected. Willows are common and so is the oleander, the biblical "willow of the brook," while the acacia is plentiful around the Dead Sea.

Plant	Scripture References	Notes
Fig	Genesis iii, 7; Deuteronomy viii, 8; I Samuel xxv, 18; Song of Solomon ii, 13; Hosea ix, 10, etc.	Indicates variously the tree, the unripened fruit, the early fig, and a cake of dried figs
Fir: general term for conifer	II Samuel vi, 5; I Kings vi, 15, 34; Psalms civ, 17; Ezekiel xxvii, 5	Wood used in carpentry, for ship-building, and for making musical instruments. The Aleppo pine is widely distributed in Palestine
Fitch: O.E. for Vetch	Isaiah xxviii, 25, 27; Ezekiel iv, 9	May be either fennel flower or spelt
Flax	Exodus ix, 31; Joshua ii, 6; Judges xv, 14; Proverbs xxxi, 13, etc.	Stem fibre of *Linum usitatissimum*, extensively cultivated in Palestine in Hebrew times as a source of fine linen
Frankincense: aromatic gum	Exodus xxx, 34; Leviticus ii, 1; Nehemiah xiii, 5; Matthew ii, 11, etc.	Exuded from species of *Boswellia* in Arabia and East coast of Africa. Used in the Temple ceremonial
Galbanum	Exodus xxx, 34	Aromatic resin, an ingredient of incense.
Garlick	Numbers xi, 5	Pungent bulb of the genus *Allium*
Gopherwood	Genesis vi, 14	Possibly cypress, a wood suitable for ship-building
Gourd	Jonah iv, 6–9	The bottle gourd, a rapidly climbing plant used for shade
Gourd, Wild	II Kings iv, 39	The colocynth, perhaps, which grows abundantly in the desert. This may also be the "vine of Sodom" referred to in Deuteronomy xxxii, 32
Grape: See Vine		
Grass, Hay	Genesis i, 11; Numbers xxii, 4; Psalms xxxvii, 2; Proverbs xxvii, 25; Isaiah xv, 6; xxxv, 7, etc.	Translation of three Hebrew words meaning respectively any green herbage, green grass, and fodder
Grove	Genesis xxi, 33	Tamarisk
Hazel	Genesis xxx, 37	The almond tree
Heath	Jeremiah xvii, 6; xlviii, 6	Dwarf juniper of the desert
Hemlock; also **Gall, Wormwood**	Deuteronomy xxix, 18; Lamentations iii, 15; Hosea x, 4; Amos vi, 12, etc.	Some poisonous, bitter-tasting herb
Herbs	II Kings iv, 39; Proverbs xv, 17	General term for cultivated herbs. (*See* Bitter Herbs)
Husks	Luke xv, 16	Fodder for animals made from pods of the locust tree
Hyssop: the caper plant	Exodus xii, 22; Numbers xix, 6; Psalms li, 7; John xix, 29; Hebrews ix, 19, etc.	Low-growing evergreen shrub, used in the purification service of the Temple, whence its figurative meaning
Juniper	I Kings xix, 4, 5; Job xxx, 4; Psalms cxx, 4	Probably a large species of broom, growing abundantly in the desert. The roots when burnt produced charcoal; they were also edible
Ladanum: an aromatic resin	Genesis xxxvii, 25; xliii, 11	Mis-translated myrrh in A.V. Ladanum was probably the gum of the rock-rose, common in Palestine
Leek	Numbers xi, 5	*Allium porrum*, closely related to the onion
Lentil	Genesis xxv, 30, 34; II Samuel xxiii, 11	*Lens esculenta:* the round seeds formed a staple food. Red pottage is soup of lentils
Lily	Song of Solomon, ii, 1, 2, 16; Hosea xiv, 5; Matthew vi, 28, etc.	Used in a general way to indicate any striking indigenous flower
Mallow	Job xxx, 4	R.V. gives salt-wort. A saline plant edible in extremity, as juniper (*see* above)
Mandrake	Genesis xxx, 14	Plant of the potato family, still believed by the natives of Palestine to ensure conception
Melon	Numbers xi, 5	Common melon and water melon
Millet	Ezekiel iv, 9	Grain of various cultivated grasses; it is ground into flour and made into bread
Mint	Matthew xxiii, 23; Luke xi, 42	Garden mint used as a condiment
Mulberry	II Samuel v, 23; I Chronicles xiv, 14, 15	The poplar, probably *Populus tremula*
Mustard	Matthew xiii, 31; Mark iv, 31; Luke xiii, 19; xvii, 6	Common mustard plant, which in Palestine grows to a height of 10 feet
Myrrh: an aromatic gum	Psalms xlv, 8; Proverbs vii, 17; Matthew ii, 11; Mark xv, 23, etc.	Exuded from the stem of certain thorny oriental shrubs and used in incense, perfumes, etc.

(Continued in page 118)

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Exodus

II

The Story of the Book

A Nation's Epic Story with a Message for Today

by REV. J. W. JACK, M.A., D.D.

Author of "The Date of the Exodus," "Samaria in Ahab's Time"; Minister of Glenfarg Church of Scotland, Perthshire.

THE name "Exodus" means "departure" or "going out," and was selected as an appropriate title of a work which treats mainly of the departure of the Israelites from the bondage of Egypt to the Promised Land. The Book covers the period from the death of Joseph to the erection of the Tabernacle in the second year of the Exodus, and is mainly historical, though it contains also important legislative sections. It may be divided by its subject-matter into three parts: (1) Israel's fortunes in Egypt (Chapters i-xv, 21), including the early life of Moses, the oppression under Pharaoh, the ten plagues, the institution of the Passover, and the deliverance through Moses; (2) The journey from Egypt to Sinai or Horeb (Chapters xv, 22–xviii, 27), including the passage of the Red Sea (Hebrew *Yam Sûph*, "Sea of Reeds"); (3) Events occurring at Sinai, and in particular the making of the covenant between Jehovah and Israel, the sin and punishment of the people for making the golden calf, and the erection of the Tabernacle in which Jehovah's presence and glory were visibly manifested.

Altogether the Book is one of extraordinary and diversified interest. Its one clear and plain purpose is to give an account of the circumstances in which the Israelites quitted Egypt and became God's peculiar people, bound to Him by covenant. It shows that there is a power above us, shaping our lives and imparting to history a great sense of purpose. All throughout the Book we see that events do not merely happen: they move on to a Divine event. Indeed, one of the most precious things in the Book is this deep assurance of purpose amid so much apparent opposition. In all the ancient world there is nothing like it, and we are justified in believing that this purpose of God's was intended to prepare the way for the coming of Him who was the Truth and the Life. The purpose, moreover, works itself out in a world rich in human touches and experiences. Though the field over which the story takes us is only a few score of miles, there is nothing local or trivial about it; it is splendidly human, and speaks home to the hearts of us all.

The writer of this article does not propose to deal with the historical events contained in Exodus, nor with its topography or archaeology, but will confine himself to its origins and its moral and spiritual teaching.

Recognized Divisions of the Pentateuch

IT is believed by most scholars that the Book of Exodus, as we now have it, is not an independent work by one and the same author. It forms part of the Pentateuch, which contains in one complex whole all that had been preserved of Old Testament writings regarding the early history of Israel. In such a work, covering the first five books of the Bible, we come into contact with different documents which have been frequently copied, enlarged with new material, and woven together into one connected narrative. Apart from Deuteronomy, which stands by itself, it is generally possible to divide the material of the Pentateuch among three different documents.

One of these shows a preference for the Divine name "Jehovah," and appears to have been produced by the prophetic school of Judah, about 850–750 B.C. A second generally uses the Divine name "God" (Hebrew *Elohim*), and is believed to have emanated from the northern kingdom of Israel, about 800–750 B.C. The third is the work of the priestly or legalistic school who transformed the people from the monarchical system to an ecclesiastical one under high priests. Their writings date only from the latter part of the Exile of the Jews to Babylon (i.e., 500–300 B.C.), though they are undoubtedly based in some cases on very ancient material. They consist largely of genealogies, statistics and religious formulas, and are marked by an insistence on ceremonies and the details of worship. These three documents may have been complete and separate books originally. At all events, they differ from each other, not only in the manner stated above, but in their style and vocabulary, their theological attitude, and the accounts they give of the same events. They have all been connected together in the Pentateuch into a general narrative by the religious teachers of Israel, so that succeeding generations might have the whole early history of Israel in complete form.

Three Witnesses to a Single Message

WE have an example of the same thing in the "Diatessaron" of Tatian, which was the official Gospel of the Syrian Church for about two centuries. It is an excellent specimen of a "composite" work, being made up from the different versions of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. A paragraph taken at random has been fused together as follows: Matthew xxi, 7, 8; Luke xix, 37; Matthew xxi, 9b; Mark xi, 10a; Luke xix, 38b; John xii, 12, 13; Luke xix, 39-44. Everyone who is acquainted with this composite Gospel will understand the "make-up" of the Pentateuch, for the principle in both cases is the same—only in the one case we have the original sources in our four canonical Gospels, while in the other the sources have to be discovered by careful examination. After all, great gain results from this threefold origin of the Pentateuch, for it means that we have at least three witnesses, instead of one, to the broad outlines of Israelite history, and we see also three successive efforts to interpret and apply the great religious message proclaimed by Moses.

Thus, Exodus, being part of the Pentateuch, is a composite production, based on different narratives, which have been rearranged, and woven together by the Jewish teachers. There are a few Biblical scholars who hold the view that the Book (as also the rest of the Pentateuch) has been written, mostly if not entirely, by one author, probably Moses. But these scholars find themselves faced with insuperable difficulties, and the theory of a threefold composition to which we refer becomes inevitable, as clearing up innumerable perplexities and explaining the many so-called divergencies in the narrative. The sources, in fact, are substantially the same as in Genesis. Exodus is really a sequel to Genesis.

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"A WISE MAN AND A SCRIBE." By the time of Moses, every well-to-do child in Egypt was taught to write in hieroglyphics. The profession of scribe was a highly-honoured one. Centuries before even Abraham was born, however, such writing was known. This masterpiece of early Egyptian sculpture, the Seated Scribe, is nearly 5000 years old. It is of painted limestone—black hair, brown body, and white papyrus roll—with realistic eyes of alabaster, rock crystal and copper.

The Louvre

being joined on to it by the conjunction "and" (translated "now" in our English version).

Except in certain doubtful cases, the three sections are not difficult to distinguish from each other, especially in the original Hebrew, any more than the literary productions of Macaulay, Gibbon, and Grote would be in an English narrative compiled from these authors. This combination of original documents, of course, does not affect the accuracy of the Book, any more than when an historian of today takes some older records as a basis, and writes a history of King Alfred or Queen Elizabeth. Instead of being a drawback, indeed, it is an undoubted advantage, giving us, as we have pointed out, more than one testimony to the historicity of the narrative. There is certainly not the least reason why it should be objected to by any lover of the Old Testament, or why it should be wrongly associated with critical or anti-Christian views.

On the contrary, some years ago, we are told, the Sunday School teachers of a certain church had met together for their regular weekly study of the lesson for the following Sunday. The subject happened to be the story of Joseph being drawn out of the pit and sold to passing merchantmen (Genesis xxxvii). In seeking to understand the narrative, they became conscious of a difficulty: in one case Joseph is represented as being sold to the Midianites, and in another to Ishmaelites from Gilead (compare also xxxix, 1). Other difficulties appeared, such as the parts played by Reuben and Judah respectively, and the case seemed hopeless until the leader of the group suggested that possibly two stories were interwoven here.

At once the solution was seen, and in half an hour, with nothing but the English Authorized Version before them, the students had disentangled two narratives, each practically complete in itself, yet these young people would have been surprised if they had been told that they were separating two of the main sources. We should be glad if we knew the names of the actual authors and thus be able to speak of them properly, but in point of fact all the historical writings of the Old Testament, except the memoirs of Ezra and Nehemiah, are really anonymous.

But we have not reached the ultimate origins of the Book of Exodus when we have lighted on the three main sections to which we refer. Where did *they* come from? Did they come, each of them, from a single independent author? In reply, it must be said that they also are composite, consisting partly of oral traditions handed down from ancient times, and partly of written narratives dating from the early ages of the Hebrews. Oral material is more valuable than one would imagine, for whether it be a song or a mere saying, a legend or a mere formula, passed on from mouth to mouth, often through many generations, it at least reflects history and to this extent is of an authentic nature. In the case of the Israelites many fragments of such tradition must have been repeatedly rehearsed by them long before being written. There are tribal songs of this nature, such as the great Triumphal Ode in Exodus xv, and ancient stories, all of which had come down by long tradition. Much of this oral material was, perhaps, gathered from the local sanctuaries and the schools of the prophets, where it had every chance of being well-preserved. At the same time, a large part of the component documents was undoubtedly compiled from earlier sources of a written nature, some of them dating from the beginning of the Hebrew race.

In Exodus there are some elements which must have been set down in writing at a period not long distant from the events. Scholars are agreed that the Biblical records relating to this time contain a greater measure of real historical material than used to be supposed, and

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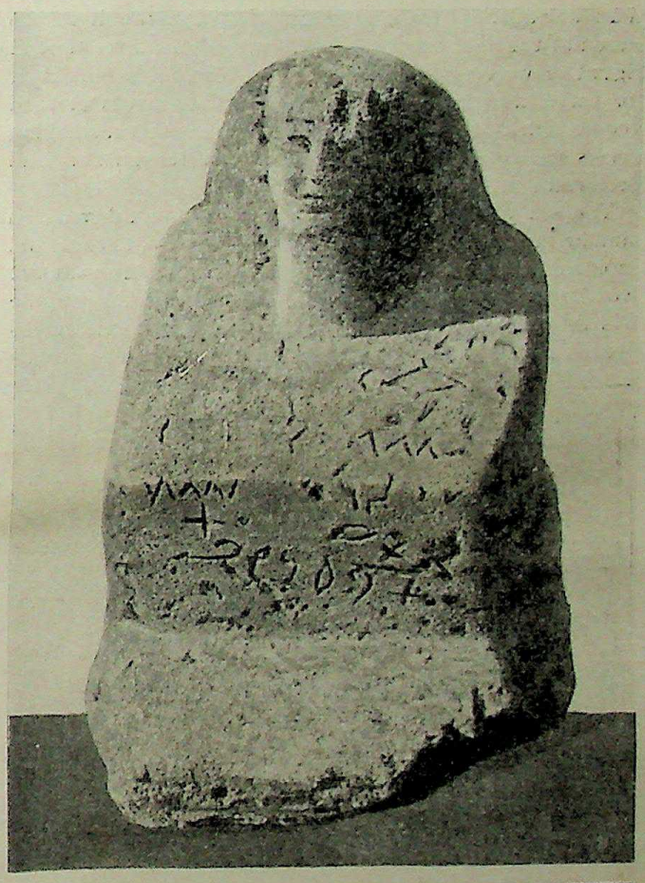
must have been based, in some important matters, upon authentic documents. That some of the Israelites themselves, during their sojourn in Egypt, were acquainted with writing (probably in the ancient Semitic alphabet) is evident from certain of their number being appointed "officers" (Exodus v, 14), the word for which, *shatar*, literally means "scribes." This implies that the Israelites were able to keep the usual registering and account work which the Egyptian taskmasters required. The fact is that writing was habitually used long before Moses was born (about 1500 B.C.), and even before Abraham. We have now thousands of tablets from Babylonia, Assyria, and other regions, as early as the third and fourth millenia B.C. Indeed, we have no difficulty in concluding that in the time of Moses there were many written chronologies and codes in the Near East, and there must have been scribes and recorders among the Hebrews.

All this goes to show that the authors of the original documents in the eighth and ninth centuries B.C. could have had, and probably did have, actual written sources at their disposal, dating from much earlier times than their own, and contemporary or almost so with the events they described. The present writer sees no difficulty in assuming such earlier writings, and has no hesitation in believing that Moses inscribed his laws on tables of stone after the manner of Hammurabi (the Babylonian king in the time of Abraham) and made legal and historical records in other forms. There can be no reason to deny that the Decalogue and other laws in Exodus may have been written down at that early age. We may thus conclude that the component parts of Exodus contain, not only oral traditions, but a certain amount of earlier written material, especially in connexion with those great events, such as the exodus from Egypt, which had deeply moved the Hebrew race.

Egyptian Traces in the Exodus Story

THAT much of this earlier material in the story of Exodus must have originated in Egypt, or at least have had some direct connexion with that land, is evident from the fact that clear visible traces of Egyptian influence can be found in the language used. The material may not have been contemporary with the events described—it may have been produced some generations later, as some of the proper names seem to show—but it certainly bears unmistakable marks of contact with Egypt. A great deal of Egyptian life is depicted with a wealth of detail which could have been derived only from thorough knowledge and exact observation. The most intimate familiarity with the manners, customs, and usages of the Egyptians at the epoch of the Exodus (i.e. the 18th Dynasty) is everywhere apparent in the expressions used. In one verse alone (ii, 3) no fewer than four Egyptian words occur: "And when she could not longer hide him, she took for him an *ark* of *bulrushes*, and daubed it with slime and with pitch; and put the child therein, and she laid it in the *flags* by the *river's* brink." Here is the word *tēbā* for ark, *gōmĕ* for bulrushes, *sūph* for flags, and *yeōr* for river, all of which are Egyptian loan words. In some cases, also, whole phrases are so typically Egyptian that no one but a Hebrew, who was writing under the influence of the Egyptian language, could adapt them to Hebrew. The Egyptian knowledge shown, moreover, is not such as any writer could have picked up while spending a few weeks in the land: it is deeper, more accurate, more intimate than this. There was a time when the writers of the Book of Exodus were boldly taxed with ignorance of Egyptian customs. Now no one ventures on such an assertion. In fact, hardly a year passes without the discovery of fresh passages in Egyptian literature, which harmonize with and illustrate the Exodus narrative.

Even the most cursory reader of the Book will agree that the writers have done their work well. The story they tell is the thrilling one of Israel's galling bondage in a foreign land and their miraculous escape by the hand of God. "I have surely seen the affliction of my people," said God to Moses. "I have heard their cry, I know their sorrows, and I have come down to deliver them." True, no record of this great event, or even of the Oppression, which must have extended over a considerable period, is given in the papyri or monuments or tombs of Egypt. Indeed, only one mention of Israel has been found ("Isira'al people"); this is on a monument erected by Pharaoh Merneptah, who reigned about 1230 B.C., in which it is stated that "Israel is desolated, her seed is not." Apart from this, there is no Egyptian reference



PRECURSOR OF ALPHABETIC WRITING. Egyptian in pose, but too clumsily executed to be the work of an Egyptian sculptor, this figure, dated by some about 1900 B.C., was found in Sinai. It is probably a Semitic sculpture. On it occurs one of the groups of signs (enlargement below) that have been read as Ba'alath, and this, with others in the region, may be the forerunner of the alphabet.

From Petrie, "Researches in Sinai"

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anywhere to any of the persons or events connected with Israel's early history

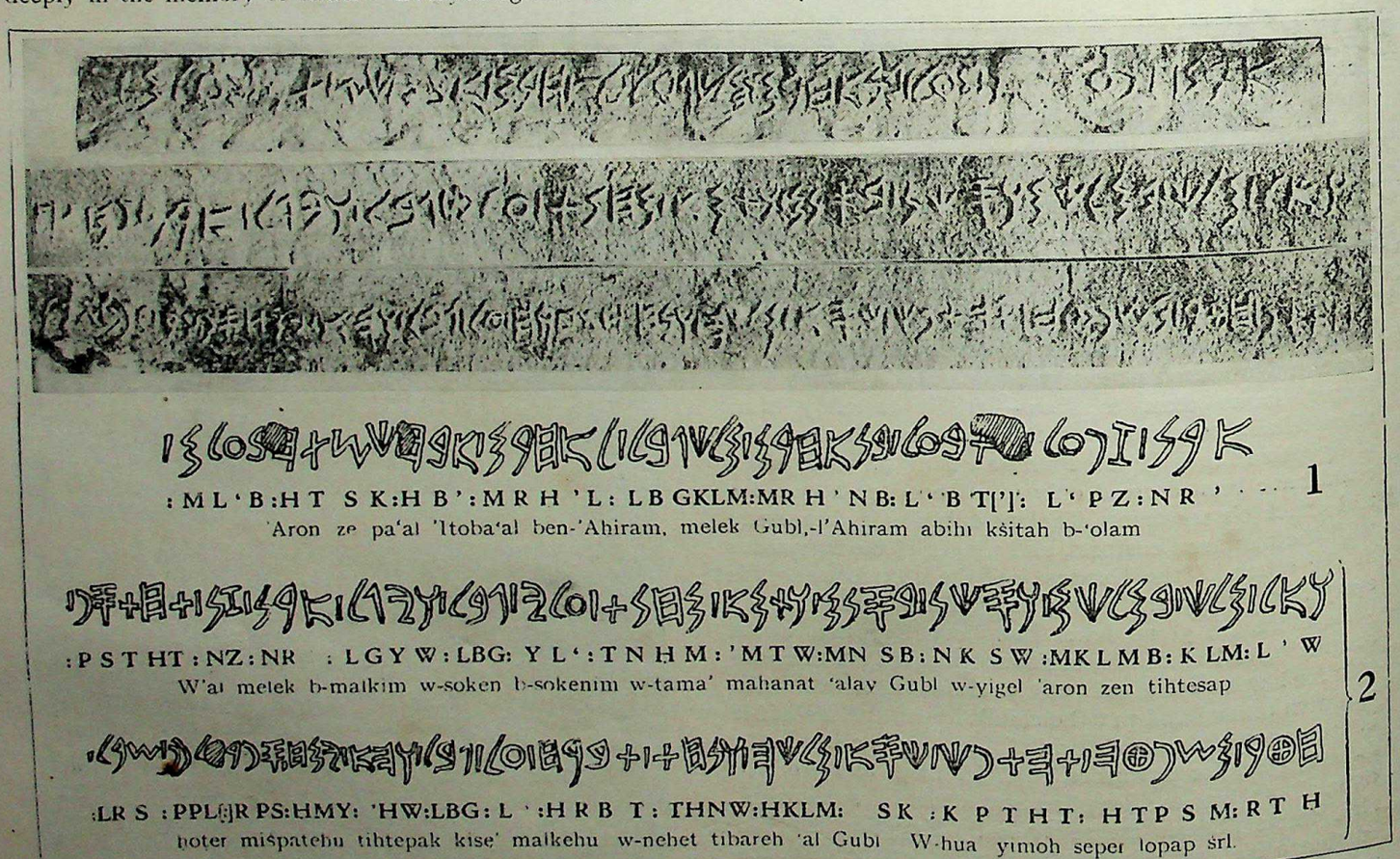
But the writers of the Book of Exodus, who were well acquainted with the facts, furnish us with all the details we need. The district of Goshen, which was allotted to the Israelites by Pharaoh, was somewhere in the eastern Delta, and was probably not a large one, covering perhaps only about one hundred square miles at the most. Within this enclosed tract the great majority of them must have dwelt, with their flocks and herds, much the same as dwell the Beduin of the present day. Here they suffered grievous hardship, slavery, and cruelty under the task-masters' lash. No doubt, they had their tribal leaders, councils of elders, rudimentary worship, and other organization. Being of poor social and political standing, they would probably be of little importance to the Egyptian authorities, and this is no doubt the reason why they are never mentioned in Egyptian history; for even Moses, from the Egyptian point of view, would be no more than a leader of alien nomads. Besides, the Israelites were not the only people who sojourned for a long time in Egypt or were enslaved to work on Pharaoh's buildings, for there are many pictures on the monuments of such people, who were not Jews, and whom we see making bricks under the superintendence of a taskmaster, and performing other servile work.

The story of Israel might well be lost amid a dozen similar memories, but the events were so significant and momentous to the Israelites themselves that we do not wonder at them being referred to so frequently in the Old Testament. They seem to have imprinted themselves deeply in the memory of Israel Everything else in the Old Testament stands in the background compared with the Egyptian bondage and the marvellous deliverance by God. In song, psalm, and prophecy it echoed down the history of Israel till its close, and could no more be forgotten than the British nation can forget the Great War, or the American nation its struggle for independence.

All the Biblical accounts are in agreement that the Israelites were at the end of their resources when God intervened to deliver them How complete the ruin of the pursuing Egyptians was it is impossible to say. For it is legitimate to suppose that the Israelites, exulting in their unexpected escape and in their triumph over their enemies, may have made it greater than it actually was. But at least it was great enough to prevent Pharaoh making any further effort at pursuit. Israel was freed from Egyptian bondage from that hour.

Fresh Light on Israel's Journey

IT is not generally known that this outstanding event in Israel's history has been wonderfully corroborated in recent years by external evidence. According to the latest historical and archaeological researches, it is believed to have taken place under the 18th Egyptian dynasty, about 1445 B.C., just after the long despotic reign of Thothmes III (who was thus the oppressor) and during that of his son, Amenhotep II (*c.* 1447–1420 B.C.). If we allow forty years or thereabouts (the figure is a round one) for the wanderings in the desert, the entry into Canaan would correspond with the invasion of this land by the "Habiru" (Hebrews), described so vividly



ANCIENT ALPHABETIC INSCRIPTION. The epitaph of Ahiram, King of Byblus, *c.* 1250 B.C., was found in 1923 graven on his coffin. Being Semitic it is vowelless and runs from right to left; a left to right version in Roman characters with vowels inserted is given below the lines. Translation: first line: This coffin made (I)thoba'al (?) son of Ahiram, King of Byblus, for Ahiram his father to be an abiding place for ever. Second line: And if any king among kings or governor among governors lay siege to Byblus and discover this coffin, broken be the sceptre of his government, overturned be the throne of his royalty, and let peace reign over Byblus. If any man efface this inscription may his seed perish. This inscription dates from but a century or two after Moses, who probably used the same ancient Semitic alphabet.

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"IN CARVING OF WOOD TO MAKE ANY MANNER OF CUNNING WORK"

This humble follower of one of the crafts of "Bezaleel, the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah," who was inspired "to devise curious works" and "carving of wood" for the tabernacle (Exodus xxxv, 30-33), conservatively clings to the ancient method of drilling. A woodworker of Jerusalem, chiefly employed in fashioning ploughs, he uses tools which do not differ much from those of the carpenters among the Children of Israel and their Egyptian contemporaries. Holes were bored by them with a drill worked by a bow and string similar to the one seen in the photograph.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

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"EAT IT IN HASTE: IT IS THE LORD'S PASSOVER"

The first festival mentioned in the Bible is that of the Passover, an occasion for a family feast of sacredly memorial character celebrating the national deliverance from Egyptian bondage. The Samaritans (*see* illustration in page 150) still keep the festival strictly as "the sacrifice of the Lord's passover, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, when he smote the Egyptians" (Exodus xii, 10, 11, 27). The roasted lamb is eaten in haste, care being taken that no bones are broken; no table-ware is used; and "that which remaineth of it until the morning" they scrupulously burn with fire."

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

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"AND WITH BITTER HERBS THEY SHALL EAT IT"

Though the bitter plants traditionally associated with the Passover, to be eaten with the Paschal lamb, are endive, chicory, nettles and lettuce, the Hebrew word which is rendered "bitter herbs" in Exodus xii, 8 does not refer to any special plants. Cultivated herbs for food are mentioned several times in the Bible and, dried, they are today in Palestine the poor man's luxury, spread with olive oil on his breakfast bread. He buys them from the barrow, neatly set out with an assortment in colourful design. The required weight is correctly balanced in the scales by graded iron bars.

Photo, "Daily Mirror"

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"THE LAND OF GOSHEN, IN WHICH MY PEOPLE DWELL"

This rural scene is in the Wady Tumilat, one of the most fertile parts of Egypt, where wheat-fields, fringed by luxuriant palms, ripen to the harvest, are reaped, and the corn is threshed as in the days when the land belonged to Israel. The site of Goshen is at the west end of this Wady, and was the district given by the Pharaoh who honoured Joseph to his kinsmen and their descendants. No wonder that these descendants during their wanderings in the parched wilderness regretfully remembered the land where corn, wine and fruit were in abundance.

Photo, E.N.A.

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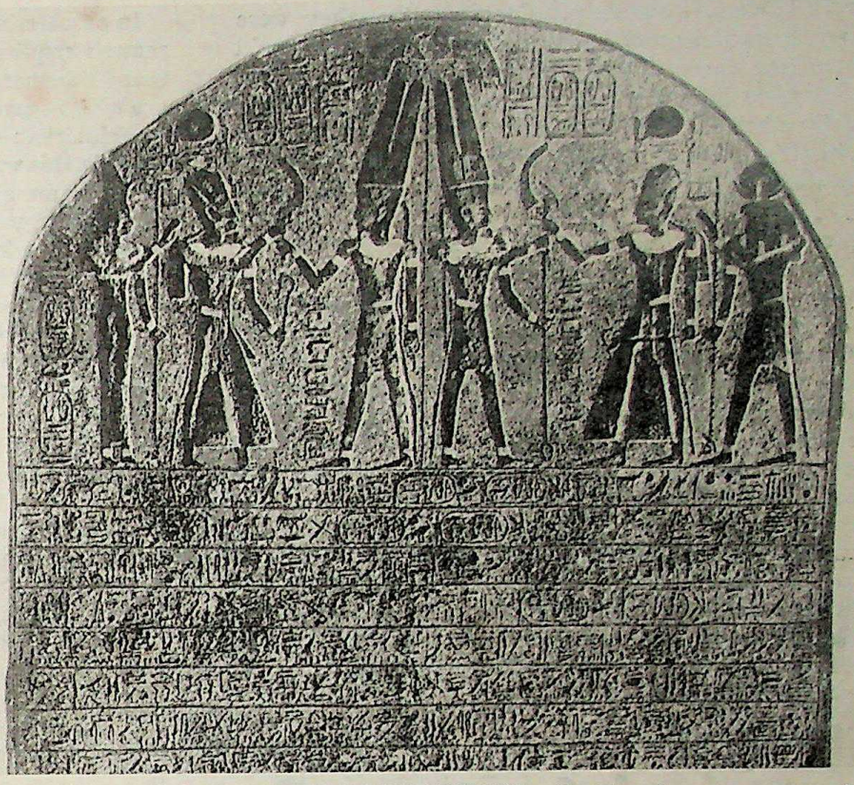
in letters received by Amenhotep from Palestinian governors about 1400 B.C., and dug up in 1887 in this Pharaoh's palace at Tell el-Amarna in Egypt. Nearly all the letters record imminent disaster to the Egyptian power in Palestine owing to the invasion, coupled with earnest entreaties for help. The Governor of Jerusalem described the invaders as coming from the south, the "land of Seir," and as attacking the districts and towns round Jerusalem, and threatening the city itself. He pictures their advance as widespread and powerful. This "Habiru" or Hebrew entry into Canaan has now been corroborated archaeologically by the excavations of Professor Garstang at Jericho, which show that this city was attacked and destroyed about 1400 B.C. We may therefore conclude that the Hebrews were actually in Egypt for a time as stated in Exodus, and that they escaped from bondage about 1445 B.C.



EGYPTIAN MENTION OF THE ISRAELITES. On Egyptian monuments the only mention as yet discovered of the word Israel is in a hymn of victory engraved upon a stele from the mortuary temple of the Pharaoh Merneptah at Thebes: "Israel is desolate, her seed is not." As the inscription is dated to 1223 B.C., the inference is that the Israelites were already settled in Palestine in the 13th century B.C. If so, Merneptah, who began his reign about 1225 B.C., was not the Pharaoh of the Exodus.

Courtesy of Sir Flinders Petrie

Any theory dealing with the date no doubt has its perplexities, but, in the newer evidence now available, there is a combination of arguments, Biblical, chronological, and historical, which points to the date we have mentioned. A remarkable coincidence of this epoch with the narrative in the Book of Exodus is that the "Pharaoh's daughter," who rescued Moses when a child, would be none other than the Princess Hatshepsut, one of the most interesting figures in history, who was the wise, energetic, and peace-loving daughter of Thothmes I, and who is believed to have died about 1479 B.C.

The writer need say nothing further as to the origins and conception of the Book. He would only point out that a realization of the different documents referred to, and their particular characteristics, goes a long way to explain any difficulties and divergencies that appear. In particular, it is well to remember that the priestly writers were inclined to read back subsequent events into early history, under the idea that some of the externals that existed in Israel in their own day must have existed long before. But when we understand the purpose and methods of these ancient writers—how they were striving in their own way to give God the first place in history—we can understand how to read their narratives.

Value of Exodus to the Modern Reader

EXODUS, like the rest of the Pentateuch, then receives fresh illumination, and its value remains priceless. It fills with throbbing human experiences and dear human faces; it pictures the perplexities and passions of our own hearts; it throws light upon our doubts and fears and sorrows; and it reveals God's footsteps across the path of history. It is seen also to be rich in great historical facts and in moral and spiritual lessons.

The writers of the Book of Exodus are not mere historians, but are religious interpreters of history. They may be criticized as narrators of outward events, but they make God manifest everywhere in their writings. It is this fact that gives permanent significance to the story of the Exodus. It is its deep religious and moral meaning that makes it attractive and instructive to the Christian reader. The intrinsic value of the Book is not affected by the question whether this or that detail belongs to this or that documentary source, or whether certain features may be mythical or legendary conceptions. The underlying idea in the Book is its teaching of Divine truth—its condemnation of evil and its emphasis upon righteousness, goodness, and truth.

In regard to the Exodus itself, which was the cardinal event in the life of the nation, the writers lay stress on two important facts. First, it was God who delivered the Israelites. While many of the details connected with the escape from bondage may be doubted by some readers and may be considered as later additions to the story, the one fact that stands out prominently is that it was God who brought the people out of Egypt "with a mighty hand and with an outstretched arm," and gave them their liberty. Hence this great historic event imprinted itself deeply on their memory and became the one constant thing in their religion—became the great theme of historians, prophets, and psalmists. It was even the chief thing from which they dated many of their religious ceremonies. They took, for example, an old festival, the Passover, which they had been in the habit of celebrating previously, and they turned it into a memorial of their deliverance from Egypt. It was to be a joyful commemoration to be observed on the first night of every year as a reminder of how God came to save them. Secondly, the Israelites were accordingly the people of God. They had been chosen by Him (compare Amos iii, 2, "You only have I known of all the families of the earth"), and were so bound to Him that together both formed one group or organism, as it were. They were the only people to whom He had

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revealed Himself intimately. Consequently, they were different from the other peoples of the earth, and could not live like these others. They were called upon to live alone, to have the courage to be different, and to show by their lives that there was a distinction. It was in this spirit that they went out into the desert, acknowledging themselves separated, and knowing where the difference lay.

In addition to these two facts, so well stressed by the writers, the Exodus story contains important teaching for the present day. "These things happened unto them for ensamples, and they are written for our admonition" (1 Corinthians x, 11). In this history we can see, as through a magnifying glass, the history of every human soul that makes its escape from the bondage of evil to the liberty of God's kingdom. We have a record, as it were, of the trials and privations which accompany that great event in the experience of the individual. The Exodus presents us, moreover, with a picture of the Church, the great company of the people of God, in its march to the "land of far distances," for it shows the eternal conditions of progress, the hindrances of human wills, and the victories of Divine grace, through which the redeemed of God move onward to the rest that remaineth for them.

God's Voice in the Ten Commandments

BUT it is undoubtedly in the events at Sinai (or Horeb) that we find the most valuable teaching. The Israelites marched to Sinai; and there, encamped before the mountain, they received the code of laws known as the Decalogue or Ten Commandments (Exodus xx, 1-21; compare also Deuteronomy v, 6-21). These have a clearly-marked moral and spiritual character, laying down the fundamental articles of religion and asserting the claims of morality in the chief spheres of human relationship. Within their brief compass we find monolatry (the worship of one God) commanded; images prohibited; false swearing condemned; the Sabbath enjoined; reverence to parents required; murder, adultery, theft, false witness, and covetousness forbidden.

It is said about the Ten Commandments that they were spoken directly by God, in the hearing, not only of the priests, but of the whole nation, and it is recorded that they were thereafter written down by God Himself on two stone tablets. We are not, of course, to take these statements in their literal sense. What the writers meant was, in the first place, that the Decalogue was *fundamental*. There were other laws that only the priests were required to observe, but the Ten Commandments applied to everyone, whether priests, rulers, or ordinary people. On them all the national institutions of Israel, whether civil or ceremonial, were to be based.

Further, to say that God Himself had put them on stone tablets was just another way of saying that they were *unchangeable*. No one had the right to alter them—they were final, immutable, absolute; and anyone who modified or varied them in any particular ceased to be a worshipper of Him.

Further still, their main purpose was *to reveal the nature and character of God Himself*, who had delivered Israel from bondage. He was not a mere power: He was a moral God and insisted upon righteousness and goodness among His people. While Israel's God was theirs in the sense that Moab's God was the Moabites', yet there was this difference—Israel's God had moral character, and demanded the same from His people, being concerned first and last for right conduct.

In considering the teaching of the Decalogue, one other remark requires to be made. It is noticeable that all these Commandments, with the exception of the fifth, are of a negative character, like most of the rules given to children: "Thou shalt not . . ." Looking at them in this way, and especially from a Christian point of view, we are apt to regard them as an imperfect code of religion and morality. Probably, in the form given, they were more adapted to the Israelites, who at this early time, generally speaking, were only a half-civilized agricultural people. Such negative precepts, however, could not meet the demands of the conscience for a positive moral ideal. Hence it was that they received some revision at the hands of Christ, who interpreted them in such a way as to widen their range and exalt their demands, and who announced a new commandment of brotherly love (John xiii, 34).

From Sinai the Israelites moved on to Kadesh. They could not all have camped here, for there was certainly not sufficient pasture or water to support the sheep and cattle of such a large body. Probably they lived a nomadic life, making Kadesh their centre to which they gathered at certain times. Here, where their main sanctuary was, they received an additional code of laws from Moses, known as "The Book of the Covenant," consisting of civil and ceremonial regulations. It is evident that the Ten Commandments, which were entirely religious and moral, required to be supplemented by these others. Therefore, the book contained, first of all, a useful *civil* code, which is described as "Judgements." Such a code was very necessary, for quarrels between individuals might arise, and would require settlement. Disputes might take place between clans over the right to certain pastures, like those which happened between Abraham's shepherds and those of Lot. Difficulties might emerge between people over property and similar things.

A man might kill another and be charged with murder, but the deed might have been done in self-defence or by accident. Sometimes it happened that such matters could be settled by the local "sheikhs," but often they were brought before the priests in the sanctuary, to be determined, as it were, by God, who was acknowledged by all to be the supreme ruler and guide. The sanctuary thus became a place of judgement, and naturally the priests kept a record of the decisions dealing with particular cases, and used these as precedents to determine similar cases in future. In this way, a comprehensive collection of civil and criminal laws sprang up (Exodus xxi, 1—xxii, 17). All of them are penetrated by a high ethical and religious spirit.

Rules of Conduct for the Hebrew People

WITH two exceptions (xxi, 17; xxii, 2, 3) they appear to be grouped together in pentads (or sets of five), probably so that they might be more easily remembered. There are eight such pentads: (1) male slaves, (2) female slaves, (3) acts of violence, (4) personal injuries, (5) injuries by beasts, (6) theft, burglary, loss by fire, (7) deposits, and (8) loans.

As the work of carrying out these laws was too great for Moses and the priests, a number of magistrates and judges were appointed on the suggestion of Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, who had paid a visit to the camp. Such laws reminded the Israelites that their God had a care for the administration of justice. The Ten Commandments laid down broad general principles which were to rule their religious and moral life, but these civil enactments dealt mainly with what we would call secular

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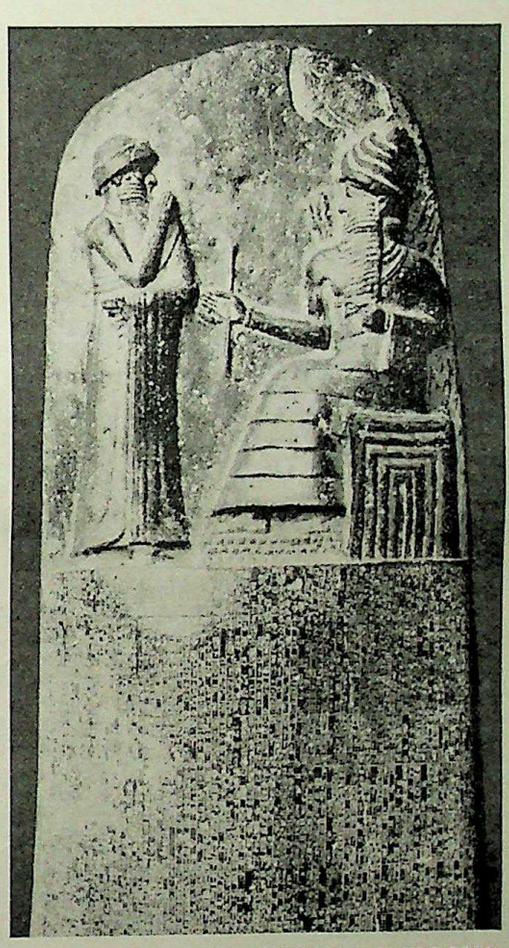
matters. They decided what should be done in the way of civilization and jurisprudence. Unless the people recognized one another's rights and respected them, there could be no nation and indeed no human society.

Some of the provisions laid down seem imperfect and even harsh. Certainly they could not be taken as precedents for general legislation in modern times. But it must be remembered that they were never intended to be final, and account must be taken of the age for which they were prescribed. Moses was not legislating for the ideal republic of Plato, or a community of perfect beings, but for a people born in slavery, from which they had just broken away—for a people who were subject to obstinacy, rebellion, and lawlessness of many kinds. After all, this brief civil code has a large element of purity, wisdom, and justice, and the dominant spirit in it is unquestionably a humane regard for the unprotected and the helpless. It is this mingling of the terrible and the tender that gives to all Hebrew law its unique character. Crime and its punishment is not in itself a pleasant subject to dwell on; but when on this dark background is thrown the light of provisions for the weak and defenceless, the effect is like the glow of sunset on the red granite of the Sinai mountains.

It is interesting to note that some of these "Judgements" correspond with those in the more elaborate Stele of Hammurabi, the Babylonian monarch, whose nearly 300 civil and other laws were engraved on a black marble stele, and had already been in existence for over 600 years. Thus (to take one example from many), the first few verses of Exodus xxii correspond with the eighth law of the code of Hammurabi, though the fine is greater there (the Babylonians being richer), and inability to pay involves death.

A comparison of the Mosaic laws, in fact, with those of this ancient monarch shows that the identity of the two in many respects is very singular. It is not that Moses "copied" the Babylonian code or any other. He may have been dependent upon it to some extent, but there were principles of legislation that were common to all the regions of the Near East. These had probably emanated from Arabia, the home of the Semites, and were current, indeed, for many ages before Hammurabi. It was this common law that Moses codified at Sinai, at the same time giving it the numerous golden threads not found elsewhere. This, of course, does not detract from the uniqueness of the Mosaic laws, which have a distinctive religious character of their own, nor from the divine and imperishable truths which Moses proclaimed to the Chosen People.



LAWS KNOWN TO THE PATRIARCHS. **Abraham must have been acquainted with the laws codified and enforced by Hammurabi, King of Babylonia (2123-2081), which show analogies with the Laws of Moses. The text of the code was engraved on the stele (upright stone slab) discovered at Susa in 1901 and shown above. Its sculptured decoration represents the legend of Hammurabi receiving the laws from Shamash the sun-god.**

The Louvre

But other laws besides these civil ones were required, for the Israelites had to know how to worship their God. Consequently, the rest of the Book of the Covenant is of a different nature, consisting largely of a *Ceremonial Code* (Exodus xx, 22—26; xxii—xxiii, 9), which relates to the Sabbath year, the Sabbath day, festivals, sacred dues, sacrifices, and certain social and moral evils. These additional regulations played an important part in the religious education of the Israelites. They enforced and deepened the sense of sin, and declared the need of forgiveness and restoration. They expressed in the form of institutions the great principles which regulate man's converse with God. They taught that a rite of sacrifice or self-denial of some kind must precede acceptance of the worshipper by God, and thus prepared the way for the supreme and final sacrifice of Christ.

But, apart from all these laws, we may glean valuable moral and spiritual lessons from the life of Moses, which occupies such a large part in the story of Exodus. For example, we learn what proper organization can do, for his was an organizing, constructive mind. He took a nation, or rather a horde of ignorant bondmen, and moulded them in his own lifetime into a compact and vigorous nationality; and he took the elements of morality and sociology and wove them into a majestic series of institutes, nobler and purer than any to be found in surrounding nations. Though more than 3,000 years have passed since he lived, his code is still the basis of modern morality, modern jurisprudence, modern worship—in a single word, modern civilization.

Then we see what genuine moral character can do. Not that Moses was faultless—his naturally impetuous temperament brought him more than once into serious trouble, as in the affair of the Egyptian homicide, and the smiting of the rock of Meribah. But he had undoubted personal qualities of a high order, such as sympathy, for he entered into the woes of his enslaved kinsmen in Egypt; self-denial, for he refused any longer to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; conscientiousness, as when he chose rather to suffer with God's people than to enjoy the pleasures of sin; magnanimity, as when he offered to die in place of his apostate people; and heroism, as when he confronted Pharaoh's court and Israel's tumultuous demands. His was surely an ideal character, and well does Exodus pay him the magnificent tribute of being the greatest of Israel's prophets, one whom "God knew face to face."

Again we learn how a good life may have sore disappointments, but nevertheless has high compensations. It is infinitely sad to think that this great leader never set foot in Canaan, and that he died and was buried in the heathen land of Moab. But he still had God with him, and died with the vision splendid before his eyes

Finally, the workers for God fall, but the work goes on. The great purpose of God advances in spite of all obstacles, and will continue to do so age after age.

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NATURAL HISTORY OF THE BIBLE. I

An ABC of Plants and Trees

(*Concluded from page* 106)

OF the fruit trees found in Palestine the olive is still the one most extensively cultivated, for olives form a staple commodity of the peasant today, just as they did in Biblical times. Ten to fifteen gallons of oil are obtainable from a tree in full bearing, while the berries provide not only butter, but soap and candles.

NEXT in importance come the vine and the fig tree. The climate of Palestine is particularly suited to the grape, and that its cultivation is of very early origin is proved by innumerable traces and remains of ancient vineyards. Figs then, as now, were of great economic importance. The bulk of the harvest was dried, a method of preserving used also for grapes, for there are references in the Old Testament, especially in the Book of Samuel, to "raisins" and to "cakes of figs."

THE brilliantly coloured flowers that spring up after the rains contribute an enchanting feature to the landscape of the Holy Land. But the season is a short one—a few weeks only in the months of March and April—and it is with the essential impermanence of the "flower of the field" that human life is compared by the Psalmist and the author of the Book of Job.

Plant	*Scripture References*	*Notes*
Myrtle	Nehemiah viii, 15; Isaiah xli, 19; lv, 13; Zechariah i, 8, 11	Tree common in Palestine
Nettle	Job xxx, 7; Proverbs xxiv, 31; Isaiah xxxiv, 13; Hosea ix, 6, etc.	Two plants are indicated: the large stinging nettle, and perhaps the thorny acanthus
Nut	Genesis xliii, 11; Song of Solomon vi, 11	Word applied in the Song of Solomon to the walnut, and in Genesis to the pistachio nut
Oak: translation of six different Hebrew words	Genesis xxxv, 4, 8; Joshua xxiv, 26; Judges vi, 11; II Samuel xviii, 9, 10, 14; Ezekiel vi, 13; xxvii, 6; Hosea iv, 13; etc.	One word so translated is the terebinth or teil tree; two others may represent the evergreen and the deciduous tree. Three species of oak are common in Palestine
Oil Tree	I Kings vi, 23; Nehemiah viii, 15; Isaiah xli, 19	The oleaster, a tree common in Palestine; the wood is used for making furniture
Olive Tree	Deuteronomy xxiv, 20; Judges ix, 8; Psalms lii, 8; Isaiah xvii, 6; Jeremiah xi, 16; Romans xi, 17, 24, etc.	*Olea europaea*, widely distributed throughout Palestine; grafted on wild stock. The wild olive (Romans xi, 17-24) was the ungrafted seedling, producing small and inferior fruit
Onion	Numbers xi, 5	The common onion, *Allium cepa*
Orange, *see* Apple		
Palm Tree	Exodus xv, 27; Leviticus xxiii, 40; Judges i, 16; etc.	The date palm. It was once extensively cultivated in the Jordan valley
Pine Tree	Isaiah xli, 19; lx, 13	The plane
Pomegranate	Exodus xxviii, 33-34; Numbers xiii, 23; I Kings vii, 18; Song of Solomon viii, 2; iv, 13; vi, 11; vii, 12; etc.	Fruit of *Punica granatum*, a tree widely distributed in the East. The juice was made into wine and the rind had medicinal qualities. The fruit was a model for architectural ornaments
Poplar	Genesis xxx, 37; Hosea iv, 13	The first reference may be to the storax; the second to the poplar, of which three species occur in Palestine. (*See* under Mulberry)
Pulse	II Samuel xvii, 28; Daniel i, 12, 16	Various kinds of peas and lentils, staple foods in Palestine
Rose, Rose of Sharon	Song of Solomon ii, 1; Isaiah xxxv, 1	Used, like lily, in a general way; or may refer to bulbous plants generally or to *Narcissus tazetta*, which abounds on the Plain of Sharon. No true roses are found, except in Galilee and Lebanon
Rue	Luke xi, 42	The herb *Ruta graveolens*
Saffron	Song of Solomon, iv, 14	Spice distilled from *Crocus sativus*
Shittah Tree or Shittim Wood	Exodus xxv, 10; xxxvii, 1; Deuteronomy x, 3; Isaiah xli, 19; etc.	R. V. translates acacia, as it is now identified with *Acacia seyal*, the gum arabic tree
Spicery	Genesis xxxvii, 25; xliii, 11	R.V. gives "gum tragacanth, or storax."
Stacte	Exodus xxx, 34	Drop of aromatic gum, probably of storax, used in perfumes
Sycamine Tree	Luke xvii, 6	The black mulberry
Sycomore	I Kings x, 27; I Chronicles xxvii, 28; II Chronicles i, 15; Psalms lxxviii, 47; Amos vii, 14; Luke xix, 4	Species of fig much cultivated in the East. The timber was used in Egypt for mummy coffins. Not the British sycamore, which is a maple
Tares	Matthew xiii, 24-30	Bearded darnel, a pernicious corn-weed
Teil Tree	Isaiah vi, 13	The terebinth
Thyme-Wood	Revelation xviii, 12	Wood resembling cypress and much valued by the Romans
Vine	Genesis xl, 9-10; Leviticus xxv, 5; Numbers vi, 4; etc., etc.	The grape vine, cultivated in the East from the earliest times
Wheat	Exodus ix, 32; Judges vi, 11; Ruth ii, 23; Jeremiah xii, 13; etc., etc.	Wheat was harvested from April to June
Willow	Leviticus xxiii, 40; Job xl, 22; Psalms cxxxvii, 2; Isaiah xv, 7; xliv, 4; Ezekiel xvii, 5	Reference is made to the willow generally; to the "willow of the brook," which is probably the oleander; and in the Psalms to what may be a poplar
Wormwood	Proverbs v, 4; Jeremiah ix, 15; Amos v, 7; Revelation viii, 11, etc.	Same as hemlock and gall; some poisonous, bitter-tasting herb

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Exodus

III

The Land of the Book

In the Footsteps of the Israelites from Goshen to Sinai

by REV. R. S. CRIPPS, M.A., B.D.

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ARE there any contemporary records about Israel in Egypt, or any landmarks in the desert that may be identified as being on their route? This is a reasonable question and one often asked. Now, in discussing the historical and geographical background of Exodus, it must be made clear that there is no record in Egyptian inscriptions and remains of Israel's sojourn in, or escape from, Egypt. The name of Moses has not been found, nor the geographical name Goshen. Of forty stations mentioned in Exodus, Numbers and Deuteronomy as on the route from Egypt up to the approach to the land of Moab, it can hardly be said that many more than half a dozen have been identified with any degree of certainty. In reading the story we need to remind ourselves that the events under consideration admittedly belong to a very distant past. If the date of the Exodus be 1445 B.C., that is hardly less than 3,400 years from our own time. These facts both illustrate the magnitude of the range covered by the Book of Exodus, and also serve to demonstrate to reasonable men and women that no security or dogmatic certainty should be claimed for the work of Bible students in any effort to place the Bible story within the solid mould of history and geography.

Problems Raised by the Exodus Story

FURTHERMORE, from the point of view of the Bible narrative, modern readers should remember that the writers did not always feel it their duty to give detailed facts such as perhaps we today should like to have known. Not till the First Book of Kings does the name of a king of Egypt appear; just the general word "Pharaoh" is all that is supplied. As regards geography, no writer in the Pentateuch, or anywhere else in the Bible for that matter, gives any clear indication as to the whereabouts of so important a site as Mount Sinai, where the law of Israel was promulgated. Yet the irony of the case is, that in inverse proportion to the prospect of convincing results, has been the vast product of literature in modern days upon the subject of the history and topography of the Exodus—a stream of energy, too often misplaced, which shows no sign of abating.

This does not imply that the Exodus is not to be regarded as an event in history. Far from it. It means only that the narrative of the book of Exodus is our only source of information. The writer will not ask the reader's attention to a tithe, or even a hundredth part, of what has been speculated during the last hundred years upon this most perplexing of subjects. But the reader will be interested to learn of a certain number of alternative views where there is insufficient material or a conflict of evidence. To know of an uncertainty is in itself a piece of real knowledge.

Goshen's Place in Egypt

ISRAELITES went into Egypt, they were there enslaved, they passed out free, they had an experience of God in the wilderness and they eventually entered Canaan. These are simple historical facts. Their relationship to the political life and the Nile Delta of Egypt, and the sand and streams of the desert, are of very minor importance. The really great thing is the place which these events have had in the foundation of eternal religion.

In the Book of Genesis it is related that Joseph secured for his father and his brothers the land of Goshen; it was well suited to the needs of this nomadic group with its flocks and herds. It is described as the "best of the land" (Genesis xlvii, 6, 11). In another book of the Bible, Goshen is described by the grumbling Israelites as a "land flowing with milk and honey"—the frequent description of Canaan itself (Numbers xvi, 13). Assuredly, it cannot be said that the name Goshen has been discovered in the Egyptian language as a district name, though there is no reason why it should not be identified some day. The site of Goshen, in the strict sense, should be placed in the fertile district along the western part of what is now called the Wady Tumilat, through which valley at a later time a freshwater canal connected the Nile with the Red Sea. There can be no doubt that at least by the time of the Greek translation of the first two books of the Bible (i.e., about 250 B.C.) the Jews believed that Goshen was all or part of this valley.

At a minimum estimate its area would be 70 square miles (*see* dotted line enclosure on Map I, according to Naville's boundaries). Note at the eastern end Tell el-Kebir, interesting to Englishmen as the low hill where Sir Garnet Wolseley in 1882 put down a rebellion of the Egyptian army. There is evidence, however, that it was larger, and even that the name could be applied to a considerable portion of the eastern part of the Nile Delta (Judith i, 7-10), as will appear later. That an Asiatic tribe like Jacob and his sons might be allowed residence at least for a time in the valley of the Tumilat seems clear from a papyrus dating from the time of a Pharaoh of about 1220 B.C. In this letter from an official upon the Egyptian frontier at the end of the Wady may be read these words: "We have finished causing the Beduin tribes (*Shasu*) of Atuma to pass the fortress of Merneptah, belonging to Theku (a district), towards the pools of Pithom of Merneptah, belonging to Theku, *in order to feed themselves and their flocks.*"

The name of the king of Egypt in whose reign the brothers of Joseph began their sojourn will perhaps never be known, but it may be stated with confidence that the period is that of the domination over Lower Egypt by the Hyksos—in Egyptian, *Hiku-khasut* or *Hiku-shos*, i.e., "Princes of the Desert." Manetho, the native Egyptian historian of the 3rd century B.C., speaks of this tribe in the following words: "Men of ignoble birth out of the eastern parts . . . . They burned our cities and demolished the temples of the gods . . . . At length they made one of themselves king. He lived at Memphis."

In passing, readers may be reminded that Manetho explains the proper name Hyksos as "Prince of the Shepherds," but this etymology may be the result of a confusion with the word *Shasu*, "Beduin or shepherds." It has been observed by many modern writers upon the story of the Israelite entry into Egypt that *if* the rulers of Egypt were "shepherds" *par excellence*, it would be easy to understand how every shepherd would be an "abomination" to the native Egyptians, and that Joseph's brethren might therefore be given hospitality by the Hyksos in a more or less defined area of Egypt. At all events, whether this dynasty of kings is rightly styled "Shepherd Kings" or not, these Asiatic rulers of Egypt might well receive the Israelites more gladly than native Egyptians would have done.

Egypt under the Rule of the Hyksos

FOR a period variously estimated at from two to five centuries, the Sheikh, or Chief, of the Hyksos was king of a considerable part of Egypt. From those very days the names and doings of many kings of this "dynasty," also the names of the gods of the Hyksos, have survived in Egyptian writing. The stronghold capital of these immigrants became Avaris—almost certainly the same as Tanis, near the Mediterranean coast (*see* Map I). Gradually, however, the Egyptians under their native rulers at Thebes were able to drive out these

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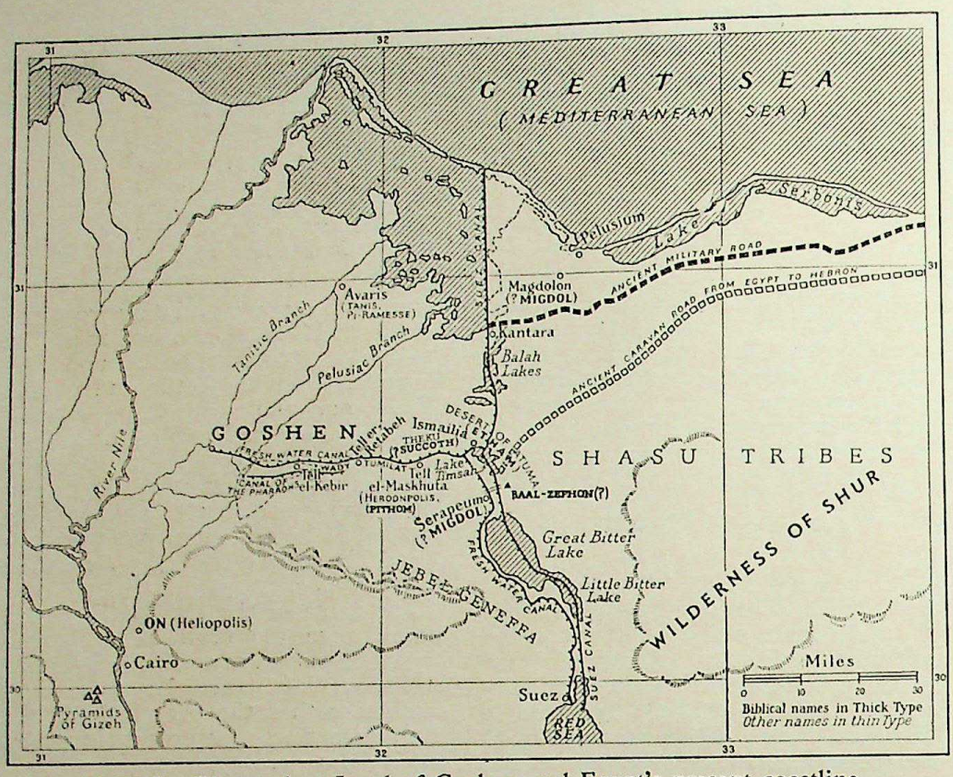

MAP I. The ancient Land of Goshen and Egypt's present coastline
Prepared under the direction of the Author

Asiatics. The Jewish historian Josephus, writing in about A.D. 94, takes the view that somehow the driving out of the Hyksos and the Exodus of the Hebrews were one and the same historical event. Fantastic as such an idea may seem at first sight to us, it must be borne in mind that it has received the support of some modern Egyptologists. At any rate, the Israelites and the Hyksos might conceivably have left Egypt more or less together. From the point of view of chronology it would only mean that Israel were nomads in the desert an extra century or so before entering Canaan.

'A New King which Knew not Joseph'

BE this as it may, all went well with the sons of Jacob and with their descendants until "there arose a new king over Egypt which knew not Joseph." (Exodus, i, 8). Who was this "new king"? According to the simplest explanation he was the first Pharaoh of the 18th Dynasty—Aahmes (Ahmose) I, who reigned from 1580 B.C., and who completed the expulsion of the Hyksos by the 5th year of his rule, taking over their seat of government, Avaris, as a capital. The narrative of Exodus pictures the Israelites remaining on in Egypt, possibly feared, certainly hated. The book tells of an edict to destroy their male babies and that an infant, Moses by name, was hidden by his mother and was, finally, brought up by Pharaoh's daughter. It has been suggested that the princess is to be identified with Hatshepsut, the eldest daughter of Thothmes (Thutmose) I, who was Queen with Thothmes II, and who, for the first 21 years of the reign of Thothmes III was the real ruler of Egypt (*see* illus. page 88).

Apparently from the time of Aahmes onwards the Israelites had been set to make bricks and to build under conditions often practised in the east at that time; and this state of things is thought by many to have reached its climax when Thothmes III was reigning alone. An excellent idea of brickmaking and wall-building by slave labour is afforded by the picture (*see* page 88) found in the tomb of the vizier of this very Thothmes III near Luxor. It shows captives taken in one of the Pharaoh's campaigns in Asia performing the various parts of the task. Some are drawing water, others are carrying the mud in a kind of basket, placing it in moulds, putting these to dry, heaping up the bricks (now hardened and finished) and, finally, building a wall with them. In the upper portion an Egyptian taskmaster may be seen with his rod. The hieroglyphics state: "For the new building of the storehouse of the god Amun of Thebes. Captives whom his Majesty carried away, building the temple of his father Amun (the god). The taskmaster says to his labourers, 'The stick is in my hand, be not idle.'"

This Pharaoh was one of the mightiest kings of Egypt. On the death of Hatshepsut about 1480 B.C., he, freed from her domination, tried to wipe out her memory, and changed her policy of peaceful trading for one of consolidation and expansion. Upon the walls of the celebrated Temple of Amun at Karnak, are inscribed the

OLD WHEN THE ISRAELITES SAW THEM. That overwhelmingly distinctive feature of the Egyptian scene, the Pyramids of Gizeh, must have been a familiar sight to the Israelites, though, as the erection of these stupendous monuments was already ancient history, they evoked no comment recorded in the Bible. The period of the Pyramid Builders, kings of the 4th Dynasty, was 2900–2750 B.C., ending nearly 1200 years before the probable date of the Oppression.
(Photo: American School of Oriental Research)

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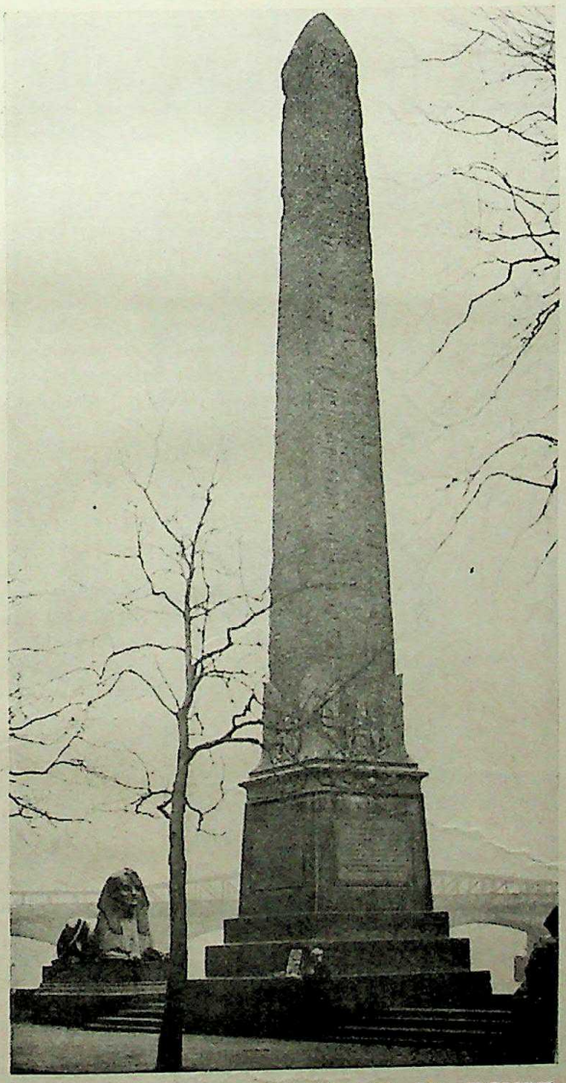
names of no fewer than 360 places which had fallen as a result of a battle at Megiddo in central Palestine in the year 1479 B.C. against an alliance of Syrian peoples. Amongst them occur Palestinian place-names which have been deciphered as Jacob-el and (less certainly) Joseph-el.

If Thothmes III was the great Pharaoh of the Oppression, it is interesting to remember that "Cleopatra's Needle" on the Thames Embankment is in fact one of two huge obelisks (weighing 180 tons apiece) erected by him at Heliopolis. In the year 12 B.C. these were removed to Alexandria where they remained until 1877. Then one was brought to England, and the other two years later travelled to New York. Thus arose on opposite shores of the western ocean memorials of the world's first empire builder.

Thothmes III died in 1447 B.C. His son Amenhotep II succeeded him and reigned about 26 years. The theory which is gaining in popularity today places the Exodus of Israel from Egypt in the early years of this monarch's reign.

Here this part of our subject might be dismissed but for two considerations. In the first place, readers who desire to see the matter whole—and really who does not?—may like to be reminded of the story of Egypt in such a way that they can perceive better why for many years it was believed that the Exodus actually took place two centuries later—in fact, that the Pharaoh of the final oppression was Rameses II and that of the release Merneptah (otherwise spelt Merenptah). Secondly, the reign of Rameses II provides a convenient basis for considering briefly the keenly-disputed question of the geography of the Sojourn which is so necessary to our subject. To continue, then, our summary of events in this most arresting period of the history of this most fascinating land.

Amenhotep II was succeeded by Thothmes IV. In the latter part of the reign of his successor, Amenhotep III, the imperial power of Egypt began to decay.



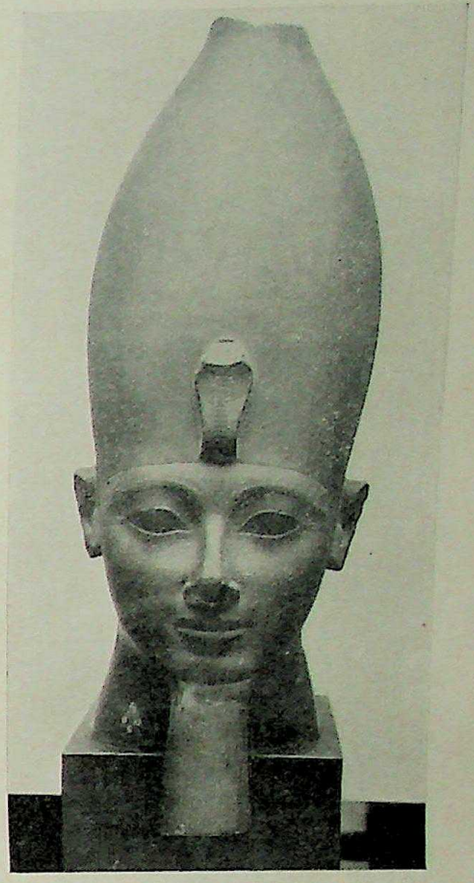
LONDON LINK WITH ISRAEL IN EGYPT. The so-called Cleopatra's Needles—one of which is now in New York and the other, viewed above, in London, on the Thames Embankment—are a pair of obelisks once set up by Thothmes III, about 1500 B.C., at Heliopolis, the Biblical city of On. He is frequently identified with the Pharaoh of the Oppression of the Israelites.

Photo, Fox

THEN in 1375 B.C. came the idealist, Amenhotep IV, otherwise known as Akhenaten (or Akhnaton). This king endeavoured to replace the worship of the many gods of Egypt by a species of monotheism—the worship of Aten, the disc of the sun. His capital he transferred from Thebes to Tell el-Amarna, 170 miles south of Cairo. Here a sculptured limestone stele shows the rays of the sun, each with a hand by which the Pharaoh can lay hold of divine assistance.

It has been suggested that this was the age of Moses and that he who was to become the great Israelite leader and lawgiver was influenced by the monotheistic idealism of Akhenaten. The Exodus of the Israelites, accordingly, it has been supposed, took place in the revolution in Egypt which is known to have followed shortly on the death of Akhenaten, 1358 B.C. We need not trouble ourselves further with this theory if for no other reason than that it rests upon a false comparison.

A truly interesting fact, however, concerning this period of history is that in the ruins of the palace of Akhenaten there have been discovered no fewer than 350 tablets in the cuneiform (Babylonian) writing which are of the utmost historical value. Most of them are now housed in the Berlin Museum, but some are in the British Museum. They were, in point of fact, letters to the two Pharaohs Amenhotep III and IV; the writers were Assyrian and Hittite kings and, what is more to our immediate purpose, some were local Egyptian governors in Palestine. From the letters of these last it is clear that Palestine was being attacked. Abdi-hiba, governor of Jerusalem, repeatedly implores the king to send help against the "Habiru" who are attacking in the south. For our purpose these tribes may be taken as the Hebrews. (See the last section of this chapter upon the Date of the Exodus).



PHARAOH OR QUEEN? Authorities are not agreed whether this sculpture is a portrait of Hatshepsut or of her husband, Thothmes III. Though ruler in her own right, the queen was formally regarded as a male Pharaoh, and is sometimes represented (as here) with a conventionalized beard.

British Museum

The reader may like to read some brief extracts from several letters (adapted from Handcock):

> To the king, my lord Abdi-hiba, thy servant speaks. Let the king know that all lands have leagued in hostility against me; let the king therefore care for his land. Why do you like the Habiru and hate the local rulers? . . . May the king care for his land. The lands of the king, my lord, have all fallen away. . . . So may it seem right to the king to send garrison troops. . . . The Habiru are devastating all the lands of the king. If there be troops in this year, then the lands will remain the king's, my lord's; but if no troops arrive, the lands of the king, my lord,

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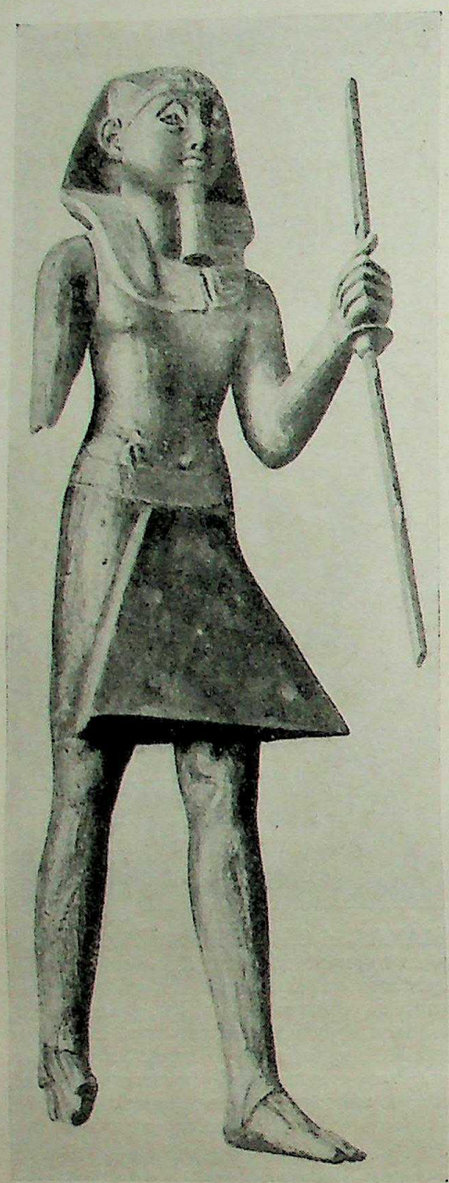


WAS THIS THE PHARAOH OF THE EXODUS? Many authorities now agree that the Exodus took place about 1445 B.C. If so, the Pharaoh who "hardened his heart" (Exodus viii, 32) and would not let the Israelites go, was Amenhotep II, whose reign began in 1447 B.C. This cedar statuette representing him marching, holding a lotus-ringed sceptre, was found in his tomb in the Valley of the Kings.

are lost. . . . Now the Habiru hold the cities of the king . . . yet the king does nothing. . . . The land of the king is lost to the Habiru.

If Akhenaten had followed up his praying with actions, his kingdom might have been more successful both at home and abroad. At all events, he and the Egyptian Empire died together. The undeservedly famous Tutankhamen's six years' rule, reversing the monotheism of Akhenaten, began in 1356 B.C.

In 1292 B.C. Rameses II, son of Seti I, came to the throne, ruling for 67 years. By the time of his death he attained a century of years, and had become the father of about 160 children. One of his wives was the daughter of Hattusil, the king of the powerful Hittites of Asia Minor, with which monarch he had concluded a treaty settling the boundary of the respective empires by a line near Beyrout "for ever." The British Museum contains many memorials from his reign, not least the head and shoulders of a colossal granite statue of Pharaoh Rameses himself.

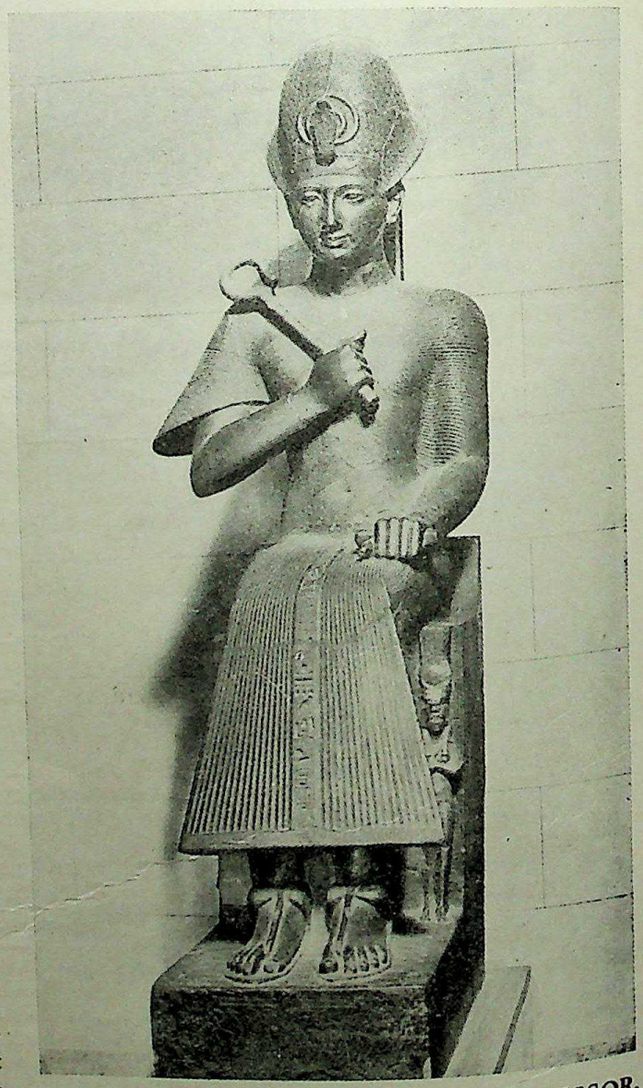
In the book of Exodus it is written that the people of the children of Israel in bondage "built for Pharaoh . . . Pithom and Raamses," i.e., Rameses (Exodus i, 11). This sentence is not so easy as it looks, as we shall see. Meanwhile *if* Rameses II were the Pharaoh of the great Oppression, his son Merneptah, (who reigned from 1225 to 1215 B.C.), would be the Pharaoh of the Exodus.

In the year 1883 a French archaeologist Edouard Naville, excavating at the modern Tell el-Maskhuta in the Wady Tumilat (*see* Map I) discovered an ancient city in the shape of a square containing within high brick walls an area measuring about 55,000 square yards. Here Naville discovered inscriptions bearing the name P-etom or Pi-Tum, that is, "abode of Tum"—the sun-god of the town of Heliopolis.

THE city contained (or at least he believed so) a number of separate store-chambers, which he thought showed that the city served the purpose of a store place for provisioning Egyptian troops before setting out across the desert to the eastward, as well as a defence or outpost to guard the Egyptian frontier. Naville concluded (from inscriptional finds) that the Pharaoh responsible for the building was Rameses II. Many later Egyptologists, however, have doubted whether Naville was right in holding that the city with its store-chambers, if indeed they were such, was built by Rameses II, particularly as this king had the habit of attaching his name to earlier Pharaohs' work. But it may be that Naville discovered the site of Pithom. Another point in Naville's work was the finding of the name Thuku or Theku seemingly designating a city close by Pithom, or else a small district in which Pithom lay. (This he identified with Succoth from which the children of Israel journeyed, Exodus xii, 37).

The site of the city Rameses, if in this district at all, may be Tell er-Retabeh, ten miles to the west of Pithom. Here Flinders Petrie found a temple and many objects suggesting a connexion between Rameses II and the foundation of this city. But more must be said in a moment upon the site of Rameses. Since Naville's day, Egyptologists like Peet and Alan Gardiner have come to the conclusion that Tell el-Maskhuta is not the ancient Pithom, but that it is Theku, and that Tell er-Retabeh is Pithom. Nothing alters the considerable amount of monumental evidence of a connexion of Pharaoh Rameses with the Valley of Tumilat.

Whether or not Rameses was the Pharaoh of the Oppression it is legitimate to hold that the land of Goshen at least included the western area of the Valley of Tumilat. Pithom and Rameses, wherever they may be, are not in Goshen in the narrow sense of the word. The latest discoveries as regards Rameses are those made by M. Montet at San el-Hagar, the ancient Zoan, on the "Tanitic" branch of the Nile, about 10 miles from the sea. In 1865 an Egyptologist, named Brugsch, had identified this site as Pi-Ramesse, "the city of Rameses." Now this is confirmed, and Dr. Alan Gardiner enthusiastically heralds it as the city which was



REGARDED BY SOME AS ISRAEL'S OPPRESSOR. The identification of Rameses II with the Pharaoh who afflicted the Israelites in Egypt was generally accepted before the discovery of the Israel Stele (*see* illustration in page 115) which apparently shows that the Hebrews had left the land before his reign, 1292-1225 B.C. The finest known portrait-statue of this mighty Pharaoh, pictured above, is now in the Egyptian Museum, Turin.

Photo: *Anderson*

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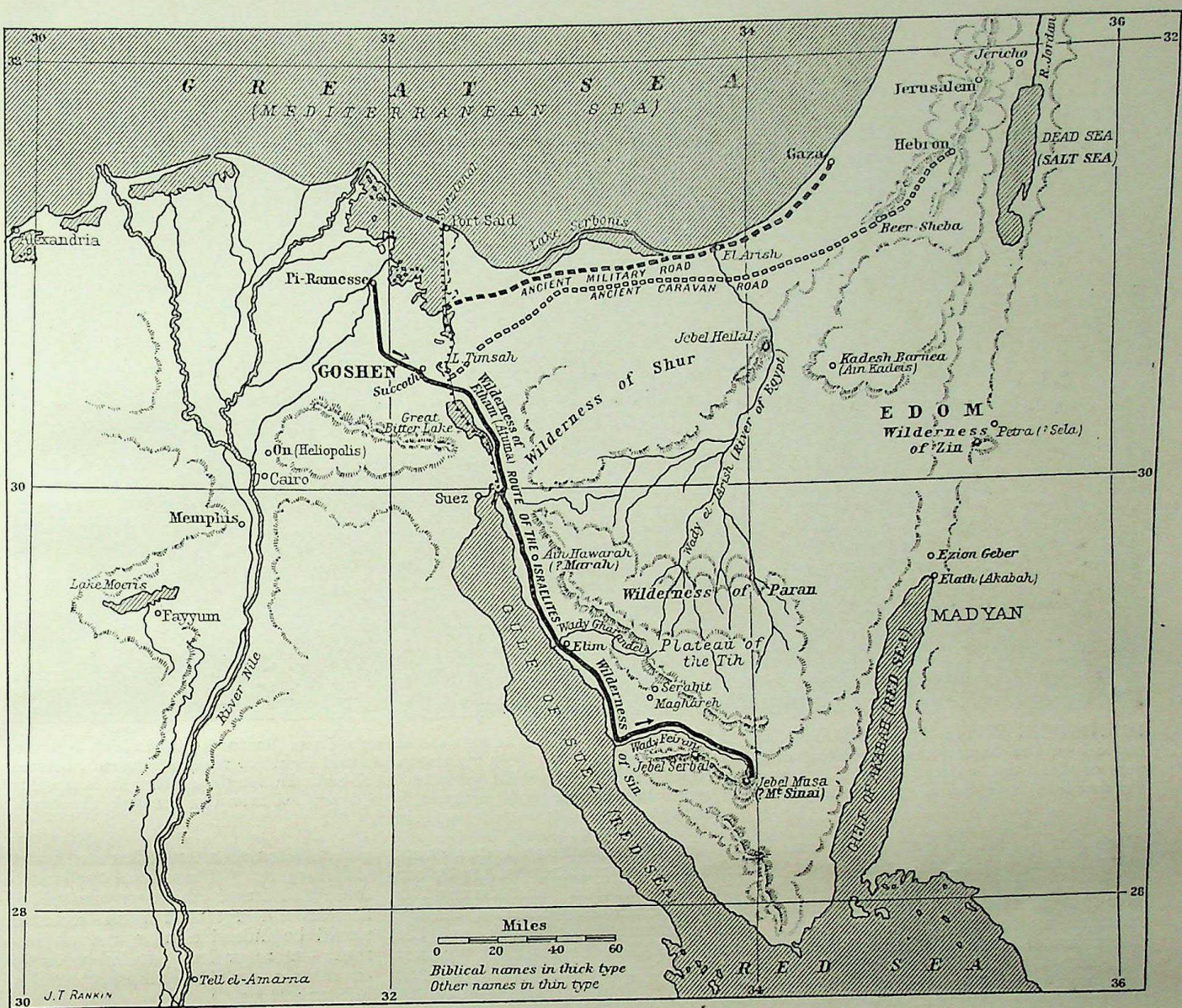

MAP II. Showing the Traditional Route of the Israelites from Goshen to Mount Sinai

Prepared under the direction of the Author

the capital of the Hyksos (under the name of Avaris), and which was afterwards called Pi-Ramesse and Tanis. "No Egyptian city but Thebes can boast a greater number of stelae, statues and sphinxes bearing cartouches of Rameses II and his successors." From the point of view of the settlement, and the Exodus, of Israel the important thing is that this town was undoubtedly in existence long before the time of Rameses, in fact that it dates back to the Hyksos' age. There is no reason why it (and Pithom in the valley of Tumilat) could not have been built by Israelite labour. Here Pharaoh had his palace and here Moses could speak with him and also be in touch with the main body of Israelites only 30 miles south in the land of Goshen proper. (Indeed, as we have seen, the Israelites may well have been scattered over a good deal of the area of the eastern Nile delta.)

The release from Egypt, taken with the wonderful passage of the Red Sea, constitutes, as it were, the birthday of the Israelite nation. And now the great movement forward begins. But we must be cautious in sketching the route otherwise than tentatively (*see* Map II).

"And the children of Israel journeyed from Rameses to Succoth" (xii, 37). The sites of these places we have just considered. If Rameses is rightly located as Pharaoh's capital near the sea, then we may presume that Moses would rally the Israelites living there, and pass south collecting most of his fellow-countrymen on the way till they reach the main body in the western part of the valley of Tumilat, and so they would proceed due east to Succoth (Theku).

Where Was the Red Sea Crossed?

THEY next encamped "in Etham, in the edge of the wilderness" (Exodus xiii, 20). Naville identified this district with the desert of Atuma, extending around the north and east of Lake Timsah. We are now coming near to where the famous crossing of the Red Sea took place. Where did they cross? Exodus xiv, 2 gives three proper names (Pi-hahiroth, Migdol and Baal-zephon) which no doubt fixed the spot at one time, but unfortunately the site of none of these places is now known. From the narrative it is clear that Baal-zephon is a mountain which faced the Israelites, upon the opposite shore of the sea.

In considering the various suggestions made as to the actual spot where the Egyptian host was overwhelmed by the waters, we must not rule out the possibility that it was near the present Suez itself. The Gulf of Suez as we know it with its sandy flats seems well suited to be the place where the Egyptians could have been overtaken by an incoming tide, not least so because the tides here are unusually dependent on the direction of the wind.

On the other hand, in the opinion of the present writer, great consideration should be given to the idea that the passage was in reality much further north, and, indeed, comparatively near to the valley of Tumilat, whence Israel had set out. It is not generally known that geological evidence points to the fact that in prehistoric times the Red Sea was linked up with the Mediterranean.

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IDENTIFIED WITH THE RED SEA OF EXODUS. In support of the theory that the wanderings of the Israelites were confined to the north of Sinai, it has been suggested that the Red Sea, or Sea of Reeds, was in reality the great sheet of water, known as the Serbonis or Bardawil Lake, which is separated only by a strip of sand from the Mediterranean. Masses of rushes grow on its shore. In rough weather it is quickly flooded, as above, by a heavy sea breaking through the bank.

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(The Suez Canal is but a modern restoration of conditions prevailing in remote antiquity). Even within historic times the Gulf of Suez must have extended up to the Little and Great Bitter Lakes and to Lake Timsah (*see* Map I); and this appears to have been possible in the 15th or even the 13th century B.C.—to whichever period we assign the Exodus. The tablets recently found at Ras Shamra to the north of Syria contain a poem in which God (El) is represented as saying, " I will divide sea from sea."

Some modern readers may find in these words a form of the story of the passing over the Red Sea, but in reality they seem to be a wonderful echo of the prehistoric event of the raising of the Isthmus of Suez. The Roman name for the Gulf of Suez is the Heroonpolitan Gulf, after the town of Heroonpolis, the Roman name for the town of Pithom. This again suggests that not many centuries before Christ the sea extended as far as Lake Timsah. If this be so, the most natural point for the crossing by Israel would be where at that time the sea was narrowest and shallowest—between Lake Timsah and the Great Bitter Lake. Here a " strong east wind " might well blow the water back. Naville hazarded Serapeum as the most likely place for the Migdol of Exodus xiv, 2. At all events, the deliverance at the Red Sea may fairly be regarded not so much as a stupendous miracle entirely out of the course of nature as a happy timing of natural events under a Divine providence. That the Pharaoh himself was overwhelmed in the catastrophe is not clear from the Biblical narrative. The wording of Exodus indicates, surely, that whereas the Pharaoh led the forces out (Chapter xiv, 8) it was not the king but his host that pursued far enough to be drowned (verse 28).

Whether the Pharaoh concerned was Amenhotep II, or Merneptah, their mummies are in the Valley of the Kings at Thebes, and photographs of these and other royal mummies may be seen in the Mummy Room in the British Museum.

Lake Serbonis and the Northern Route

READERS, however, may expect to be informed of an alternative suggestion made more than 80 years ago, which the present writer does not accept, although it has found a number of advocates during recent years, including Major C. S. Jarvis in his book " Yesterday and Today in Sinai." According to this theory, the Israelites when they left Egypt, marched along towards the south of Palestine. Many who take this view hold that the land of Goshen extended up to the Mediterranean and was not confined to the area of the Wady Tumilat, or, indeed, was not the Wady Tumilat at all. The town of Rameses they identify with Pelusium on the coast; or, according to the very latest discussions of the subject (*see* above), Tanis (or Zoan). Then Migdol becomes the well-known city of that name the modern Tell el-Her, situated a few miles south-west of Pelusium. " The way of the land of the Philistines," which we are told in Exodus xiii, 17, that Israel avoided, would be indeed a near and obvious route—more or less parallel with the coast (*see* on the maps, " Ancient Military Road ").

It is thought that the road which they chose was one which passed along a narrow strip of sand to the *north* of Lake Serbonis, joining the main military road (in the neighbourhood of El-Arish) after about forty-five miles. This extreme northern route would not be popular, simply because of the possibility of unexpected flooding from the Mediterranean. One particular development of this theory may be mentioned. Major Jarvis, for 12 years Governor of Sinai, believes that this lake was normally dry except when the sea (by means of channels) percolated into it. The Egyptians, according to his theory, cut across it when it was passable to get to the Israelites who were marching along the northern causeway. In doing so they were overwhelmed by the Mediterranean coming through the strip of land unexpectedly at various places. In view of Rameses being so near the mouth of the Nile and Goshen extending thereto, the idea in general of some northerly route may not lightly be dismissed; and this recent suggestion is entitled to respect.

But it may be asked: How could Lake Serbonis be the Red Sea?

The phrase (Yam Sūph), translated by the Greek and English term " the

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Red Sea," actually means in Hebrew "Sea of Reeds." Speaking in general terms, any suitable sea with reeds or rushes might have been the "Sea of Reeds" of the book of Exodus. The Hebrew language possesses but one word for either the open sea and ocean or the enclosed lake (whether of salt or fresh water). Thus, for example, in New Testament times that which the Romans called the Lake of Tiberias, the Jews described as the Sea of Galilee. It is a fact that the modern Lake Serbon is contains large quantities of rushes.

On the other hand the phrase, Sea of Reeds, certainly means what we call the Red Sea (which leads to the Indian Ocean) in Numbers xiv, 25 and xxi, 4 "by way of the Red Sea, *to compass the land of Edom.*" In such passages the Gulf of Akabah, the Eastern arm of what we call the Red Sea, is meant (*see* Map II). In view of this it would seem improbable that the term could be applied to a lake like Serbonis, having no connexion with it or with the Gulf of Akabah or the Gulf of Suez or what we call the Red Sea today.

Seeking the Site of Sinai

THE question of a possible northern route introduces still another problem, one to which we shall revert when we have followed Israel in its three months' travel into the Sinaitic Peninsula to Mount Sinai itself—as located since the fourth century A.D. Those who uphold the northern route point to the uncertainty that surrounds the placing of Mount Sinai. For there is indeed a degree of evidence from the Bible itself that Mount "Sinai" or "Horeb" (for they are almost certainly variant ways of referring to the same mountain) is to be sought somewhere in the neighbourhood of Kadesh—e.g., either west of Jebel Heilal (*see* Map II) or to the east, towards (or even in) the land of Edom. Here is one of several verses which have been taken to indicate the general proximity of Sinai to Edom:

> "The LORD came from Sinai, and rose up from Seir (=Edom) unto them" (Deut. xxxiii, 2).

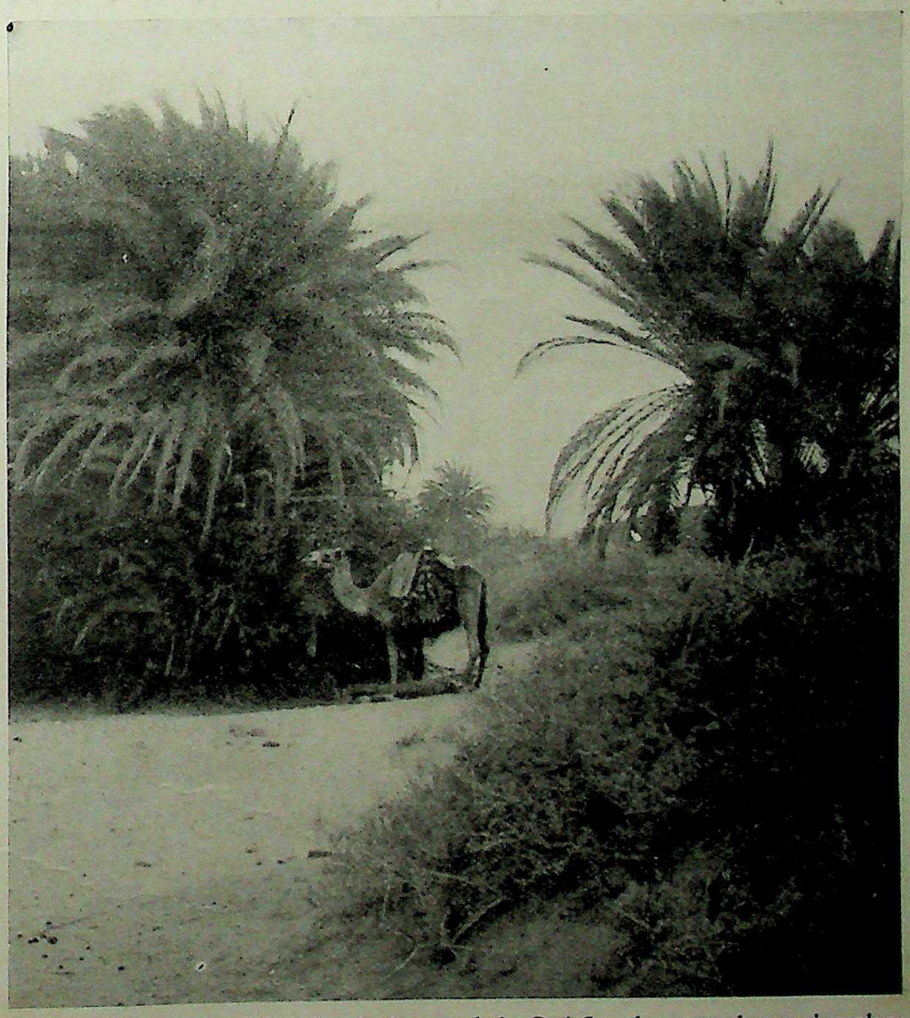
Now if the view is held that in fact Sinai lay somewhere in the region extending from the further end of Lake Serbonis to the land of Edom, then Mount Sinai could be taken in easily by the Israelites on their way to the Holy Land. To the present writer at least the placing of Sinai near Kadesh, while it solves some difficulties, raises its own too great a crop of problems, particularly on the Biblical side. The whole question, however, belongs properly to the study of the book of Numbers, where Kadesh, and district come into the route (Numbers xx).

But while many favour a northern route, to a Sinai in the neighbourhood of Kadesh, the many objections force us to lay this aside. We follow the simple route as understood traditionally, and as accepted by not a few modern scholars, including the late Professor Driver. It would appear that the children of Israel were reverting to the nomad life of their ancestors, and we might not be far wrong if we said that the question of the most direct route to Canaan did not enter into their thoughts. Some people think that it is absurd that the Israelites should take forty years to get to Palestine. It is recorded that Thothmes III marched his troops the 150 miles from Kantara in Egypt to Gaza in Canaan in 9 days; and, when we think in terms of today, we find that the Egypt-Jerusalem train time-table is as follows:

Kantara *dep.* 11.35 p.m.
Jerusalem *arr.* 9.0 a.m.

The journey is thus one of only nine hours and twenty-five minutes! No doubt the Israelites did much grumbling, but, all the same, the instinct of nomadic wandering with flocks and herds was part of their nature. Probably they never had Canaan so urgently in mind that they could find no satisfaction in their daily life.

We left Israel having crossed "the Red Sea" at what was presumably its northern extension in the neighbourhood of the south of Lake Timsah. Here they entered the Wilderness of Shur, an unidentified region. The Book of Numbers (xxxiii, 8) describes this (more precisely) as the "wilderness of Etham"; which seems to show that this district extended some considerable distance east of Succoth. (*See* above, on Naville's identifications.) They now enter the Peninsula of Sinai. This is a tract which may be described very roughly as of the shape of an inverted equilateral triangle—the base stretching west and east from the head of the Gulf of Suez to that of the Gulf of Akabah, a distance of 150 miles, and the apex where these two gulfs join to form the Red Sea proper. The northern portion of this peninsula is a barren table-land of limestone which goes by the name of El-Tih. To the south of this the peninsula becomes a number of peaks of granite intersected by narrow valleys. Some of these wadies or valleys are very fertile, especially where they are fed by perennial springs. Petrie, whose long and successful excavations entitle his opinion to respect, maintains that the writer of Exodus "knew the road to the present Sinai well. The description exactly fits that road" ("Researches in Sinai," page 205).



PALMS OF ELIM. After they had crossed the Red Sea the second stopping-place of the Israelites was Elim, where there were "twelve wells of water, and threescore and ten palm trees: and they encamped there by the waters" (Exodus xv, 27). According to common tradition, Elim lay in the Wady (Arabic for valley) Gharandel, pictured above, notable for its luxuriant palms and tamarisks and much used as a camping-ground on account of its excellent supply of drinkable water.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

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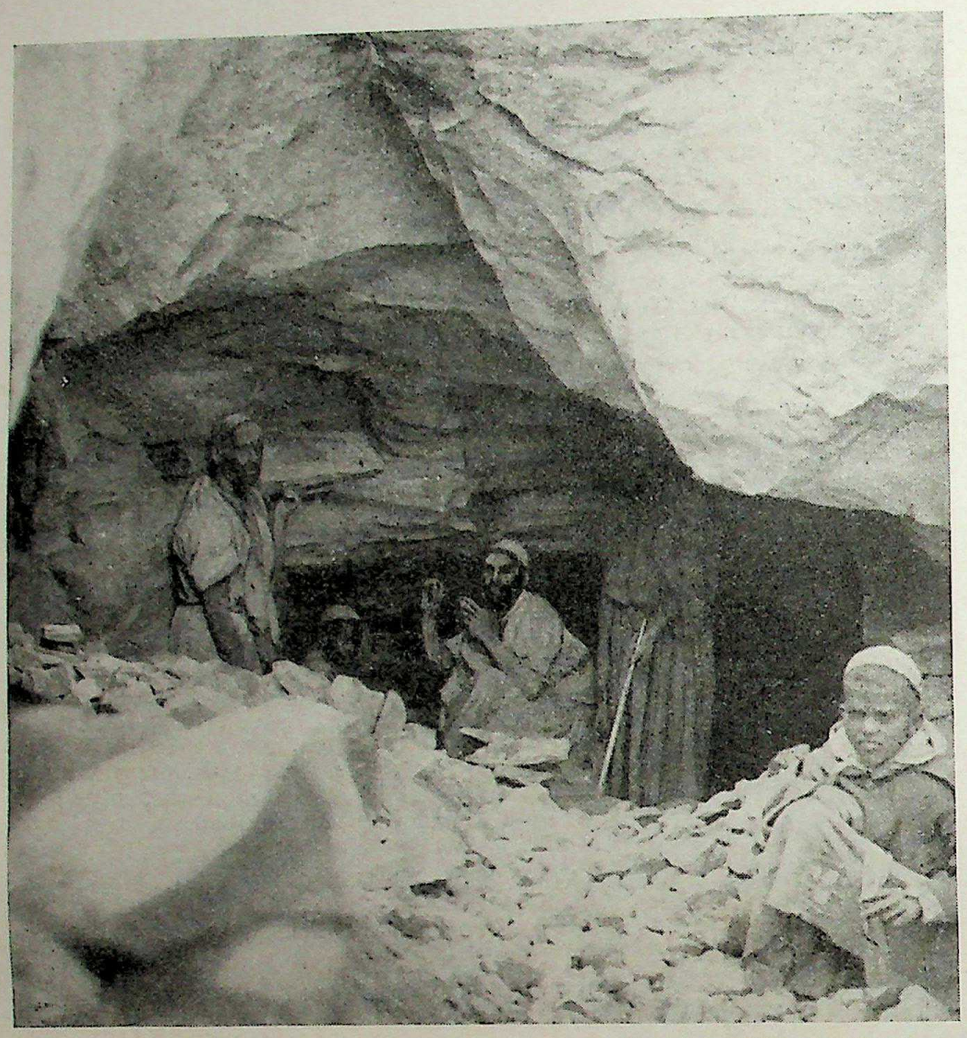

THE MINER "CUTTETH OUT CHANNELS AMONG THE ROCKS." In the time of the Pharaohs, gangs of miners, including local Beduin and other Semites, were employed on the north-west slope of the Maghareh Valley, near the traditional route of the Israelites in Sinai. The area was being fully exploited by the Egyptians for its copper and turquoise at the time of the Exodus (1445 B.C.). Arabs today clamber up to the entrance of the old mines in search of pieces of turquoise.

pronounced even more similarly in Hebrew than in English). This latter wilderness is of spacious extent in the region between Kadesh and Edom (Numbers xxxiv, 4) and is of importance in connexion with the geography of the later journeyings as recounted not in Exodus but in Numbers.

From the little Wilderness of Sin the Israelites pass on to places which are called Dophkah and Alush in the Book of Numbers. Nothing can be said about these except that Israel was now near where (further inland) lay the famous turquoise and copper mines of Maghareh and Serabit. These mines were worked by the Egyptians from very remote times, as the inscriptions discovered by Petrie show. They also proved that among the native workmen employed were the Aamu—whom Petrie identified with Syrians—and various Semitic races. At Serabit the Egyptian kings built a great temple, one Pharaoh after another adding some detail to the structure or adornment. Both Queen Hatshepsut, and afterwards Thothmes III, were builders of parts of this temple which was dedicated to the goddess Hathor, styled in this connexion, "Princess (or Lady) of turquoise."

EVEN more remarkable was the discovery of a number of signs adapted from hieroglyphics which proved to be the beginning of an alphabetic form of writing, dating from as early as 1700 B.C. This was the origin of the cuneiform alphabet of Ras Shamra, the alphabetic script of Lachish (including that upon the Dagger made public in January 1937) which in turn led to the Phoenician and old Israelitish alphabets as well as the Greek and Roman and therefore the beginning of

Reference was made in p. 123 to the raising in remote antiquity of the bed of the strip of sea which once connected the Mediterranean with the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean. This produced a sandy plain almost all round the coast of the Sinai peninsula. Thus there is a nearly level plain extending in places as much as 10 miles or more inland. Hence the journeying is not really difficult. Let the reader clearly understand that none of the places mentioned in the Books of Exodus and Numbers after the crossing of the Red Sea to the arrival at Mount Sinai can be identified, no matter what route is sponsored by the modern scholar. Suffice it, then, to say that the Israelites passed from the Wilderness of Shur to Marah (="bitter"). The bitter water here is stated to have become drinkable when Moses threw in a certain tree. Some modern writers affirm that such a practice is known to this day to be efficacious.

It has been suggested that Marah is the modern Hawara and that the next stopping place, Elim, is the Wady Gharandel (*see* page 125). Here, says the book of Exodus, were 12 wells and 70 palm trees. And now Israel enters the Wilderness of Sin. The name is connected with "Sinai," of course. It is on no account to be confused with the term "wilderness of Zin" (though

WHERE THE ISRAELITES RECEIVED QUAILS AND MANNA. After leaving the pleasant encampment at Elim "the children of Israel came into the wilderness of Sin" (Exodus xvi, 1, 13). The above photograph gives an idea of the arid nature of this stony waste and explains in part the discontent of the Israelites, longing for the "flesh-pots" of Egypt. But they were speedily supplied with meat and "bread."

Photos: American Colony, Jerusalem

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THROUGH THIS OASIS ISRAEL MAY HAVE PASSED TO SINAI

By the palm-shaded, flowery way of the Wady Feiran, most beautiful oasis in the Sinai Desert, the Israelites would have journeyed if the locality of the Mount of the Law is to be found in the south of the Peninsula. Near this valley is thought to have been Rephidim, where " there was no water for the people to drink " (Exodus xvii, 1, 2) and they " did chide with Moses," until he obtained a supply by striking the rock. In the oasis itself there would have been no shortage of water, a fact which affords ample reason for the fight in Rephidim with the Amalekites, anxious to prevent invasion of their fertile valley by these unwelcome wanderers from Egypt.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

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Raphael 1483-1520

"THE CLOUDY PILLAR DESCENDED AND STOOD AT THE DOOR OF THE TABERNACLE"

James Tissot, 1836-1902

"THEY HAVE MADE THEM A MOLTEN CALF, AND HAVE WORSHIPPED IT"

James Tissot has illustrated the incident of the worship of the golden calf. The Children of Israel, wearied of waiting for the return of Moses from Mount Sinai, importuned Aaron: "Up, make us gods, which shall go before us" (Exodus xxxii, 1); and after he had fashioned a calf molten out of their golden ornaments they made sacrifices to it. The upper picture, representing Moses kneeling "when all the people saw the cloudy pillar stand at the tabernacle door" (Exodus xxxiii, 10), is one of a series of fifty-four frescoes, known as "Raphael's Bible," decorating the vaulting of the Vatican Loggia. They were mainly executed by Perino del Vaga (1500-1547) from finished designs by the great Renaissance painter.

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Daniele da Volterra, 1509-1565

"HE CAST THE TABLES OUT OF HIS HANDS, AND BRAKE THEM"

Moses, coming down from Mount Sinai with the stone Tables of the Law, heard the noise of the Israelites, shouting and singing round the golden calf. "And it came to pass, as soon as he came nigh unto the camp, that he saw the calf, and the dancing; and Moses' anger waxed hot," and he broke the tables "beneath the mount" (Exodus xxxii, 19). The impressive picture, now in the Dresden Gallery, of this momentous occurrence was painted by Daniele Ricciarelli, called da Volterra, after the name of his native town in Italy. He was influenced and befriended by Michelangelo in Rome, and assisted Perino del Vaga with the Vatican frescoes of Biblical subjects from Raphael's designs, one of which is reproduced in the facing page.

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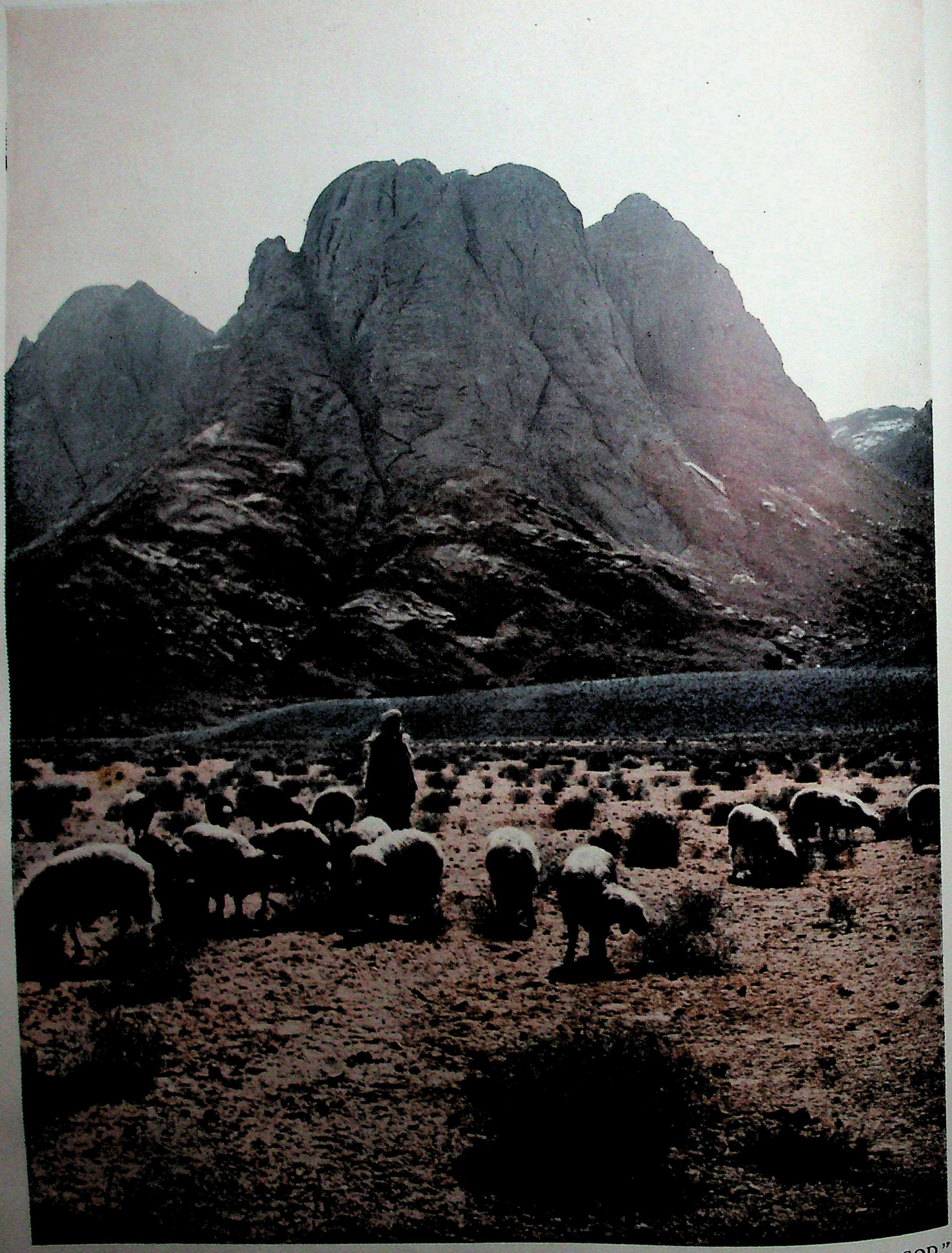

"MOSES LED THE FLOCK . . . AND CAME TO THE MOUNTAIN OF GOD"

Tending the sheep of his father-in-law, Jethro, Moses brought them into the desert pastures and in due course to Mount Horeb, or Sinai. By many authorities, past and present, this height has been identified with Jebel Musa (Mount of Moses). A spring gushes out from a rocky cleft on a lower slope and there, tradition says, Moses watered the flock. Doubtless he welcomed this time in the solitary places as an opportunity for preparation of the heart—a time of sunny days and starlit nights in the silence of the wilderness, until the silence was broken by the voice of God calling to him out of the Burning Bush and commissioning him to liberate Israel.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

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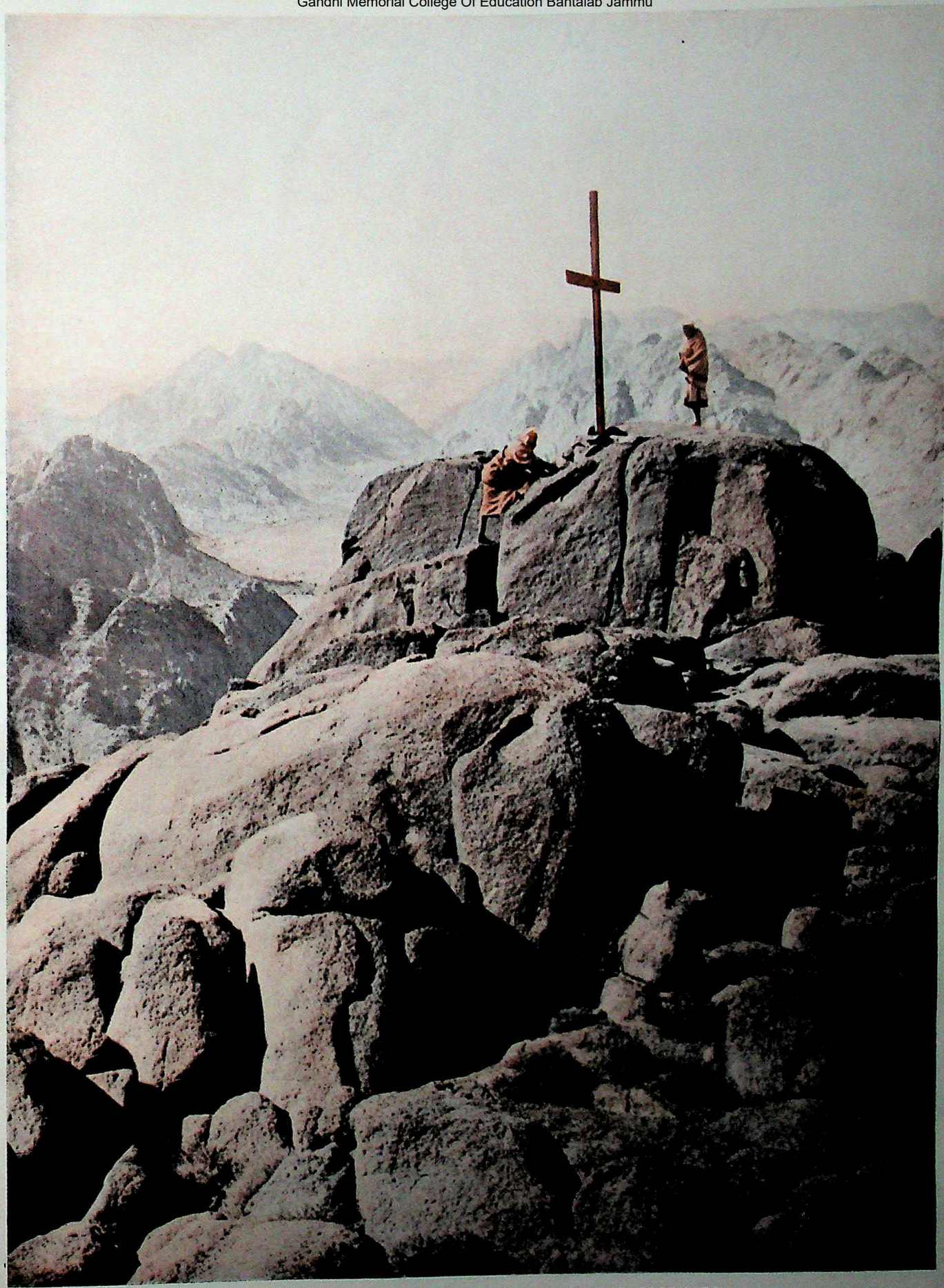

"GO FORTH, AND STAND UPON THE MOUNT"

Since Moses returned to the Mountain of God, shepherding his human flock through the wilderness of Sinai, hosts of pilgrims have ascended Jebel Musa's precipitous slopes by the rough paths and rock-hewn steps. The mountain rises to a height of 7,363 feet. Near its summit, the granite, speckled red, grey, green and yellow, is devoid of vegetation. On the huge boulders along the route Christians of the past have placed crosses. Beyond the one on this barren pinnacle can be seen part of the plain where, according to tradition, Moses told "seventy of the elders of Israel" (Exodus xxiv, 9) to tarry while he ascended to receive the revelation of the Law.

Photo W. F. Taylor

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Holman Hunt 1827-1910

"LET HIM GO FOR A SCAPEGOAT INTO THE WILDERNESS"

Holman Hunt spent two years in Palestine, from 1854, making studies for his religious pictures, but he brought back one painting completed—The Scapegoat (now in the Lever Art Gallery, Port Sunlight). It is the most deeply impressive of his works. Encamped on the barren waste near the Dead Sea, he endured considerable hardships in order convincingly to portray the tragic loneliness of the goat, bearing the iniquities of the people "unto a land not inhabited" (Leviticus xvi, 22). The solemnity of the mountains is enhanced by the gorgeous colouring of the sunset which lights the picture.

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John Rogers Herbert, 1810-1890

"FOR THE LAW WAS GIVEN BY MOSES"

Botticelli, 1444-1510

"AND THEY PERISHED FROM AMONG THE CONGREGATION"

No two frescoes could be less alike in treatment than the Descent of Moses from Sinai, commissioned in 1846 for a committee room in the House of Lords, and the Punishment of Korah, Dathan and Abiram, which has decorated the Sistine Chapel, Rome, since 1483. The Victorian painter, John Rogers Herbert, devoted himself to Biblical illustration with religious care; the Florentine Botticelli was always aloof from his subjects in a strange world of exquisitely classical unreality. To suit his design he transformed the door of the tabernacle—before which "the earth opened her mouth and swallowed . . . . all the men that appertained unto Korah" (Numbers xvi, 32)—into a Roman triumphal arch.

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"HE SHALL TAKE MORTER AND SHALL PLAISTER THE HOUSE"

Most of the inhabitants of a small village are here collected lending a hand with house-building. The men are mixing mortar which is passed along on boards by the women to the workmen. It was a custom among the Israelites to plaster stone work with mortar, that is, lime-mud. Thus in the instructions for cleansing a house of the plague (Leviticus xiv, 40-42), we find that the plaster had first to be scraped off the walls before the stones were removed. The builders had then to "take other stones" and fresh mortar to "plaister the house."

Photo, American Colony, Jerusalem

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the alphabet which we ourselves use. The alphabetic writing is on the sphinx shown on the right (which may be seen in the British Museum). By passing (out of their route) up the valley the Israelites could certainly have seen this in position.

There is one point which has a direct bearing upon our subject. Was the existence of this Egyptian mine a barrier such as makes it unreasonable for us to suppose that the Israelites actually travelled into the Sinai peninsula? Certainly it does look as if they would be running a grave risk from the miners who would be partially armed and from any garrison which might be maintained on the spot. It should be said, however, that there seems little evidence that there could have been any strong force there. The number of Israelites, though none would suppose it to be very great, at the lowest estimate must have run into many thousands, and the mines were almost in the centre of the peninsula.

THOSE who feel that the danger from the Egyptians in Sinai is a fatal obstacle to Israel ever having chosen this route at all may be drawn towards accepting the northern route outlined above in this article. Or they may choose a third alternative which, for the sake of simplicity, the writer has reserved till now—a route whose formulation was powerfully influenced by this very consideration. According to this, the Israelites left the Valley of Tumilat, or the northern coast of Egypt, and went across as directly as they could to the head of the Gulf of Akabah. There is early evidence that on the east of that gulf there was a land called Madyan (? Midian). Here Moses may have fed the flock of Jethro, and somewhere in the vicinity he may have seen the Burning Bush on Mount Sinai, or Horeb, which must then be located in that district instead of in the Peninsula of Sinai.

After this digression we must pick up the travellers, whom we left marching along not so many miles inland from the coast. They now turn sharp inland up the Wady Feiran towards the "Pharan" of the Middle Ages where there was a bishopric. There is an oasis here, fed by a perennial stream, and to this day there is an abundance of date palms, melons, etc. In this vicinity Rephidim is placed by a fourth century authority. At the point itself there was a lack of water (xvii, 1), and it is recorded that Moses obtained a supply by striking a rock. (Jarvis describes how once he saw an N.C.O., digging to liberate water, accidentally strike with his spade a limestone rock in such a way that the upper surface cracked, and soft porous rock beneath was exposed, out of which there came a great rush of clear water.) Moses called the place Massah (or "tempting") and Meribah (or "striving"), because the children of Israel had "tempted the LORD, saying, Is the LORD among us, or not?"

But we said that a fertile oasis was near by. It is, therefore, not to be wondered at that the intrusion of Israel was resented by the native Amalekites and that a fierce battle was fought. From Rephidim a turn south brought them to the Wilderness of Sinai and to the mountain itself, whose site we must now discuss. There is no peak in the Peninsula of Sinai which can be very conclusively identified, for we have already considered that its locality may have to be sought somewhere to the south of the land of Canaan or in Edom or near the head of the Gulf of Akabah. But if we are to look for Sinai in the Peninsula, the choice seems to be narrowed down to two peaks, Jebel Serbal and Jebel Musa. The former is 6,500 feet high, the latter 7,363 feet. Serbal is quite close to Rephidim while Musa is a further 20 miles as the crow flies. There is evidence as early as the fourth century A.D. that monastic settlements clustered around both Mount Serbal and Mount Musa before the latter became popular as the orthodox site.

SPHINX INSCRIBED WITH SEMITIC ALPHABETIC WRITING. **Discovered by Sir Flinders Petrie in the Egyptian temple at Serabit, and now in the British Museum, this sphinx is dated by him to 1500 B.C. Semitic labour was employed in the Egyptian-owned mines in the district. The inscription on the base is translated: "From the beloved of Ba'alath to Ba'alath," clearly the Semitic equivalent of Hathor, the Egyptian goddess. The rude alphabetic script is a link between hieroglyphs and the alphabets of the Semites, and indeed of the modern Western world.**

From Petrie, "Researches in Sinai"

Monks where Israel May Have Camped

IN favour of Jebel Musa ("Mount Moses") being "Mount Sinai" is that the plain below is widespreading and entirely more suitable for any encampment of Israelites than is the foot of Jebel Serbal. The convent of St. Catharine, erected in the year 527 A.D., was brought to the notice of the public in 1933 when the British Government purchased from the Soviet Government the large portion of the Codex Sinaiticus which Constantine Tischendorf had obtained from this convent in 1859 (*see* illustration in page 13).

At Mount Sinai Jehovah met His people. Howsoever we may understand the manner of it, God gave a revelation of Himself and of His will to Moses. From the Release from Egypt and the Covenant of Sinai Jehovah was the God of the Israelite nation for ever.

What Was the Date of the Exodus?

WE have reserved for the conclusion of this article the answer to the question, When was the Exodus? We can only attempt an answer. There is nothing within the Biblical record clearly to fix this date; there is no document in Egypt which can be claimed as settling the matter.

It is true that upon a papyrus of Rameses II there is a record of some people called Aperu or Apriu who are foreign forced labourers, and it has been suggested that these are the Hebrews; but the name goes on occurring in Egypt in such a way as to prove that these people, or many of them, were living there even in reigns later than any in which the Exodus could possibly have taken place. Moreover, the word "Hebrew" should be represented in Egyptian by *br*, not *pr*. At all events this does not help us about the date of the Exodus. And so it is for those interested to consider the facts and the possibilities.

We have already referred to the idea that the departure from Egypt was in some way connected with the expulsion of the Hyksos kings. This is not acceptable to the present writer, though it is conceivable that more

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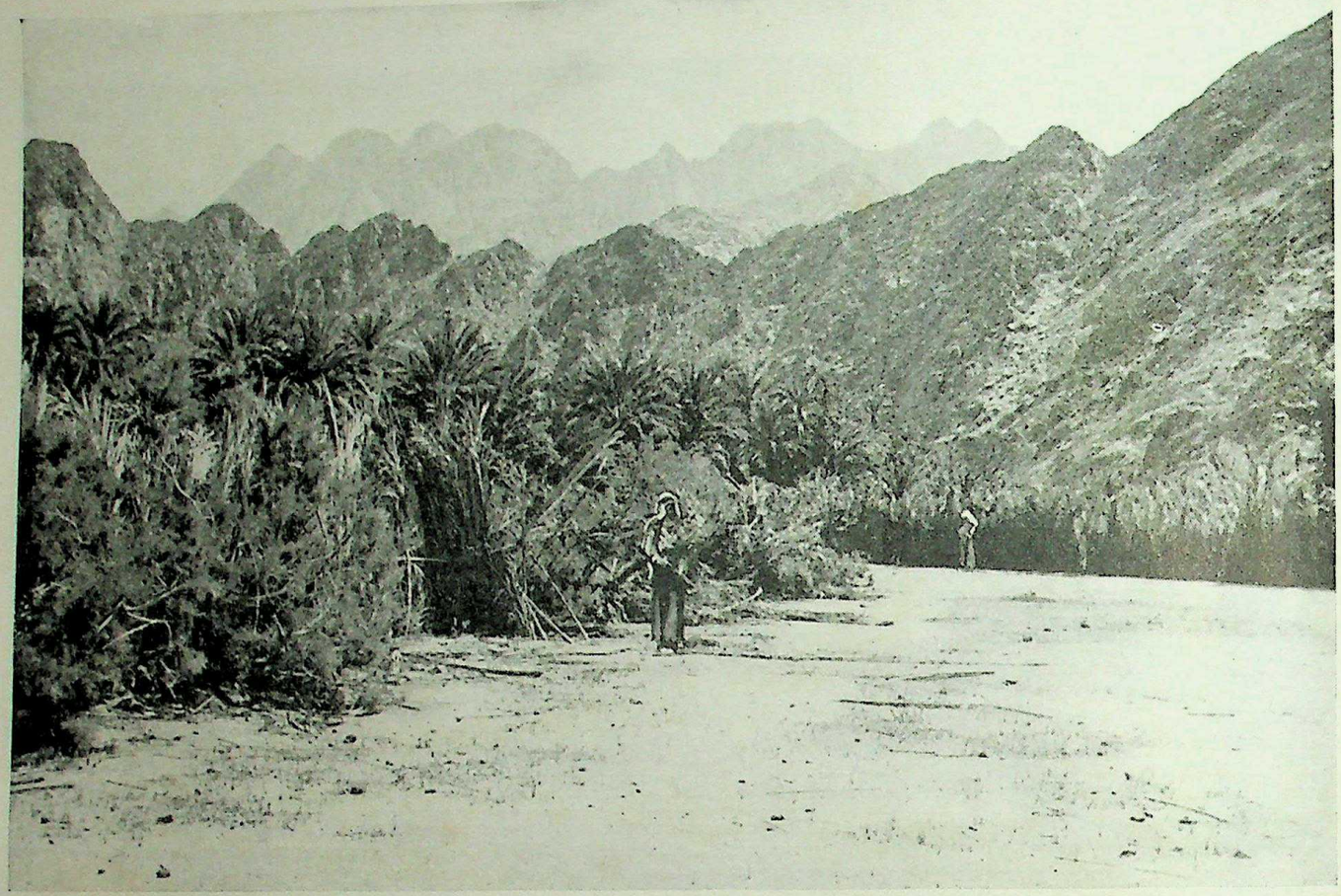

WAS JEBEL SERBAL THE MOUNT OF THE LAW? **Belonging to the huge range of the Mount Sinai group, Jebel Serbal rises to the south of the Feiran Oasis, the edge of which is seen in this photograph. Fantastically the many-peaked summit of the granite mass serrates the skyline. It is one of the two mountains in the Peninsula regarded by authorities as possibly the Mountain of the Law—the other being Jebel Musa about twenty miles away to the east. Against the identification of Serbal with Mount Sinai is the fact that at its foot is no such extensive plain as lies before Jebel Musa.**

may be heard of this view in time to come. By this theory the date would be about 1580 B.C. We will not trouble the reader with the recital of suggestions which we regard as altogether unlikely, e.g. that which would seek to connect the Exodus of Israel with the disturbances which occurred in Egypt after the reign of Akhenaten, making the date of their departure somewhere around 1350 B.C. No; there seem at the moment to be but two dates from which to make a choice —those which identify the Pharaoh of the Great Oppression with Rameses II, or with Thothmes III, each of whom was succeeded by a comparatively weak ruler, such as the story of the Exodus postulates. The alternative dates have been narrowed down to either 1445 or 1223 B.C. Upon the whole, the balance of evidence points to a date somewhere around the year 1445.

As regards the later date (1223), in the book of Exodus it is written of Israel in Egypt that "they built Pithom and Raamses." For generations it has been regarded to be as certain as these things can be that this proved that Rameses II was the Pharaoh of the Great Oppression and therefore that his son Merneptah was the Pharaoh of the Exodus. Readers are reminded of what is written above concerning the archaeological work of Naville, which seemed to show by external evidence that it was Rameses who oppressed Israel. There is strength in this argument still. Further, it is clear from an inscription found in 1923 in Beth-shan in Central Palestine that the Egyptians had command of a good deal of Canaan in the time of Rameses' father, Seti I. It is known that Rameses marched into Canaan. These facts are difficult to understand upon the theory that the Exodus was 200 years earlier. It seems unlikely that Egyptian armies could march through Palestine without a hint of it having been preserved in the Bible. The book of Judges speaks of trouble from many quarters, but never from Egypt. Other arguments may be advanced for the late dating.

Evidence in Favour of the Early Date

LET us now consider the evidence in favour of a date round about 1445 B.C. It seemed that the 1223 date should not be left unchallenged. New evidence presented itself for consideration. In 1896 Professor Flinders-Petrie discovered in Thebes an inscription written in the fifth year of Merneptah concerning the victories of his reign. Among the lines occur the following words, which contain the first and only known Egyptian reference to Israel that has been discovered:

> Ashkelon is carried captive
> Gezer is taken
> Yenoam is brought to nought
> Israel is destroyed, its seed is not.

Now, if Israel had escaped from Egypt only in Merneptah's reign it is manifest that they could not have journeyed for anything like forty years, have settled in Canaan and have suffered a defeat from Egyptian forces by the fifth year of the same Merneptah. This difficulty is removed if Israel left Egypt earlier.

AGAIN, in 1887 the Tell el-Amarna Letters were discovered. The extracts from them quoted earlier in this article showed that certain people, styled the Habiru, were breaking in upon Canaan around the year 1400. There are reasons why we should not say that "Habiru" is just another name for the Hebrews, but, rather, that it includes them. It does look as if the writers of these letters are speaking of what we call the Israelite conquest of Canaan. Dr. Jack attaches considerable importance to this argument in his interesting book, "The Date of the Exodus." We add forty years for the time of wandering and we get 1440 as the date of the Exodus. Similarly, in 1928, Professor Garstang in laying bare the walls of ancient Jericho discovered signs of their having been burnt at a date about 1400 B.C. It is easy to place too much reliance upon an argument of this kind, but taken together with what has been said above, it suggests the reign of Amenhotep II (1447–1420 B.C.) for the release of the Israelites from their captivity in Egypt.

A small point may be mentioned here. In the book of Exodus we read that the firstborn of the Pharaoh at

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the time of Israel's departure died in the tenth "plague." Amenhotep II was succeeded by his son, Thothmes IV. Some centuries afterwards, a story was current in Egypt that the Sun-god had promised Thothmes in a dream while he slept near the great Sphinx (his emblem) some long time before his father's death, that if he would clear away the sand which was encumbering it, he would one day come to the throne. The prince made a vow to do this and carried it out on his accession. He wrote the incident on a stele, and a later form of the story is still to be seen as an inscription on a granite tablet, erected probably in the 21st Dynasty, between the fore-legs of the Sphinx. This tablet is clearly shown in the illustration in page 94.

If there is any truth at all in this story, it means that the young prince was not the heir-apparent, and it is evidence that his elder brother perished. This explanation would fit in with Amenhotep II, their father, being the Pharaoh of the Exodus.

The obstacle in the way of holding the early date presented by the words of Exodus that the children of Israel "built Pithom and Raamses" may be lessened (though not removed) by bearing in mind the following point. A Hebrew writer, drawing together his narrative some centuries after the time of the events he is recording, might give a place the name by which it had come to be known in his own time. An instance will leap to the minds of many. The book of Genesis recounts a story of Abram pursuing invaders "as far as Dan" (Genesis xiv, 14). From the Book of Judges it is learnt that at the time of the incident the name of the locality must have been Laish—in fact, that it remained so for nearly 1,000 years from then, until its capture by the Danites, who "called the name of the city Dan" (Judges xviii, 29). Likewise, it is said in another passage (Genesis xlvii, 11) that Joseph put his father and his brethren "in the best of the land, in the land of Rameses," years before there had been any Pharaoh Rameses or city of that name.

Thus we have seen that there is external evidence in support of placing the Exodus within the reign of Amenhotep II, 1447–1420 B.C. It can be claimed that there is support in the Old Testament for a date within these years. In the story of the building of the temple by Solomon it is stated (in I Kings, vi, 1) that the work began "in the four hundred and eightieth year after the children of Israel were come out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign." The fourth year of Solomon is, within limits, a definitely known date —about 965 B.C. There are reasons why we should not be too precise about the number 480, but, taking it as it stands and adding to it the fixed number 965, we arrive at the year 1445. Some may find satisfaction in noting the coincidence that this date is within less than fifty years of that (1491 B.C.) arrived at by Archbishop Ussher at the time of the Commonwealth, and inserted into the margin of the Authorized Version. The present writer is of the opinion that there is an unquestioned advantage in being able to picture the migration of the Hebrews at as early a period as possible. It is known that other Semitic people and tribes were on the move in remote antiquity; moreover, an extra 200 years in getting Israel started as a nation in Canaan helps to ease some of the problems which confront the historian of the early centuries of Israel's life in Canaan.

We now leave the Israelites to writers on the Books of Numbers and Deuteronomy to take to the end of their journey. We have, of necessity, left not a little of our subject undecided. Let us hope that fuller knowledge from evidence yet to be discovered will resolve such difficulties, but be content if facts which we should all have desired to learn may never on this earth be available to us. The present writer would with all sincerity stress the point that, whereas details of archaeology and geography, dates and figures, may be in doubt, yet the event itself is as secure as any fact in history.

Furthermore, all those who are interested in religion—and who is not ?—must realize that the Divine Providence and love are realities in experience in the present, no matter what problems may remain in the story of particular instances in the remote past. In a word, God's love to us in Redemption and in the pilgrimage of life through this world to the heavenly Canaan is "the same, yesterday, today and for ever."

KINGS OF EGYPT

The following dates are taken from the Cambridge Ancient History (Volume II), but where alternative dates are given there, the list below follows Breasted.

15th and 16th Dynasties

Circa 1800—1580 B.C.

Hyksos or Shepherd Kings. Contemporary Egyptian inscriptions have preserved the names of twelve of these kings.

17th Dynasty

Circa 1635—1580 B.C.

Five Egyptian kings reigning independently at Thebes. About 1600 the Theban king in power leads Egypt in revolt against the Hyksos.

18th Dynasty

Circa 1580—1350 B.C.

The Hyksos kings expelled by Aahmes who founds the New Kingdom or Empire.

	Accession Year B.C.
Aahmes I (Ahmose)	1580
Amenhotep I (Amenophis)	1557
Thothmes I (Thutmose)	1540
Thothmes II	1514
Hatshepsut (with Thothmes III to 1480)	1501
Thothmes III	1480
Amenhotep II	1447

? 1445 The Exodus

Thothmes IV	1420
Amenhotep III	1411
Amenhotep IV (Akhenaten)	1375
Sakere	1358
Tutankhamen	1356
Ai	1350

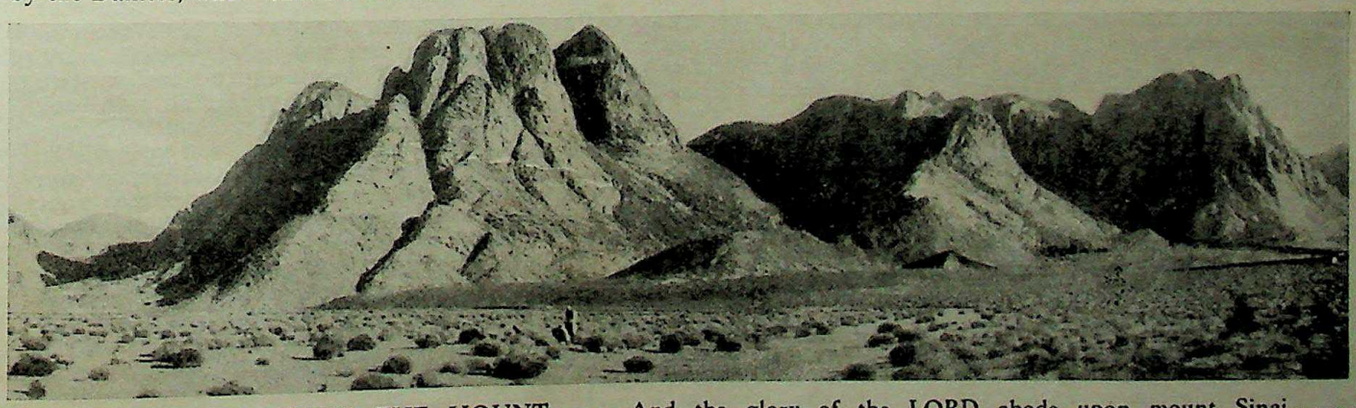
19th Dynasty

Circa 1350—1200 B.C.

Fresh period of power after the temporary confusion occasioned by Akhenaten and his heresies.

Harmhab (Horemheb)	1350
Rameses I (Raamses)	1315
Seti I (Sethos)	1314
Rameses II	1292
Merneptah (Merenptah)	1225

? 1223 The Exodus



"MOSES WENT UP INTO THE MOUNT . . . . And the glory of the LORD abode upon mount Sinai . . . . and the sight of the glory of the LORD was like devouring fire on the top of the mount in the eyes of the children of Israel . . . . and Moses was in the mount forty days and forty nights" (Exodus xxiv, 15—18).

Photo, E.N.A.

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LITERARY BEAUTY OF THE BIBLE. IV

Ritual Grace of Leviticus

UNLIKE the two previous books of the Pentateuch, Genesis and Exodus, Leviticus contains no fast-moving narrative, no colourful atmosphere, no poetic tale, no actual poetry in form. It is virtually a treatise on priestly law and social customs, stressing the moral and liturgical aspects of holiness. But though the book is perhaps the least interesting in the Old Testament from the literary viewpoint, its detailed records throw sidelights on the critical period of Israel's nomadic life in the wilderness. A passage frequently recalled in art is found in chapter xvi. Paintings, poetry, and many symbolical allusions have been inspired by the description of the scapegoat, bearing away the sins of the people.

DESPITE the paucity of well-known quotations, fine phraseology abounds. The English translators of the Bible, who turned even long genealogies on occasion into free verse, listed the animals and birds, permissible and unpermissible for food, in rhythmic prose. They found skilful verbal equivalents for the ceremonial accounts of offerings and sacrifices. Literary embellishment was appreciated by the early seventeenth century writers. The group of Biblical scholars appointed by James I to make the Authorized Version, admirably preserved the musical cadence and poetry of Tyndale's translation of the Pentateuch, printed in 1530. They retained about eighty per cent of his work.

UNFIT FOR FOOD

xi, 4—7, 12—19, 29, 30

NEVERTHELESS these shall ye not eat of them that chew the cud, or of them that divide the hoof: as the camel, because he cheweth the cud, but divideth not the hoof; he is unclean unto you. And the coney, because he cheweth the cud, but divideth not the hoof; he is unclean unto you. And the hare, because he cheweth the cud, but divideth not the hoof; he is unclean unto you. And the swine, though he divide the hoof, and be clovenfooted, yet he cheweth not the cud; he is unclean to you.

Whatsoever hath no fins nor scales in the waters, that shall be an abomination unto you.

And these are they which ye shall have in abomination among the fowls; they shall not be eaten, they are an abomination: the eagle, and the ossifrage, and the ospray, and the vulture, and the kite after his kind; every raven after his kind; and the owl, and the night hawk, and the cuckow, and the hawk after his kind, and the little owl, and the cormorant, and the great owl, and the swan, and the pelican, and the gier eagle, and the stork, the heron after her kind, and the lapwing, and the bat.

These also shall be unclean unto you among the creeping things that creep upon the earth; the weasel and the mouse, and the tortoise after his kind, and the ferret, and the chameleon, and the lizard, and the snail, and the mole.

THE SCAPEGOAT

xvi, 5—10, 21, 22

AND he shall take of the congregation of the children of Israel two kids of the goats for a sin offering, and one ram for a burnt offering. And Aaron shall offer his bullock of the sin offering, which is for himself, and make an atonement for himself, and for his house. And he shall take the two goats, and present them before the Lord at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. And Aaron shall cast lots upon the two goats; one lot for the Lord, and the other lot for the scapegoat. And Aaron shall bring the goat upon which the Lord's lot fell, and offer him for a sin offering. But the goat, on which the lot fell to be the scapegoat, shall be presented alive before the Lord, to make an atonement with him, and to let him go for a scapegoat into the wilderness.

And Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat, and shall send him away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness: And the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities unto a land not inhabited: and he shall let go the goat in the wilderness.

YEAR OF JUBILE

xxv, 1—12, 35—37

AND the Lord spake unto Moses in mount Sinai, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye come into the land which I give you, then shall the land keep a sabbath unto the Lord. Six years thou shalt sow thy field, and six years thou shalt prune thy vineyard, and gather in the fruit thereof: But in the seventh year shall be a sabbath of rest unto the land, a sabbath for the Lord; thou shalt neither sow thy field, nor prune thy vineyard. That which groweth of its own accord of thy harvest thou shalt not reap, neither gather the grapes of thy vine undressed: for it is a year of rest unto the land. And the sabbath of the land shall be meat for you; for thee, and for thy servant, and for thy maid, and for thy hired servant, and for thy stranger that sojourneth with thee. And for thy cattle, and for the beast that are in thy land, shall all the increase thereof be meat.

And thou shalt number seven sabbaths of years unto thee, seven times seven years; and the space of the seven sabbaths of years shall be unto thee forty and nine years. Then shalt thou cause the trumpet of the jubile to sound on the tenth day of the seventh month, in the day of atonement shall ye make the trumpet sound throughout all your land. And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof: it shall be a jubile unto you; and ye shall return every man unto his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family. A jubile shall that fiftieth year be unto you: ye shall not sow, neither reap that which groweth of itself in it, nor gather the grapes in it of thy vine undressed. For it is the jubile; it shall be holy unto you: ye shall eat the increase thereof out of the field.

And if thy brother be waxen poor, and fallen in decay with thee: then thou shalt relieve him: yea, though he be a stranger, or a sojourner; that he may live with thee. Take thou no usury of him, or increase: but fear thy God; that thy brother may live with thee. Thou shalt not give him thy money upon usury, nor lend him thy victuals for increase.

OBEDIENCE BLESSED

xxvi, 2—6, 12, 13

YE shall keep my sabbaths, and reverence my sanctuary: I am the Lord.

If ye walk in my statutes, and keep my commandments, and do them: Then I will give you rain in due season, and the land shall yield her increase, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit. And your threshing shall reach unto the vintage, and the vintage shall reach unto the sowing time: and ye shall eat your bread to the full, and dwell in your land safely. And I will give peace in the land, and ye shall lie down, and none shall make you afraid: and I will rid evil beasts out of the land, neither shall the sword go through your land.

And I will walk among you, and will be your God, and ye shall be my people. I am the Lord your God, which brought you forth out of the land of Egypt, that ye should not be their bondmen; and I have broken the bands of your yoke, and made you go upright.

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Leviticus

I

The Book in Outline

'Commandments, which the Lord Commanded Moses in Mount Sinai'

by REV. G. R. HARDING WOOD, M.A.

Vicar of Holy Trinity Church, Hampstead; Author of commentaries on Numbers and Acts, etc.

IN grasping the outline of any book in the Bible it is of the greatest importance to relate it to those that precede and follow it. Omitting Genesis as introductory to the whole library of the Bible, we have four books prior to the arrival of the Israelites in Canaan and their conquest of that land as recorded in Joshua. These four books—Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy—contain the story of the journey of the Children of Israel from Egypt to the Land of Promise. In character they alternate. In Exodus the people move from Egypt to Sinai. In Leviticus they remain stationary at the Mount, receiving instructions from God. In Numbers they move again in the wilderness wanderings, and in Deuteronomy they are stationary at the border of Canaan. The absence of movement in Leviticus accounts very largely for the difficulty of making an outline of its contents which are so largely concerned with legislation and ceremonial.

On the other hand, Leviticus is no mere book of outworn Jewish ritual. It is one of the key books of the Bible to the understanding of God's dealings with mankind. In Exodus Man is redeemed by the grace and power of God. In Leviticus Man is restored to favour and communion with God. In Exodus Man is *brought* nigh to God. In Leviticus he is shown how he may be *kept* nigh. In Exodus we learn of God's approach to us, in Leviticus of our approach to God. In Exodus of union with God; in Leviticus of communion with God. This is the order not only in Bible study to understand but in experience to enjoy. Let us now come to the book itself.

EXODUS ends with a completed tabernacle. In Exodus xl, 33, we read "So Moses finished the work." God signifies his approval by filling the tabernacle with his glory: "And the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle" (Exodus xl, 35). From the glorified tabernacle issues the legislation and ceremonial of Leviticus. God's first directions concern the offerings that are to be brought by the worshippers. Apart from offerings there is no access to God. These offerings, five in number, together with the priesthood, are God's twofold provision to meet his twofold demand for purity and holiness. This is the subject matter of Leviticus.

"And the Lord called unto Moses and spake unto him out of the tabernacle . . . saying, Speak unto the children of Israel and say . . . If any man . . . bring an offering unto the Lord . . . of the cattle . . . of the herd . . . of the flock. If his offering be a burnt sacrifice . . . he shall put his hand upon the head of the burnt offering; and it shall be accepted for him to make atonement for him" (Leviticus i, 1–4).

Three kinds of burnt offering are mentioned, "of the herd" (i, 3), of the flocks (i, 10), of turtledoves or young pigeons (i, 14). Thus provision was made for the more or the less costly offering, so that the poorer worshipper should not be debarred from approaching God. The special feature of the burnt offering was that every part of it was consumed. "And the priest shall burn *all* on the altar, a sweet savour unto the Lord" (i, 9, 13, 17), thus signifying the personal abandonment of the worshipper to God, an expression of wholehearted devotion to the divine will.

Four directions are given concerning the meat, or meal, offering. It might be uncooked flour . . . oil . . . and frankincense (ii, 1), or cooked, baked, fried or boiled (ii, 4–10). There must be salt but no leaven (ii, 11–13), and it might be first fruits (ii, 14–16).

Seeking after Communion with the Divine

THE special feature of the meal offering was its bloodless character, thus eliminating from its meaning the idea of atonement for sin, but signifying a desire on the part of the worshipper for conscious communion with God.

The peace offering might be of the herd (iii, 1), or a lamb (iii, 7), or a goat (iii, 12). The special feature here was that all the fat, that is, the richness of the sacrifice, was to be taken off and burnt on the altar. "It is the food of the offering . . . all the fat is the Lord's" (iii, 16), thus signifying the sense of gratitude with which the heart of the worshipper was filled as he thanked God for the privilege of nearness and relationship.

The sin offering might be for the priest (iv, 3–12), for the whole congregation (iv, 13–21), for a ruler (iv, 22–26), or for one of the common people (iv, 27–35). Special circumstances are cited in which a sin offering was demanded. The special feature of this offering was that it signified a sense of quiet and gained for the worshipper peace with God.

The trespass offering had specific acts of transgression in view, rather than a sense of sin on the part of the worshipper. Two classes of trespass are mentioned and the offering might be for sin "in the holy things of the Lord" (v, 15) or "unto his neighbour" (vi, 2). In each case the offender must make amends (v, 16 and vi, 4). Thus peace was gained not only with God but with man so far as he had been wronged.

These five offerings portray a fivefold approach of the worshipper to God. The burnt offering suggests abandonment to the divine will; the meal offering a desire for conscious communion; the peace offering an expression of gratitude and thanksgiving; the sin and trespass offerings a craving respectively for peace with God and Man through forgiveness and amendment.

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SALT-DIGGING IN SINAI. Salt was as much a necessity in Biblical times as today. The Israelites in Sinai obtained it by the same methods as these natives on the shores of the Red Sea. Barriers are erected so that when the tide recedes the salt may be shovelled into dumps. Salt, symbol of the covenant, had a special significance in the priestly ritual: "With all thine offerings thou shalt offer salt" (Leviticus ii, 13). From ancient days it has been associated with Eastern hospitality as expressed by the Arabic saying "there is salt between us."

Photo, Fox

One idea underlies the whole of this burdensome ceremonial. Holiness is its end, and apart from sacrifice God who is absolutely holy cannot be approached.

More than that. We cannot doubt that all this elaborate ritual has a deeper significance and points to and finds its true interpretation in Jesus Christ, "the Lamb of God." Such indeed is the burden of the Epistle to the Hebrews. According to its writer these outward ordinances signified the inward cleansing of the heart and conscience "from dead works to serve the living God" (Hebrews ix, 14).

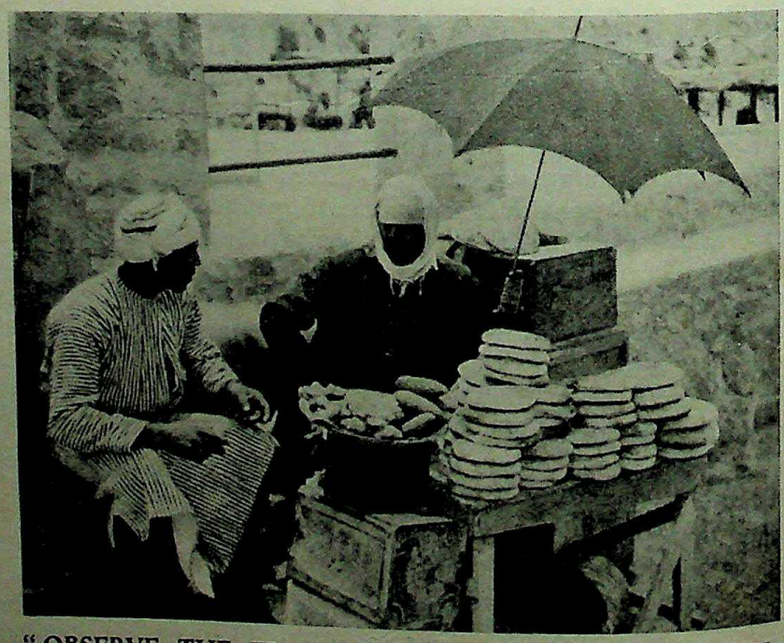
FOLLOWING upon the details of the offerings commanded by God we have the duties of the priests when they offered the sacrifices. In the case of each of these, distinct duties are assigned to the priest and instructions to the worshipper. The whole section closes with a reminder that these several commands were given by God to Moses on Mount Sinai. "This is the law of the burnt offering, of the meat offering, and of the sin offering, and of the trespass offering and of the consecrations, and of the sacrifice of the peace offerings; which the Lord commanded Moses in mount Sinai, in the day that he commanded the children of Israel to offer their oblations unto the Lord in the wilderness of Sinai" (vii, 37-38).

We now come to the second part of the provision made by God to meet His demand for purity and holiness, namely, the priesthood. This is contained in chapters eight to ten.

The section begins with the consecration of Aaron and his sons. Three acts of ritual are performed. First, ceremonial washing: "And Moses brought Aaron and his sons and washed them with water" (viii, 6). Secondly, clothing. Aaron is dressed in coat, girdle, robe, ephod, breastplate, mitre and crown (viii, 7-9)—all symbols of his holy office. Moses as prophet represented God to the people. Aaron as priest represented the people to God. Hence his special clothing. Lastly, consecrating. "And Moses took the anointing oil . . . and he poured . . upon Aaron's head . . . to sanctify him" (viii, 10, 12). "And Moses took of the blood of it (the ram of consecration) and put it upon the tip of Aaron's right ear, and upon the thumb of his right hand, and upon the great toe of his right foot" (viii, 23).

Here the priest is marked for God, set apart in his person as God's man. His head is anointed. The extremities of ear and hand and foot are touched with blood signifying separation to God in every part of the body to its farthest limits.

Thus equipped, ready to serve in the sacred office of priest, Aaron now offers his first sacrifices for himself



"OBSERVE THE FEAST OF UNLEAVENED BREAD." No leaven might be used for the bread consumed during the time of the feast of the Passover. "Seven days ye must eat unleavened bread" (Leviticus xxiii, 6). This command is still scrupulously obeyed by orthodox Jews. There is a great sale of the specially-prepared flat cakes on the previous day, and that evening any leaven or bread that may be in their houses is destroyed. A thin biscuit-bread is also sold.

Photo, Schweig

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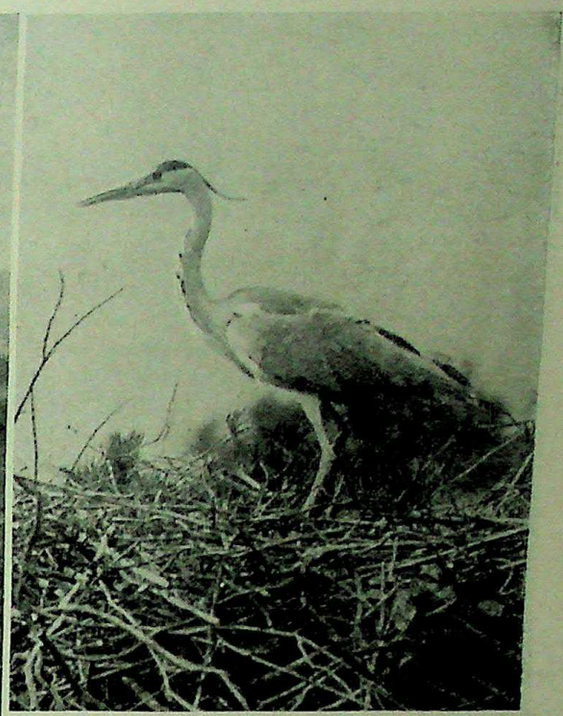

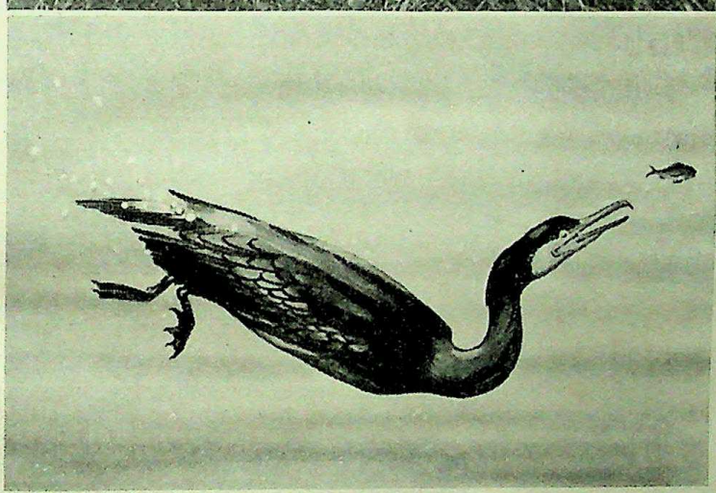

"FOWLS OF THE HEAVENS." In the list of birds classified as unfit for food were the "cuckow," the "cormorant" and "the heron after her kind" (Leviticus xi, 16-19). The word rendered cuckow is translated sea-mew in the Revised Version, a term which includes sea-gulls, abundant on the coasts of Palestine. That expert diver, the cormorant, is found by all the rivers and lakes; its Hebrew name signifies plunger. The common heron nests near the swamps, where it can obtain a diet of frogs and small fish in shallow water.

Photos, Arthur Brook; L. J. Langford

and for the people. "And Moses said unto Aaron, Go unto the altar and offer . . . for thyself" (ix, 7). "And he brought the people's offering" (ix, 15). This was miraculously accepted by God—a sign that so far all had been carried out according to God's will. "And there came a fire out from before the Lord and consumed . . . the burnt offering . . . which when all the people saw, they shouted and fell on their faces" (ix, 24).

The next chapter (x) contains the first blot upon the picture in the story of the sons of Aaron—Nadab and Abihu by name—who, perhaps too much elated by the dignity of their new office, and despising the restrictions by which it was fenced round (Exodus xxx, 7ff.) filled their censers with ordinary fire instead of embers from the brazen altar. "Strange fire" the Bible calls it. Only fire connected with sacrifice will suffice in the service of God. "And," we read, "there went out fire from the Lord and devoured them, and they died" (x, 2).

The conclusion of the story is touched with a real pathos. Aaron, though forbidden to mourn the death of his sons (x, 6-7) refuses to eat his portion of the sin offering in the holy place. For this he is rebuked by Moses, pleading in his defence: "Such things have befallen me, and if I had eaten the sin offering to day, should it have been accepted in the sight of the Lord?" (x, 19). Moses admits the plea and honours the natural feeling of the father's heart even though it has led to a violation of the letter of the divine commandment. "And," we read, "when Moses heard that, he was content" (x, 20).

Thus ends the first main section of this wonderful book. In these ten chapters we have brought before us God's two-fold provision of sacrifice and priesthood to meet, as we shall now see, His two-fold demand for purity and holiness.

Rules that Made for Purity

CHAPTERS one to ten had reference to the putting away of guilt. Now follow chapters concerning the putting away of impurity. The words "unclean," "uncleanness," "clean," occur in almost every verse. The detailed character of the instructions reveals the depths and extent of God's demand for purity.

(1) Certain animals may and may not be eaten. (2) Next come causes of pollution by contact with the carcasses of certain animals. (3) Lastly, no kind of pollution is allowable (xi, 2-45).

The chapters that immediately follow (xii-xv) deal with other forms of uncleanness, especially with the purification of child-bearing women and of lepers.

Chapter sixteen contains the ritual of the Great Day of Atonement. By its opening sentence, "And the

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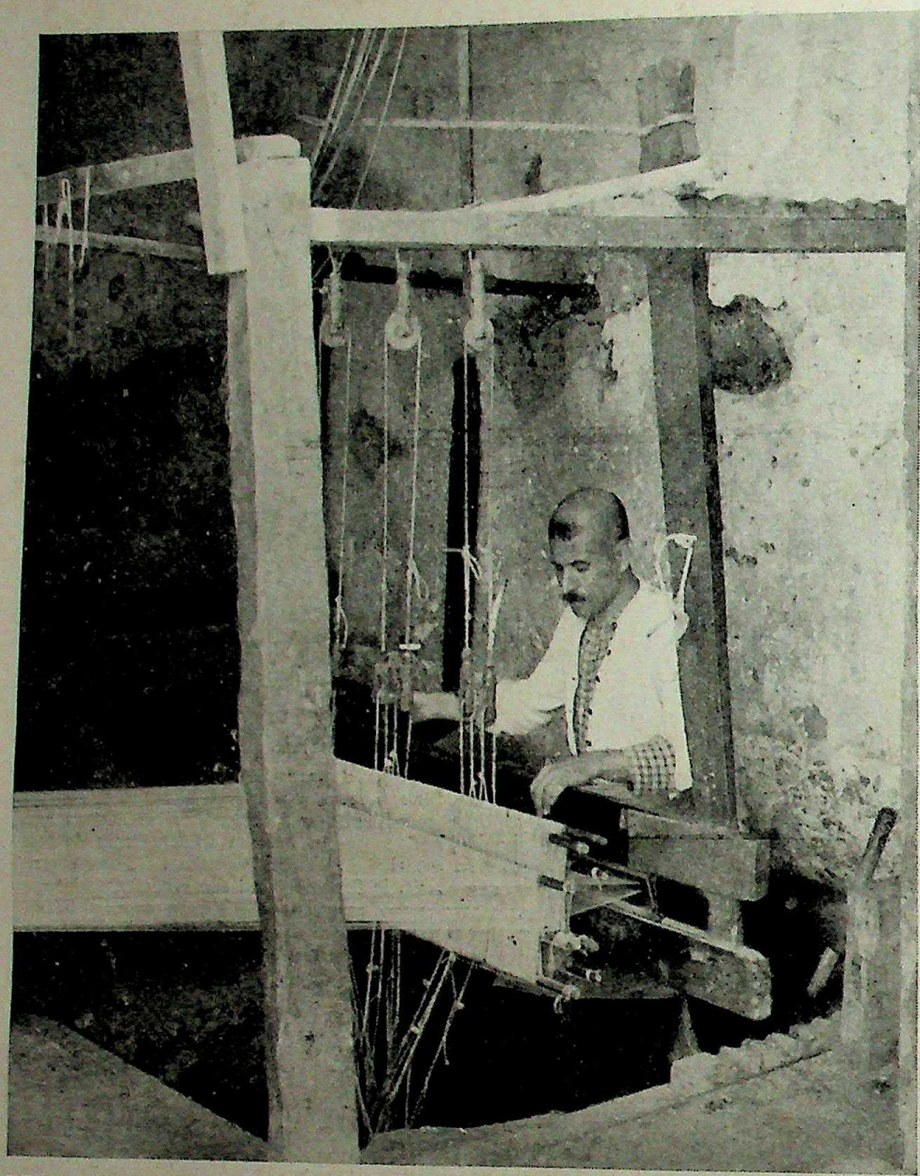

WEAVER'S PIT AS IN ANCIENT ISRAEL. Fabrics for clothing were woven by the Israelites in linen and wool. That these yarns were employed we know from the precautions to be observed with garments in cases of leprosy, "whether it be in the warp, or woof; of linen or of woollen" (Leviticus xiii, 48). As far back as patriarchal times a large handloom in use was sunk in a pit—exactly like the one seen in this photograph—so that the operative might sit on the edge to weave.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

Lord spake unto Moses after the death of the two sons of Aaron, when they offered before the Lord, and died," this chapter (xvi) is connected historically with the occurrence in Chapter x. The interposition of chapters xi to xv is significant.

The ritual of the Day of Atonement symbolized a putting away, as by one solemn act, of all those uncleannesses mentioned in the preceding chapters. But, over and above this, there was in the happenings of that day something more than, and deeper than, cleansing. Atonement was made in the sense of the hiding or putting away of sin. The Hebrew word used carries with it the idea of reconciliation.

Primarily the chapter is concerned with the ritual of the scapegoat. Aaron, wearing a special dress, is to offer certain sacrifices both for the people and for himself. Then he is to set two goats before Jehovah. On these he casts lots. He offers up the goat on which the lot falls for Jehovah and sends the goat "for Azazel" into the wilderness, having laid his hands upon it and confessed over it the sins of the people. Then he lays aside his linen garments, bathes himself, and puts on his priestly garments and offers the burnt offering.

To the present day this great annual festival is observed by the Jews with a remnant of the ritual—much of it being now impossible. No day in their calendar is more sacred than the Day of Atonement, and no ritual more significant than that recorded in Leviticus xvi. This is one of the great chapters, not only of this book, but of the whole Bible. Here is the character of Christ, the Priesthood of Christ, above all the atonement brought by Christ on the Cross, dramatized in this old Jewish ceremony, the remnants of which exist today wherever Jews are to be found.

With the account of the Day of Atonement we reach the central point of the book. Two great truths have been established. First, God can be approached only by appointed sacrifices, and, secondly, Man is full of pollution, which must be cleansed. We have now brought before us the third great truth, namely, that acts of sin are only manifestations of a sinful *nature*, and for this there must be atonement made that the righteous displeasure of God may be turned away. Before this is dealt with, however, there is an interesting digression to be noted.

Chapters seventeen to twenty are in the nature of a parenthesis. Israel is reminded that they are God's people, the holy nation, set apart for the service of God and the carrying out of His purposes.

Signs of Israel's Divine Selection

CONSEQUENTLY, we find certain laws and ordinances which specially distinguish the nation of Israel from all other nations of the earth. The enactments of Chapter xvii reveal the nature and meaning of sacrifice to Jehovah as compared with those offered to false gods (xvii, 7, 10, 13). The rendering of verse eleven in the Authorized Version should be noted; "for it is the blood that maketh atonement for the soul," should read, "for it is the blood that maketh an atonement *by reason of the life*." It is not merely blood as such, but blood as having in it the principle of life, that God accepts in sacrifice. Thus by giving

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"THE HARVEST IS RIPE." In Palestine and neighbouring countries barley harvest begins in April, wheat harvest in May or June. Earlier on the plains than in the uplands, but always in a hot and entirely rainless season, harvesting is thirsty work. The reapers and gleaners in this field, near Bethlehem, are therefore gladly beginning to gather round the two women who are uncovering bottles of water from a shading corn heap. Gleaning has been encouraged since the humane precept in Leviticus xix, 9, "And when ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not . . . . gather the gleanings of thy harvest."

Photo, W. F. Taylor

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vicariously the life of the dumb animal, the sinner confesses that his own life is forfeit.

Then follow in Chapter xviii enactments concerning unlawful marriages and unlawful lusts—again marking off the children of Israel as different from the surrounding heathen nations. In Chapters xix and xx are a series of mixed laws—to honour father and mother, and to keep the sabbath; not to worship idols; laws concerning thankofferings; gleaning; stealing; lying; of swearing; of wages and hired labour; concluding with the commandment for the stoning to death of the man or woman possessed with a familiar spirit (xx, 27).

Thus in a multitude of varied ways God commanded his people to make a difference between themselves and the surrounding nations. "The doings of the land of Canaan . . . shall ye not do: neither shall ye walk in their ordinances" (xviii, 3).

We now take up the main current of the book where we left it at the end of Chapter xvi. There and in the preceding chapters (xii to xv) God demands ceremonial purity. He now demands personal holiness—Chapters xxi to xxv. First there must be personal holiness in the priests (Chapter xxi). They may not defile themselves for the dead, i.e., approach a corpse. They and also their wives and daughters must be free from all personal blemish. They may eat the holy things only if free from uncleanness; also their offerings must be without blemish (xxii).

Three times a year all Israel is to appear before Jehovah at the holy convocations—Passover, the memorial of their deliverance from Egypt, and Pentecost (Feast of Harvest) and Tabernacles (xxiii).

It is possible thus to trace a system in the order of all this legislation. First a demand for external and ceremonial purity (xi to xvi); incidentally, then, for national separation (xvii to xx); and finally for inward and moral holiness (xxi to xxiii); the whole concluding with the provision for solemn feasts when the nation presented themselves to God as His cleansed people. To meet these demands God ordained the sacrifices and priesthood which are the subject matter of the opening chapters of the Book (Leviticus 1 to x).

Chapter xxiv has a peculiar character of its own. The instructions concerning the oil and the lamps of the Holy Place repeat the enactment of Exodus xxvii, 20–21. Then follow directions concerning the shewbread, which are new. The chapter ends with an historical occurrence in which a blasphemer is commanded to be stoned, followed by laws concerning murder and the slaughter of a beast. Possibly these isolated laws were grouped together here in obedience to some traditional association. The section ends with laws controlling the observance of the sabbatical year and the jubile (xxv, 25).

Solemn Warnings against Disobedience

The whole Book fitly closes with words of promise for obedience and threats of judgement for disobedience. It is interesting to compare this ending of the second great division of the law with that of the first, or Book of the Covenant, which ends with promises only (Exodus xxiii, 20–33). In that book no word is spoken of the judgements that would follow disobedience, and for a good reason, namely, that the Covenant had not yet been made. But now that the nation had entered into the privilege of that Covenant they had bound themselves by its penalties as well as blessed themselves with its rewards. It would seem that in Leviticus the judgements outweighed the rewards, and we are not surprised, seeing that from the first "Israel would not obey" and showed themselves "a stiffnecked people," so that the doom of their disobedience hung like a sword above their heads.

The final section of the whole legislation ends with the words, "These are the statutes and judgements and laws which the LORD made between him and the children of Israel in mount Sinai by the hand of Moses" (xxvi, 46).

Chapter xxvii is clearly a later addition in the form of an appendix. It concerns the making of vows. It again closes with a similar formula, which indicates that the transcriber looked upon it as an integral part of the Mosaic legislation: "These are the commandments which the LORD commanded Moses for the children of Israel in mount Sinai."

LEVITICUS: A SYNOPSIS

Laws Concerning Sacrifices

	Chapters
The Burnt Offering	i
The Meat (or Meal) Offering	ii
The Peace (or Thank) Offering	iii
The Sin Offering	iv—v, 13
The Trespass Offering	v, 14—vi, 7
The Duties Prescribed	vi—vii

Laws Concerning Priesthood

Consecration of Aaron and his Sons	viii
Aaron Offers his first Sacrifices	ix
Disobedience and Punishment	x

Ritual Cleanliness and Atonement

Ceremonial Purity of Animals	xi
Cleansing for Personal Defilement	xii
Infectious and Non-Infectious Diseases	xiii—xiv
Hygienic Precautions	xv
Day of Atonement	xvi

Code of Holiness

Eating of Blood Forbidden	xvii
Unlawful Marriages and Lusts	xviii
Miscellany of Precepts	xix, xx
Regulations for Priests	xxi, xxii
The Sacred Calendar	xxiii
Some Further Precepts	xxiv
Sabbath and Jubile	xxv

Concluding Exhortation

Promises and Warnings	xxvi
Estimation of Vows	xxvii

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Leviticus

II

The Story of the Book

The Laws that were Given to the Israelites in the Wilderness

by REV. J. N. SCHOFIELD, M.A., B.D.

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IN the Hebrew Bible the book of Leviticus is named, like the other four books of the Pentateuch, from the Hebrew word that stands at the beginning of the book; the word here is *wayyiqra* meaning "and he called." The name in the English Bible comes from the Latin version of the title given to the book by those who translated it into Greek; they called it "the Levitical book," or the book that dealt with Levitical duties.

Levites are mentioned only in two verses in the book (xxv, 32 and 33), but it must be remembered that in Old Testament times all the Jewish priests claimed to be Levites—descendants of Jacob's son Levi; and as the book is mainly concerned with priestly duties, such as the sacrificial system, the distinction between clean and unclean, and the maintenance of the holiness of the nation, the title accurately describes its contents.

It is of interest, however, that although the book is in this sense a priestly lawbook, yet Jesus of Nazareth, who frequently denounced the priestly ritual and regulations current in His days, often used and quoted it; for example, the conclusion to the Sermon on the Mount—"Ye therefore shall be perfect, as your heavenly father is perfect" (R.V.)—appears to be suggested by Leviticus xi, 45: "I am the Lord . . . ye shall therefore be holy, for I am holy"; and "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" (Leviticus xix, 18) is quoted by Jesus as the second great commandment and the summary of the second half of the law (Matthew v, 48; xix, 19; xxii, 39). Jesus evidently did not adopt toward the Book the attitude of many Bible readers, who, unless they see in its various sacrifices and laws types that foreshadow the work of Christ, pass it by, regarding it as of little use for instruction or as a source of spiritual nurture.

Law-giving in the Wilderness

THE present introduction in the Book itself (i, 1) tells us that the contents were spoken by the Lord to Moses out of the Tent of Meeting, after it had been erected on the first day of the second year after the children of Israel had come out of Egypt (Exodus xl, 2; compare Numbers i, 1), and the total space of time covered by the Book is one month. Into this month must also be set the events recorded in Numbers vii–ix, 14, where there is an account of the happenings that occurred in the first half of the month, and a statement of other laws that were given at the same time. These events, with the eight days required for the consecration of Aaron (Leviticus viii-x), leave only about a week for the giving of the laws in the book of Leviticus. The whole time was spent at the Mount of God in the wilderness of Sinai, from which the Israelites did not move until the twentieth day of the second month (Numbers x, 11).

This setting of the laws is not consistently maintained throughout the book, and is emphatically denied by Jeremiah, who said "Thus saith the Lord: I spake not unto your fathers, nor commanded them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning burnt offerings or sacrifices" (Jeremiah vii, 22.). Deuteronomy attempts to harmonize the two positions by the theory that, although these ritual laws were given to Moses by God at Sinai, they were not communicated by Moses to the Israelites until years later in the fields of Moab, just before the entry into Palestine. Ezekiel states that laws were given in the wilderness, but he includes a law commanding the sacrifice of children (Ezekiel xx, 25f.) that is the opposite of that contained in Leviticus xx, 2. The truth appears to be that, in the time of Jeremiah, priestly writers were claiming that the Temple laws and ritual dated from the Exodus, but their claim was not such an old one that it could not be challenged, and Jeremiah, although himself a priest by birth and training, rejected the claim, saying "Behold, the false pen of the scribes hath wrought falsely" (Jeremiah viii, 8); Ezekiel and the priestly writers, however, accepted the claim, and any new collection of laws was inserted into the story of the events at Sinai, even though it contained laws at variance with those which were already part of the Sinai legislation (compare Exodus xxii, 29, which demands the sacrifice of firstborn children).

Striking the Note of Holiness

IT is always difficult to tell in an interesting way the story of a lawbook, and Leviticus is purely a lawbook. The only narratives it contains are either the account of the fulfilment of a law, like the consecration of Aaron, or stories that are used as an introduction to particular case-laws, like the story of the two priests who were burnt for offering unauthorized fire (x), and the account of the man who was stoned for blaspheming the Holy Name during a fight in the camp (xxiv). For many years scholars have recognized that the book contains extracts from previous collections of laws which were originally independent codes, and which were used by priestly writers who compiled the Pentateuch. It has been generally agreed that one clearly distinguishable code can be found in Chapters xvii to xxvi, and since A.D. 1877 this code has been called by the name given it by Klostermann, the "Law of Holiness." The name indicates the chief characteristic of the section, which is the emphasis on the need for holiness among the people who worship a holy God; there are other indications that have been noted which suggest that this section was once a separate unit—the fact that the opening and closing of the section correspond to those of the Book of the Covenant and the Book of Deuteronomy, the miscellaneous nature of the contents, and the recurrence of subjects already dealt with. There are, however, also scholars who believe that these features, which are regarded as characteristic of this section, are the sign of an editorial hand, rather than of an independent code.

To a careful reader of Leviticus it is obvious that a long history lies behind it, and that many sources, whether written or oral, were used by the compilers.

Perhaps a clue to the story of the compilation may be found in the frequent changes of number and person in

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the book—whether the worshipper is spoken of as "he" or "they," or addressed as "thou" or "you." We are familiar with the difference of the usage of "thou" and "you" in English as denoting a different age or milieu; for example, the Quakers retained, for religious reasons, the singular form of address long after it had passed out of common usage, and it is still commonly used in the language of prayer. It seems probable that the variations are just as important in Hebrew, and the book gains in interest if the reader takes notice of these changes which run right through the book. On this basis Leviticus can be divided into "he," "thou," and "ye" sections.

THE first of these appears to go back to instructions given to priests in reference to the ritual and the worshipper, the second to instructions given to individual worshippers by the priests, and the third, scattered through the book sometimes in single phrases or verses, and at other times expanded into long sections or even whole chapters, addressing the whole people, priest, and worshipper, as "you," appears to come from the hands of the writers who edited the book and prepared it for publication. The fact that the final section of Leviticus comes after the editorial peroration in xxvi, 1 to 39, suggests that additions were made to the book after the first editor had made his compilation, and a careful study of the book shows that these later additions were not confined to the closing chapters, for the hands of these later editors have left their finger-prints on other parts of Leviticus.

The major portion of Leviticus naturally comes from the instructions that were given to the priests in reference to the conduct of sacrifices and the performance of the various ritual acts in the Temple, and therefore it is in the third person. This portion is not however homogeneous, and a Hebrew reader can discern quite clearly differences of style and language, showing that some of it belongs to other milieus. Chapter ii, 1—3, which introduces the only "thou" section in the first seventeen chapters of the book, and iv, 1—vi, 7 do not belong to the main "he" section; these chapters refer to offerings that are not mentioned in the book of Deuteronomy, and appear to be part of the requirements of the more priestly section of the community; ii, 1—3 belongs to the same circle of time or place as Numbers xv, where rules are laid down requiring a present of meal to be offered with every animal sacrifice.

Apart from the regulations in ii, 4—16 regarding the offering of cooked meal, the "thou" sections occur in the second part of Leviticus, and are concerned more with the affairs of ordinary life than with purely ritual requirements. The law in reference to the shewbread in xxiv, 5ff is a ritual law, but xviii contains a table of affinity, xix gives various laws that have to do with social life, and xxv gives the efforts of the legislators to ameliorate the conditions of the poorer members of the community. It is of interest, as showing the milieu from which these sections came, that the prohibition against marrying a brother's wife (xviii, 16) does not allow for the custom of Levirate marriage legislated for in Deuteronomy xxv, and mentioned in Ruth and in Matthew xxii; and that verse 18 forbids such a marriage relationship as Jeremiah ascribes to God (Jeremiah iii). The law of the Jubilee year would also appear to be later than Exodus xxi and Deuteronomy xv, which ordered that Hebrew slaves were to be released and all debts remitted every seven years, and Jeremiah xxxiv, which tells us that this earlier law had not worked in practice.

The hand of the editor can be seen in the opening verses of the book, in the prohibition against the burning of leaven or honey on the altar (ii, 11 and 12), and in the repeated demand that neither blood nor fat must be eaten (iii, 17; vii, 22 to 26; xvii, 11, 12 and 14; xix, 26). Other ritual demands are found in vii, 32, where the priests' portion of the peace-offering is defined, xvi, 29—34, which turns the story of the events of the day on which Aaron entered the holy place of the tabernacle into an annual day of atonement, and part of xxiii, which contains the calendar of the annual feasts. The remainder of the "ye" portion consists of small additions such as xx, 15b: chapter xi, which like the corresponding "ye" portion of Deuteronomy xiv deals with clean and unclean animals, and appears to be an expansion of that chapter: and the many hortatory passages, which demand the holiness of the people and their separation from anything that would contaminate them (xv, 31; xviii, 1—6, and 24—30; part of xix; xx, 22—26; xxvi, 1—39).

A study of the editorial sections shows that the aim was not to produce a book for the priest or the specialist, but one that made known God's requirements to the ordinary layman. Like Deuteronomy, Leviticus was the outcome of a democratic tendency in religion, and it is because of such tendencies that the Bible has always been pre-eminently a book for the people. Deuteronomy has been spoken of as the book that translated the moral demands of the great prophets of Israel into laws for life and worship; in the same way Leviticus attempts to popularize the temple ritual and to show how it is possible to realize Ezekiel's vision of Israel as a Holy People.

WHEN we attempt to estimate the permanent religious value of such a book as Leviticus, it is necessary to differentiate between the transient, which has remained only in symbols, and the underlying principles, which

WHAT GREAT WRITERS HAVE SAID ABOUT THE BIBLE

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749-1832). It is belief in the Bible, the fruits of deep meditation, which has served me as the guide of my moral and literary life. I have found capital safely invested and richly productive of interest, although I have sometimes made but a bad use of it.

Walter Savage Landor (1775-1864). To say nothing of its holiness or authority, the Bible contains more specimens of genius and taste than any other volume in existence.

Thomas Carlyle (1795-1881). A noble book! All men's book! It is our first, oldest statement of the never-ending problem—man's destiny, and God's ways with him here on earth; and all in such free-flowing outlines—grand in its sincerity; in its simplicity and its epic melody.

Thomas Babington Macaulay (1800-1859). The English Bible—a book which, if everything else in our language should perish, would alone suffice to show the whole extent of its beauty and power.

Victor Hugo (1802-1885). Give to the people who toil and suffer, for whom this world is hard and bad, the belief that there is a better made for them. Scatter Gospels among the villages, a Bible for every cottage.

James Anthony Froude (1818-1894). The Bible, thoroughly known, is literature in itself—the rarest and richest in all departments of thought and imagination which exists.

John Ruskin (1819-1900). To my early knowledge of the Bible I owe the best part of my taste in literature, and the most precious, and, on the whole, the one essential part of my education.

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"YE SHALL DWELL IN BOOTHS SEVEN DAYS"

The Feast of Tabernacles—so called because the Latin word Tabernacula was used in the Vulgate to translate the Hebrew Succoth (booths)—was ordained to commemorate the forty years wandering in the wilderness. "And ye shall take you on the first day the boughs of goodly trees, branches of palm trees, and the boughs of thick trees, and willows of the brook; and ye shall rejoice before the Lord your God seven days . . . All that are Israelites born shall dwell in booths" (Leviticus xxiii, 40, 42). The photograph shows a modern scene in Palestine, during the period of the feast, in a hut, roofed by branches, erected in the courtyard of the family home.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

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"SIX YEARS THOU SHALT PRUNE THY VINEYARD"

Every seventh year, according to the Mosaic law, the cultivated ground was to lie fallow. In this "year of sabbath" the vineyards, so carefully hedged, weeded, watered and pruned at other times, were not to be tended. The Israelites were also commanded: "neither gather the grapes of thy vines undressed (which have not been cut back)" (Leviticus xxv, 3, 5). It was to be a "year of rest" when slaves were freed. The vine yields excellent crops where it is still cultivated in Palestine, but the ruined wine-presses on now barren hills are evidence of its greater abundance in Biblical times.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

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DAY OF ATONEMENT AT THE WAILING WALL

The most sacred day in the calendar of Israel is the Day of Atonement. "And this shall be an everlasting statute unto you, to make an atonement for the children of Israel for all their sins once a year" (Leviticus xvi, 34). This expiatory "sabbath of rest" is held on October 10th. Then in Jerusalem a great concourse throngs the Wailing Place by the Western Wall alongside the only stones that are left of the ancient Temple. Here prayers are offered up fervently throughout the day. To Christians in the Holy City the occasion evokes reverent thoughts of the Saviour of mankind, "by whom we have now received the atonement" (Romans v, 11).

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

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"THOU SHALT PUT THE BLESSING ON MOUNT GERIZIM"

On the rocky and ruin-strewn plateau, which constitutes the summit of Mount Gerizim, the Samaritan community from the neighbouring town of Nablus, the old Sichem (*see* illustration in page 74), gather for worship during the time of the Passover. These pilgrims robe themselves in white as a sign of humility and camp on the side of the mountain for seven days. Here they strictly observe the ancient ritual. In the light of Christianity the spiritual interpretations of feast and fast ordained by the Law of Moses remain, though symbols and rites disappear.

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have been taken up into Christianity. To the first group belong animal sacrifices, and the idea that blood was holy, and holiness and sin physically contagious; to the second group belong the beliefs that life and property are not one's own but are held in stewardship, that false dealing with one's neighbour is unfaithfulness to God, and that sin, even though man does not fully realize the evil of his action or condition, produces a barrier between man and God which can be removed only by an act of atonement.

From the earliest days of Christianity men have explained the meaning of the Cross on Calvary, and their experience of forgiveness and peace with God, in symbolic language drawn from the ritual of animal sacrifice, the cleansing with blood, and the transference of sin; much of the ritual of Christian sacraments and worship comes, too, from these early religious ceremonies; and it is perhaps well to remind ourselves that the same ritual can be used to express widely-differing religious conceptions, and the same symbolic language can be employed to interpret very diverse religious experience. Neither the ritual nor the symbol is an essential part of the belief or the experience.

"AS DOVES TO THEIR WINDOWS." The only acceptable birds for sacrifice under the Law were offerings "of turtledoves or of young pigeons" (Leviticus i, 14). They abound in Palestine and Syria. Wild rock-doves swarm in the ravines and round old edifices such as this minaret of a ruined mosque. The migrant turtledoves return each spring to nest in the woods, "and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land" (The Song of Solomon ii, 12). From very early times pigeons were domesticated in the Bible countries, and they are still kept by people of all classes.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

THE book gains in value for us when we recognize the great difference between many of the ideas contained in it and those in Christianity. Sin and holiness were regarded as so contagious that they could be transferred by touch to any animate or inanimate object. By the laying-on of hands the sins of the people could be put upon the scapegoat that was driven off into the wilderness with its burden of guilt; sin could be transferred to an offering that was sacrificed at the temple, and in some instances could make the flesh of the slaughtered animal so contaminated that it had to be burnt outside the camp.

Holiness was equally contagious; priests had to officiate in special linen garments, which had to be changed before the priests left the precincts of the sanctuary. Linen was chosen because it did not cause perspiration (Ezekiel xliv, 18), but the changing of the garments was to prevent common things or people becoming "holy" and therefore the property of God; if the high priest had been in the holy place of the sanctuary, he had to wash himself to remove any other holiness he might have on his person. "He shall wash his flesh with water . . . and put on his garments, and come forth (xvi, 23)." Holiness and sin were essentially physical, not spiritual, qualities and conditions.

This fact is made clear in the regulations for the sin and trespass-offerings. None of the sins that could be forgiven by a sin-offering were what we today would call sins; they were offences committed unwittingly and accidentally; for deliberate sins there was no forgiveness, nor was forgiveness possible to the man who refused to remove his guilt when he became aware that he had committed one of these unintentional crimes. The nearest approach to a sin that may be regarded as a deliberate act of the will is the failure to come forward and give evidence in a case which one has witnessed (v, 1); but the phrase used in reference to it, "he shall bear his iniquity," means that the sin was outside those contemplated as forgivable. The gulf between Christianity and this old Judaism can be seen too in the law that a

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SACRIFICIAL LAMB FOR THE PASSOVER. The Samaritans of Nablus, observing with Pentateuchal rites the feast of the Passover, "take to them every man a lamb, according to the house of their fathers, a lamb for an house . . . a male of the first year" (Exodus xii, 3, 5), and keep it apart until the evening of the feast. This photograph shows a lamb being given drink before it is slaughtered, with others, near the cooking pit on Mount Gerizim at sunset.

Photo. H. J. Shepstone

mother was unclean after the birth of a son for forty days, and for eighty after that of a daughter; during that time she was excluded from the Sanctuary, and at the end of it she must offer a sin-offering to make atonement. The physical state of the woman, like the physical condition of a leper, caused a barrier between the "sinner" and God, which could only be removed by a renewal of the covenant between her and God. This renewal was effected mainly by sprinkling the person with blood—a relic of a time when both the worshipper and the god partook together of the same life-blood.

There is, however, as we have seen, teaching in the book that is of permanent value, on a level with that of the great prophets. The distinctive requirement of the editor of Leviticus, that the people who worship a holy God must themselves be holy, is in line with the teaching of the eighth century prophets, who claimed that the truest worship of a just and loving God was not expressed by acts of ritual, but by acts of justice and love. The teaching in the book of Amos, that privilege brings responsibility, is also an essential doctrine of Christianity, and was apprehended by the Levitical legislators, who graded the amount of the sin-offering not in accordance with the offence but with the importance of the offender. The principle is the opposite of the non-Christian attitude revealed in the caste system in India, where a low caste man incurs greater guilt than a high caste man for the same crime, or in the race prejudice in America, where the crowd would lynch a negro for a crime for which a white man would receive perhaps only a short term of imprisonment.

The prophetic high-water mark of Old Testament religion is seen too in Chapter xix, a curiously mixed chapter in which laws from many sources have been gathered together, and which makes us realize the need to "take the precious from the common" if we are to hear God speaking through this book. Laws drawn from the moral decalogue of Deuteronomy v, and the ritual decalogue of Exodus xxxiv, jostle with laws against breeding mules and wearing garments made from a cloth in which wool and linen are mixed. But there are laws here that embody the moral and spiritual teaching of the prophets, and go far beyond the nationalism of Deuteronomy and the narrow exclusive attitude of Nehemiah; justice to one's servant and justice in business are linked with requirements emphasized by the last great Prophet from Nazareth—to love your neighbour as yourself, and to include among your neighbours foreigners living in your land; not to hate a brother in your heart, nor bear a secret grudge against him.

Unlike many of the other books of the Bible, Leviticus cannot be illustrated by topographical details, for it is not a narrative of movements and events seen against a changing geographical background, but an account of some of the laws that were linked with the Mount of God at Sinai; and Sinai has already been described in connexion with the Exodus. (*See* page 119). The book gains considerably in interest, however, through a knowledge of recent archaeological discoveries, of folklore, and of Palestine today.

Archaeology in Palestine began as long ago as 1838, but it is since 1920, and the British occupation of the land, that the most rapid strides have been made by both British and American archaeological organizations.

Potsherd Relics of Ancient Rites

THE earthern vessels which the law of Leviticus ordered to be broken, because they had been touched by something holy or unclean, have contributed their share to the masses of broken pottery that, at all the excavated sites, have been a determining factor in dating the successive strata. Innumerable remains have been found of the large, wide-mouthed, earthenware jars which were used as ovens; these ovens were let into the ground, and the burnt earth around them shows that they were heated like old English ovens and many in Palestine today, by lighting a fire inside them and burning there "the grass that today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven." Because they were let into the ground it would be easy for vermin to fall into them unless they were properly covered, and

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BAKERY IN THE WILDERNESS. These women, dwellers on the edge of the Arabian desert, are using a communal oven made of an earthenware jar, partially sunk in earth, of the same kind as that alluded to in Leviticus xxvi, 26: "Ten women shall bake your bread in one oven." The flakes of dough, crisped by sprinkling with water, are flapped on to the upper part of the jar, which is heated by a fire of dried reeds, thistles and palm leaves, lighted inside it. The biscuit-bread, fresh daily, is cooked in about two minutes and then peeled off the oven. It is made of rough-cleaned, wholemeal flour.

Photo, Mondiale

SORTING "CLUSTERS OF RAISINS." Dried grapes were early esteemed a luxury food in the Bible lands where the vine was, and still is, extensively cultivated. Nazarites were commanded to abstain from them (Numbers vi, 3), and they are mentioned as acceptable gifts several times in the Old Testament. The women pictured above are employed in grading raisins cultivated for the market in Palestine.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

make them so unclean that they had to be broken (Leviticus xi, 35); in time of famine bread was so scarce that, as we learn from Leviticus xxvi, 26, ten women could bake their bread in one oven.

Temples have been uncovered and have yielded examples of furniture of the same type as that used in the sacrificial rites described in Leviticus—portable altars on which incense was burnt, tables on which offerings were made to the gods—and of many sacrificial refuse pits with their heaps of bones of sheep and oxen.

Ras Shamra's Library of Tablets

ONE of the most important discoveries, in recent years, from a religious standpoint, has been that of the tablets at Ras Shamra near Cape Fennel on the Syrian coast. These tablets belong to the period from the 15th to the 13th century B.C., and represent a Phoenician culture that existed in Syria before the invasion, in about 1200 B.C., of the Sea People akin to those we know as Philistines. It seems possible that these Phoenicians originally came from the district south of Palestine where the Israelites wandered, and where the lawgiving of Leviticus is set; and it is possible that similarities in the ritual of the Old Testament and the Ras Shamra inscriptions may in part be accounted for by the fact of this common original home. If we can trust the translations that have been published (*see* "The Ras Shamra Tablets: Their Bearing on the Old Testament," by Dr. J. W. Jack) there are many contacts with the feasts and sacrifices mentioned in Leviticus.

Among the sacrifices mentioned in these records are whole burnt-offerings made together with an offering of wheat

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to make an *atonement*, peace-offerings or offerings made for friendship, sin- and trespass-offerings, wave-offerings and the sacrifice of first-fruits. Terms used in Leviticus for "offerings-made-by-fire," offerings "without blemish," a "gift to God," the "bread of God," occur on the tablets; and there, too, birds are allowed to be offered as a substitute for a more costly sacrifice. Perhaps the closest parallel is provided by a tablet that appears to show the prototype of the seven-day Feast of Unleavened Bread (Leviticus xxiii). The tablet describes the seven-fold agricultural ritual connected with the death of the Harvest-God—the seizing of the standing corn, cutting it with a sickle, threshing it with flails, parching it with fire, crushing it between the millstones, scattering it over the fields, and finally, either the eating of the flour by birds or the removal of the prohibition against the use of leaven (the translation is uncertain). It seems likely that the feast of unleavened bread, the waving of the first sheaf of the new harvest, and the use of the parched corn, were part of the heritage taken over by the invading Israelite Beduin from their agricultural predecessors in Palestine—a heritage which they purged of its heathen associations, and incorporated in the worship of their own God.

"MEMORIAL OF BLOWING OF TRUMPETS." An Eastern rabbi is here seen sounding a shofar, or ceremonial trumpet made of a ram's horn. This is done at the conclusion of the service on the Day of Atonement and on the occasion of the Jewish New Year's "holy convocation" (Leviticus xxiii, 24). The horn is used in remembrance of the ram, sacrificed by Abraham as a substitute for Isaac.

Photo, Keystone

Palestinian Folklore and the Mosaic Law

THE characteristic tendency of a new religion, especially a priestly religion, to take over and transform more primitive rites and popular superstitions which it has found impossible to eradicate, can be seen also in some of the purification rites in Leviticus. Many of these rites must have persisted in Palestine for centuries before they were officially incorporated in the priestly religion that survived the Babylonian Exile, and although they have survived only in the later stratum of Jewish law as represented by Leviticus, they were in accordance with ancient Palestinian custom. A considerable amount of evidence, linking these ceremonies with those of primitive peoples, has been collected by Sir James Frazer in "Folklore of the Old Testament" (3 vols 1918) and by Robertson Smith and Professor S. A. Cook in "The Religion of the Semites" (3rd edition, 1927).

A belief in the mysterious power of blood is common to most primitive people; the blood was the life, participation in the same blood constituted the unity of a family or tribe, and drinking the blood of another living being enabled one to absorb its life. The staple diet of the Beduin is vegetarian; when a domestic animal was killed the slaughter was a sacrifice, and the animal was eaten at a communal feast in which the whole family, or clan, and its god shared. This feast renewed the bonds between the members of the tribe and the god, and the renewal was made by sharing in the blood of the slaughtered animal, the god's portion being smeared on his image or altar. Later, the blood became too sacred for human beings to participate in, and was poured out as an offering to the god; among some people males might partake of it, but it was forbidden to the women, like the flesh of the sin-offering in Leviticus (vi, 22). When the worshipper no longer drank the blood, he shared in its atoning effect by being sprinkled with it.

This same belief in the nature of blood was in part responsible for the purification rites that are demanded to this day among primitive people from a mother after childbirth, and for the innumerable taboos, often extremely cruel, that have surrounded women when they are said to be "unclean."

Belief in the physical contagion of holiness can also be paralleled from many sources. In Syria the dove was so holy that anyone who touched one became taboo for a day, and at Mecca, in pre-Mahomedan times, if a man entered the sacred enclosure in his own clothes they were forfeited because of their contact with the holy place. The modern custom of all the pilgrims to Mecca wearing special robes for the processions is explained as a symbol that all pilgrims become equal; but, like the use of priestly vestments, the custom has its origin in these earlier beliefs. Uncleanness is, as we have seen, regarded as equally contagious, and can be transferred to a bird that flies away with it, or to a scapegoat that bears it away to the hairy demon of the desert. Similar ritual for atonement is mentioned by Langdon as recorded on a Sumerian tablet from Babylonia; and in Arabia there was a custom, mentioned by Robertson Smith, by which a widow before re-marriage was believed to be able to make a bird fly away with the uncleanness of her widowhood.

CUSTOMS and superstitions illustrating the thought and practice revealed in such a book as Leviticus linger on not only in primitive society but in civilized countries like our own, and a study of the folklore of the country districts in England, as well as of Palestine, provides much useful and interesting material. P. J. Baldensperger, in "The Immovable East," and in articles in the "Quarterly Statement" of the Palestine Exploration Fund, quotes many examples of such folklore from outlying districts in Palestine; for example, the appearance of saltpetre on damp walls of a house

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is still mistaken for leprosy, and regarded as a disease. Sir James Frazer mentions a custom amongst some modern Jews of sacrificing a white cock on the eve of the Day of Atonement with the words "Let this cock be a substitute for me. Let it take my place, let death be laid upon it, but a happy life bestowed on me and on all Israel"; and today Jews in Palestine symbolically rid themselves of their sins by throwing stones into the sea at Tell Aviv.

Passover Sacrifices in Modern Samaria

IT is, however, the Samaritan community at Shechem—the modern Nablus—that provides the closest parallels with the animal sacrifices of Leviticus. Every spring the Passover lambs are sacrificed on Mount Gerizim with probably the same ritual that was at one time used among the Jews. When the present writer saw the ceremony, no use was made of the blood of the animals for cleansing or sprinkling purposes; it was allowed to drain away straight from the animal into the ground at the side of the altar. The altar was not built above the level of the ground, but was a trench dug into the ground, and stones were built into the sides of the trench to prevent them from falling in. It is interesting to note that the Arabic word that is equivalent to the Hebrew word translated "altar" in the Bible, means a trench. The fire was lit in the trench, wood was laid in order across the top, and on this those portions of the carcase that the book of Leviticus demands shall be burnt, were burnt. The greatest care was taken that no smallest part of the holy flesh should be left lying about, and on one occasion the work of preparing the carcases was suspended for some moments while search was made for a small piece of a sinew that had been dropped on the grass (Palestine Exploration Fund "Quarterly Statement," April, 1936). Illustrations showing incidents in the ritual practised by the Samaritans in connexion with the Passover will be found in pages 100, 112, 150, 152, 202 and 203.

Whatever we may think of such ceremonies and taboos as we have been considering in this chapter, we must remember that, however crude the taboos were, they were an advance on a lawless state of society in which "every man did that which was right in his own eyes," and they taught a keen sense of obligation to the community to which a man belonged; the sacrifices, too, brought to the worshippers a joyous confidence in a friendly god. Life loses most of its meaning and its interest if it becomes secularized and related only to this age and world, instead of being seen, as these primitive people saw it, against a background of mysterious controlling forces, or as the Christians of later ages saw it, as a preparation for Eternity.

"THERE SHALL BE A DAY OF ATONEMENT." The solemn annual fast of the "Day of Atonement" is still kept by orthodox Jews as a time of prayer, repentance, and reconciliation to God. The photograph shows the congregation of a synagogue during the recital of the service of the Temple. The account of the day's institution in Leviticus xvi records the ritual of the scapegoat which has peculiar significance for Christians, symbolizing the atonement of Our Lord on the Cross.

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Ode and Oracle in Numbers

EMBEDDED in the prose of Numbers is a considerable amount of poetry. A lyric form of peculiar charm in the Bible is the farewell blessing or benediction. Deep sincerity of religious feeling gives the familiar example cited a permanent and universal appeal. Fragments of ancient chants and songs, well-known to the people, were quoted in the written history. They were handed down by word of mouth, or were remnants of a folk literature now lost, such as "the book of the wars of the Lord" (*see* xxi, 14), except for a few traces. One of these fragments is the chant sung by the bearers of the Ark, as a signal for the progress and halt of the Israelites on their journeys. Others are the Little Songs in chapter xxi. The Song of the Well may originally have been a metaphorical allusion to a victory over Moab at the city of Beer—the name signifying a well—and sung by those who gathered to draw water, or in times of drought. The other, a taunt song, celebrates a conquest of Sihon, king of the Amorites at Heshbon.

AMONG the most notable of Biblical blessings are the lyrical outbursts of Balaam's oracles, set down in verse, while the rest of the story of Balaam and Balak is told in prose. The translation of the Authorized Version renders this group of poems superbly. The principle of Hebrew versification, parallelism, chiefly occurs in couplets, the second line depending on the idea of the first, but quatrains are found, as in the four last lines of the second oracle, and lines 8-11 of the third. The prophet receives the revelations in a trance; the open eyes referred to are the eyes of the mind. The poems are in effect inspired improvisations unwelcome in their presage.

BENEDICTION

vi, 22—26

AND the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto Aaron and unto his sons, saying, On this wise ye shall bless the children of Israel, saying unto them,

The Lord bless thee, and keep thee;
The Lord make his face shine upon thee,
And be gracious unto thee:
The Lord lift up his countenance upon thee,
And give thee peace.

CHANT OF THE ARK

x, 33—36

AND they departed from the mount of the Lord three days' journey; and the ark of the covenant of the Lord went before them in the three days' journey, to search out a resting place for them. And the cloud of the Lord was upon them by day, when they went out of the camp.

And it came to pass, when the ark set forward, that Moses said,

Rise up, Lord, and let thine enemies be scattered;
And let them that hate thee flee before thee.

And when it rested, he said:

Return, O Lord, unto the many thousands of Israel.

FOLK SONGS

xxi, 16—18, 26—30

AND from thence they went to Beer; that is the well whereof the Lord spake unto Moses, Gather the people together, and I will give them water. Then Israel sang this song.

Spring up, O well; sing ye unto it:
The princes digged the well,
The nobles of the people digged it,
By the direction of the law-giver,
With their staves.

Heshbon was the city of Sihon the king of the Amorites, who had fought against the former king of Moab and taken all his land out of his hand, even unto Arnon. Wherefore they that speak in proverbs say,

Come into Heshbon, [prepared:
Let the city of Sihon be built and
For there is a fire gone out of Heshbon,
A flame from the city of Sihon:
It hath consumed Ar of Moab,
And the lords of the high places of
Woe to thee Moab! [Arnon.
Thou art undone, O people of Chemosh:
He hath given his sons that escaped,
And his daughters, into captivity
Unto Sihon king of the Amorites.
We have shot at them;
Heshbon is perished even unto Dibon,
And we have laid them waste even unto Nophah,
Which reacheth unto Medeba.

ORACLES OF BALAAM

xxiii, 7—10, 18—24; xxiv, 3—9, 17—19

BALAK the king of Moab hath brought me from Aram, [saying,
Out of the mountains of the east,
Come, curse me Jacob,
And come, defy Israel. [cursed?
How shall I curse, whom God hath not
Or how shall I defy, whom the Lord hath not defied?
For from the top of the rocks I see him,
And from the hills I behold him:
Lo, the people shall dwell alone,
And shall not be reckoned among the nations.
Who can count the dust of Jacob,
And the number of the fourth part of Israel?
Let me die the death of the righteous,
And let my last end be like his!

. . . .

Rise up, Balak, and hear;
Hearken unto me, thou son of Zippor:
God is not a man, that he should lie;
Neither the son of man, that he should repent:
Hath he said, and shall he not do it?
Or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?
Behold I have received commandment to bless: [reverse it.
And he hath blessed; and I cannot
He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob,
Neither hath he seen perverseness in Israel:
The Lord his God is with him,
And the shout of a king is among them.
God brought them out of Egypt;
He hath as it were the strength of an unicorn. [Jacob,
Surely there is no enchantment against
Neither is there any divination against Israel;
According to this time it shall be said of Jacob and of Israel,
What hath God wrought! [great lion,
Behold the people shall rise up as a
And lift up himself as a young lion;
He shall not lie down until he eat of the prey,
And drink the blood of the slain.

. . . .

Balaam the son of Beor hath said,
And the man whose eyes are open hath said: [of God,
He hath said, which heard the words
Which saw the vision of the Almighty,
Falling into a trance, but having his eyes open;
How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob,
And thy tabernacles, O Israel!
As the valleys are they spread forth,
As gardens by the river's side,
As the trees of lign aloes which the Lord hath planted,
And as cedar trees beside the waters.
He shall pour the water out of his buckets,
And his seed shall be in many waters,
And his king shall be higher than Agag,
And his kingdom shall be exalted.
God brought him forth out of Egypt;
He hath as it were the strength of an unicorn:
He shall eat up the nations his enemies, and shall break their bones,
And pierce them through with his arrows.
He couched, he lay down as a lion, [up?
And as a great lion: who shall stir him

. . . .

I shall see him, but not now:
I shall behold him, but not nigh:
There shall come a Star out of Jacob,
And a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel,
And shall smite the corners of Moab,
And destroy all the children of Sheth.
And Edom shall be a possession,
Seir also shall be a possession for his enemies;
And Israel shall do valiantly.
Out of Jacob shall come he that shall have dominion, [of the city.
And shall destroy him that remaineth

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Numbers

I

The Book in Outline

Israel's Years of Trial in the Wilderness of Sinai

by REV. HUGH MARTIN, M.A.

Editor, Student Christian Movement Press

THE Book of Numbers is a summary of the experiences of the Israelites during their forty years of wandering in the wilderness after their escape from Egypt. The Book, loosely constructed without much logical or chronological sequence, contains a great variety of types of material —narrative, legislative, statistical, ritualistic—and in it three main divisions can be recognized: (a) in camp before Mount Sinai (i–x, 10); (b) the wanderings in the wilderness (x, 11–xxii, 1); and (c) in the plains of Moab (xxii, 2–xxxvi).

The purpose of the first section is to give a detailed account of the preparations for the journey through the wilderness.

At the outset, Moses is commanded to take a numbering of the men of twenty years old and upward, in order to determine how many were "able to go forth to war." The numbers are recorded by tribes, and yield a grand total of 603,550. The Levites were not included in the census because they were set apart for special religious duties connected with the care and service of the tabernacle.

Various laws are next promulgated. Directions are given how the tribes were to encamp around the tabernacle—which is set, alike for honour and for safety, in the midst of the people. Then in Chapters iii and iv the duties of the various families of the Levites are set forth, and they are appointed to assist Aaron and his sons, and to be substitutes for the first-born of all Israel, who would otherwise have been consecrated to the service of Jehovah. There were, we are told, 22,000 Levites, but 22,273 firstborn males in Israel. The odd 273 are to be redeemed by a money payment.

Purifying the Ranks of the People

BY a number of miscellaneous regulations certain "unclean" persons are to be excluded from the camp, provision is made for restitution in case of offence, and trial by ordeal is prescribed for a wife suspected of unfaithfulness. The last is based upon the belief that the drinking of the "bitter water" would be harmless to an innocent woman but would cause serious harm to the guilty.

The conditions of a Nazarite's vow, undertaken for a definite period of time, are also set forth (vi, 1–21). During the time of the vow the man or woman must refrain from the fruit of the vine in any form, let the hair grow, avoid contact with any dead body, and avoid all unclean food. There follow the ceremonies to be observed on the completion of the vow. Then, surprisingly, in the midst of all these legalities, there appear the words of the Hebrew benediction known to us all because of their place in Christian worship. "The Lord bless thee, and keep thee: The Lord make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee: The Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace" (vi, 24–26).

There follows a list of the offerings presented to Jehovah at the dedication of the tabernacle by the princes, or heads of the tribes (Chapter vii), a description of the golden candlestick, and the regulations for the purification of the Levites and their consecration to the service of the tabernacle (Chapter viii). They were to be liable to service from the age of twenty-five until the age of fifty. (It may be noted that in Chapter iv, 3, it is stated that the period of service was to begin at the age of thirty).

Instructions are given for the celebration of the Passover on the anniversary of the departure from Egypt, and special arrangements are made for those unable to observe the Passover on the proper date (ix, 1–14).

Over the tabernacle is a cloud which shines like fire at night-time. The removal of the cloud is the sign for striking camp and continuing the march. It is arranged that various signals to the people will be given by means of silver trumpets blown by the priests.

Outstanding Events in the Wilderness

THE second section, which records certain outstanding incidents during the forty years in the wilderness, begins with the removal of the cloud from the tabernacle and the order of march of the people following its lead (x, 11–28).

Moses appeals to his father-in-law, Hobab, to accompany them on the journey and give them the benefit of his knowledge of the country through which they are to go. His answer is not given here, but may be inferred from Judges i, 16.

In their journeying the Israelites were accompanied by the Ark of the Covenant, as the symbol of the Divine presence, and formulas or prayers associated with its use in battle are recorded.

Grumblers are destroyed by fire at a place called for that reason Taberah, or "burning" (xi, 1–3).

The people, weary of the manna, yearn for "the fleshpots of Egypt," remembering the abundance and variety of the food that was once theirs. Moses is angry at their ingratitude and prays to be relieved of his trust. Jehovah tells him to appoint seventy elders to act as officers under him and to share his responsibilities. He promises to provide flesh for a whole month, though Moses is incredulous.

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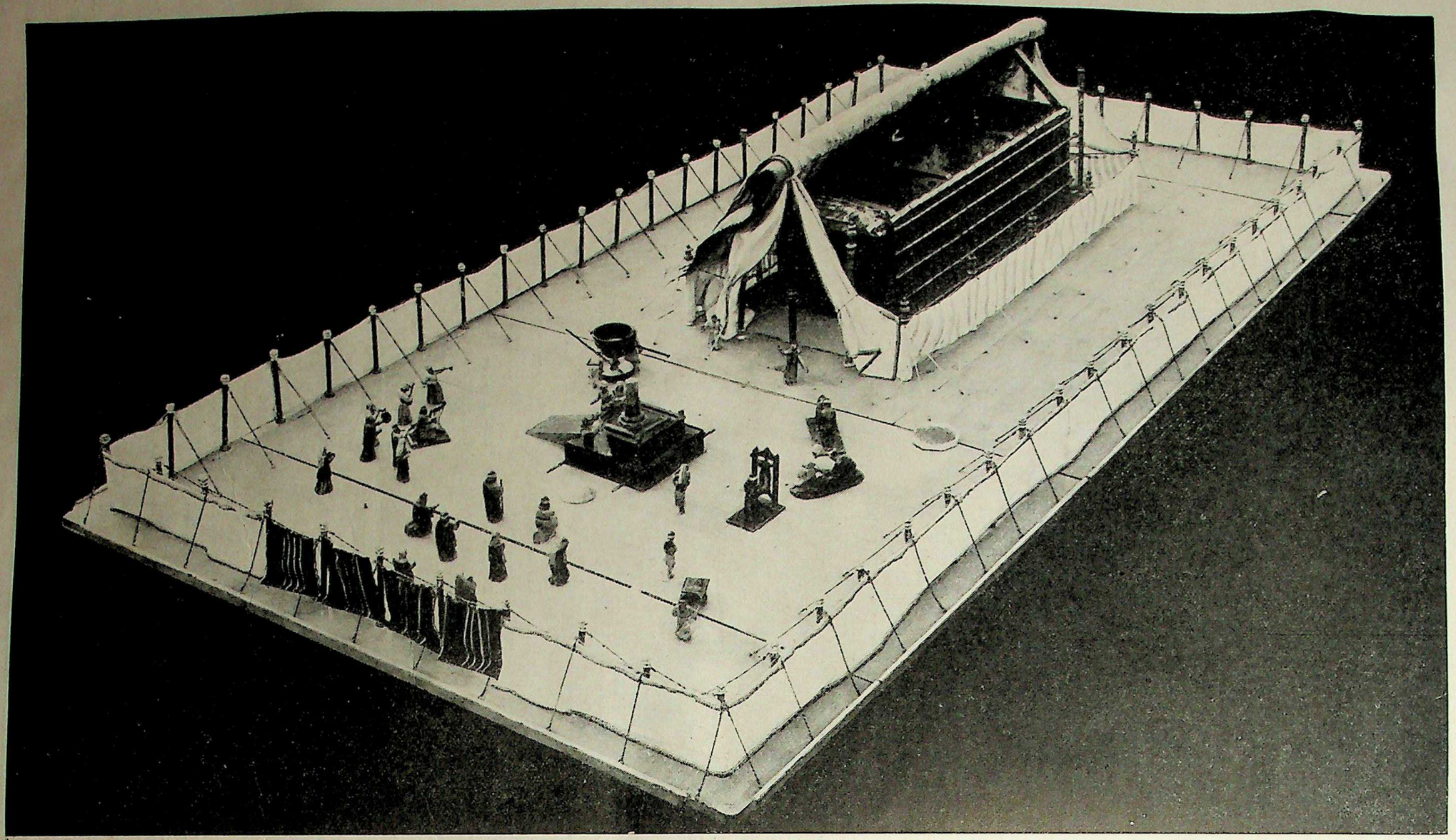

"TABERNACLE OF THE TESTIMONY." First worshipping place of the congregation of Israel, the Tabernacle was set up in the Wilderness of Sinai. How the wisehearted men and women brought offerings of all manner of work to construct and decorate it, is magnificently detailed in the Book of Exodus, chapters xxxv to xl. Above is a model of the building and enclosure made to scale by the late Sir Conrad Schick of Jerusalem. Near the entrance is seen the altar of sacrifice and, beyond it to the left, the priests' laver. Covered with four sets of curtains to form the outer tent, the tabernacle itself was a roofless wooden structure, reserved for priests, and divided by a veil into two parts—the Holy Place, containing the altar of incense, seven-branched candlestick and table of shewbread; and the Holy of Holies, enshrining the Ark of the Covenant. The entrance to the Tabernacle always faced east.

Photo. American Colony in Jerusalem

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The elders are consecrated for their service by a gift of the Divine Spirit which causes them to prophesy, and two men not gathered with the elders are also similarly inspired. Joshua urges Moses to forbid them, apparently on the ground that they were usurping the privileges of Moses and the elders. "Enviest thou for my sake? would God that all the Lord's people were prophets!" replies Moses.

The promised flesh is provided by a flight of quails who stop by the camp in their migration. But Jehovah is angry, and smites the people with a great plague.

Miriam and Aaron become jealous of their brother Moses, partly because of his marriage to an Ethiopian woman and partly because of his position of leadership. Jehovah summons the three to His presence at the tabernacle and reproves Miriam and Aaron. Moses is declared to be a uniquely-trusted servant, and Miriam as a punishment is smitten with leprosy. Moses prays for her healing, and after seven days' isolation she is restored and the march of the people is resumed (Chapter xii).

Chapters xiii and xiv tell the story of the spies sent to report upon the condition of the land of Canaan, and here we encounter a difficulty, in that two different accounts are mingled and are not easy to reconcile. After forty days the spies return bearing specimens of the fruit of the country, but declaring that while the land is gloriously fertile, "flowing with milk and honey," yet the inhabitants are powerful "men of a great stature" and dwell in strongly-fortified cities. Caleb and Joshua urge that the Israelites are well able to overcome their resistance, but the people are frightened by the reports of the majority of the spies. They bewail the fact that they were ever persuaded to leave Egypt, "would God we had died in this wilderness!"—and speak of choosing a captain who will lead them back.

Jehovah is angry with the people and threatens to destroy them, but Moses intercedes for them and urges that if the people perish the Egyptians will gloat over their fate and declare that it was due to the inability of their God to watch over them. Jehovah in response to this prayer pardons the people, but decrees that none of those who murmured shall ever enter the Promised Land; Caleb and Joshua alone of those over twenty years of age shall survive to make a settlement there. For forty years the children of Israel shall wander in the wilderness, while the ten spies who brought the faithless report die of plague.

The vivid narrative is again interrupted—this time by regulations prescribing the amounts of meal, oil and wine to be offered with different kinds of sacrifice. Provision is made for certain forms of first-fruit offering. Unintentional wrong-doing may be expiated by an offering, but there is no pardon for deliberate wrong-doing.

The narrative is resumed in Chapter xvi with the dramatic story of the rebellion of Korah, Dathan and Abiram against Moses and Aaron. They accuse Moses of usurping authority, of failure to lead them through the wilderness to the Promised Land, and, by implication, of having used his position for private profit. Moses begs for the Divine judgement between them, and an earthquake swallows up the malcontents and their families. The people murmur at this drastic judgement, and blame Moses and Aaron. Jehovah smites the people with plague, but once more Moses and Aaron intervene and though many die the plague is stayed. By the miraculous budding of Aaron's rod alone among the rods of the princes, the choice of the tribe of Levi is confirmed, and the rebels are further confounded.

Further detailed directions are given in Chapter xviii for the exercise of priestly duties, and provision is made for the support of the Levites by various offerings and by the institution of the tithe. The Levites are themselves to offer to Jehovah a tenth of their tenths.

The next chapter is marked by a mysterious ritual providing for the offering of a "red heifer without spot" (xix, 2), and as contact with a dead body defiles, instructions are given for the making of elaborate provisions for purification.

While the people are at Kadesh, in the desert of Zin, Miriam dies, and is buried there (xx, 1). Then comes the dramatic incident of the striking of the rock. The people are suffering from lack of water. As is

NUMBERS: A SYNOPSIS

In Camp before Mount Sinai

	Chapters
Census of the Secular Tribes ...	i
Positions in Camp and on the March	ii
Duties of the Priestly Order ...	iii-iv
The Law of the Nazarites	vi
Regulations on Matters of Ritual ...	vii-ix, 14
The Cloudy Pillar	ix, 15-23

Wanderings in the Wilderness

The Departure from Sinai	x
The Giving of the Quails	xi, 31-32
Sedition of Aaron and Miriam ...	xii
Spies Sent into Canaan	xiii
The People Murmur and are Condemned to Forty Years' Wandering	xiv
Rebellion of Korah, Dathan and Abiram	xvi
Duties Payable to the Levites ...	xviii
Moses Smites the Rock	xx, 2-13
Circuit around Edom	xx, 14-21
Death of Aaron	xx, 24-28
The Brazen Serpent	xxi, 7-9
Conquest of the Amorites and of Bashan	xxi, 21-35

In the Plains of Moab

Story of Balak and Balaam ...	xxii-xxiv
Second Census of the People ...	xxvi
Laws of Female Inheritance ...	xxvii, 1-11; xxxvi
Nomination of Joshua	xxvii, 12-23
Sundry Regulations	xxviii-xxx
War against the Midianites ...	xxxi
Recapitulation of the Wanderings ...	xxxiii
Boundaries of Israel's Possessions ...	xxxiv
Levitical Cities and Cities of Refuge	xxxv

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their wont, they bewail the fact that they ever left Egypt to die in this wilderness. Jehovah commands Moses to take his rod and to speak to the rock, which would then give forth water for the people and their beasts. Moses strikes the rock twice, and the water gushes forth.

JEHOVAH then tells Moses and Aaron that because of their unbelief they will not be allowed to enter the Promised Land. The narrative does not make clear wherein consisted the sin of Moses and Aaron, for it is not suggested that there was any unbelief on their part. Perhaps the sin lay in striking the rock at all, though the command to take the rod suggests that that was intended; or perhaps the unbelief consisted in striking twice, as if once were not sufficient.

From Kadesh Moses sends messengers to the king of Edom asking permission to travel through his territories, but this is refused, and a détour is necessary. Then at Mount Hor Aaron dies and his son Eleazar is installed in his place. The whole people mourns for Aaron for thirty days (xx, 22-29).

The first three verses of Chapter xxi record victories over Canaanites, although the Israelites have not yet entered the land; probably the verses have become misplaced.

There follows the account of yet another murmuring of the people against Moses. And once again they are punished, this time by "fiery" or poisonous serpents. The people repent, and Moses prays for them. He is instructed to set a brass serpent on a pole and display it to the people, whereupon those who look at it recover.

In the midst of a list of names of places traversed is to be found a little poetical fragment, the "Song of the Well." This, according to verse 14, appears to be quoted from a lost volume, "The Book of the Wars of the Lord" (xxi, 10-20).

Once more messengers are sent requesting permission to travel through a country, this time to Sihon, king of the Amorites. Sihon refuses and attacks Israel, but is defeated. Here, somewhat surprisingly, another fragment from an ancient poem, apparently celebrating a victory of Sihon over Moab, is incorporated in the story (xxi, 21-32).

Further victories are gained over Og, king of Bashan, and the children of Israel camp on the plains of Moab by Jericho (xxii, 1).

Dramatic Story of Balaam the Soothsayer

AT the outset of the third section of Numbers comes a story intended to emphasize the complete security of the Israelites under Jehovah's protection. No one who opposes them can hope for success. This story (Chapters xxii-xxiv) one of the most dramatic in the Old Testament, tells of the blessing of Balaam.

FOOD "WE DID EAT IN EGYPT." These stall-holders in the market-place at Luxor are vociferously selling comestibles such as the Israelites longed for during their wanderings. Bitterly they lamented: "We remember the fish, which we did eat in Egypt freely; the cucumbers, and the melons, and the leeks, and the onions, and the garlick; but now our soul is dried away: there is nothing at all beside this manna, before our eyes" (Numbers xi, 5, 6). The food for which they pined is still produced in the most fertile part of the Wady Tumilat, which was once their Land of Goshen.

Photo, Emmerson

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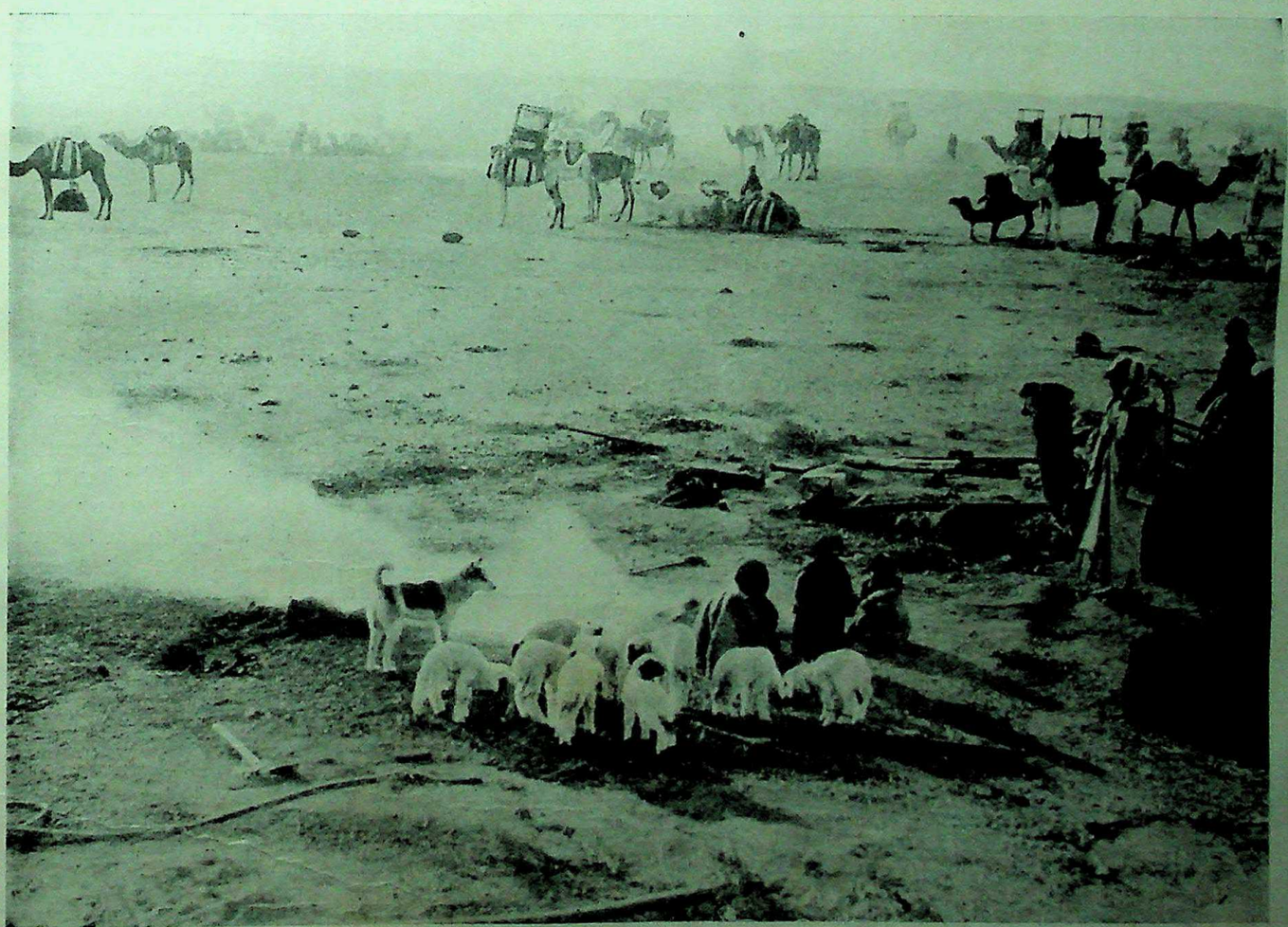
"THEY RESTED IN THEIR TENTS." Having collected a large pile of brushwood and dried reeds for the camp fire, these nomads share their "house of hair" with a young camel, probably their most valuable possession. It is much more to them than a potential beast of burden and transport. From camel's hair they make clothes, rope, and blankets; they also weave it into coarse tenting. Dyed brown, before the strips are seamed, this soon weathers "black as the tents of Kedar."



PASTURES NEW IN THE WILDERNESS. Desert tribes whose chief occupation is now, as in the time of the Wanderings, camel breeding, are frequently on the move, driving their flocks and herds to fresh pasturage—sometimes fighting other tribes for a coveted pitch. On arrival at a new camping ground, while the men unload the camels the women attend to the fires and presently unroll and rope the tents. A heavy wooden mallet, used to drive in the stakes, is seen on the ground to the left.

Photos, Mondiale

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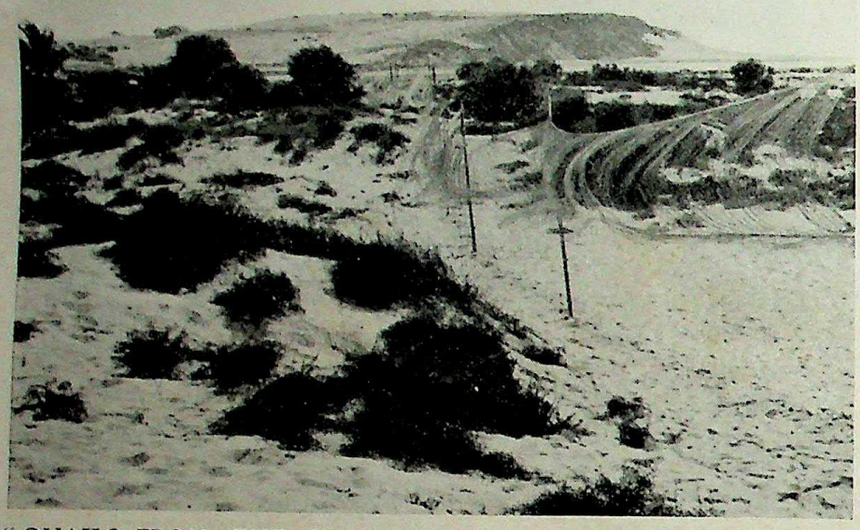

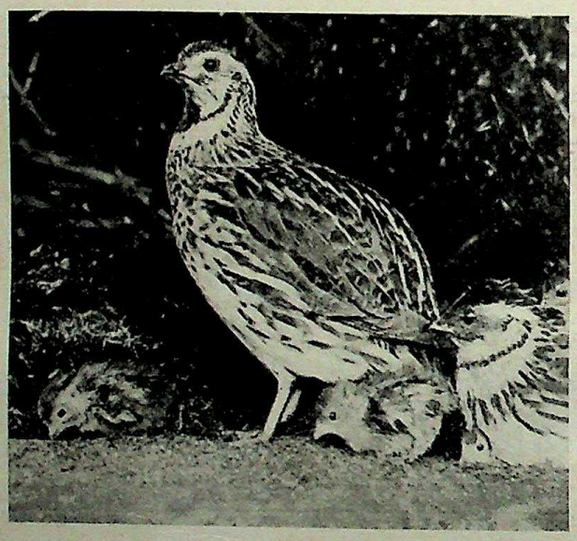

"QUAILS FROM THE SEA." In early autumn quantities of quails arrive on the shores of Egypt and Sinai during inward migration from their breeding grounds in Central Europe. Flying south they are caught in trammel nets spread as seen in the photograph. These have a small mesh net stretched before one with a large mesh of about eighteen inches. The quail caught in the small mesh carries it through the other and is thus effectively bagged.

Upper photo, American Colony in Jerusalem
Lower photo, M. H. Crawford

As in other parts of the Book there are signs of the mingling of two varying versions, but the broad outlines are sufficiently clear.

Balak, king of Moab, is frightened by the arrival of the Israelites on his borders, especially when he hears of their victories over the Amorites. So he sends for Balaam, a wise man or diviner from the East, who belonged neither to Israel nor to Moab, to curse them. For Balaam's word is believed to have magic power.

Bearing the soothsayer's fees with them, elders of Moab and Midian journey to find Balaam and beg him to come to their aid. Balaam seeks divine guidance, and Jehovah forbids him to go. Israel is not to be cursed.

The elders depart disconsolately, but Balak will not give in. He sends another and more splendid embassy and offers larger bribes if Balaam will do as he asks and curse the Israelites. Balaam declares that he can act only as God instructs him, and that a "house full of silver and gold" could not influence him. Nevertheless he promises once more to seek the divine will.

Next morning Balaam sets out with the princes of Moab. (Verses 20 and 22 are apparently contradictory, for in one Balaam goes by divine instruction, while in the other he is disobeying God. The story that follows accords with the latter view.) But God is angry at his going and an angel is sent to bar his way. Though Balaam does not see the angel, his ass does; and saves his life by refusing to go on. The ass is represented as expostulating with its master for trying to force it on. The angel reveals himself, and Balaam confesses his sin in trying to go in defiance of God's will. The angel tells him to proceed to Moab but warns him that he must speak only the word that God gives him.

BALAK takes Balaam to where he can see the Israelites, and elaborate sacrifices are offered. But Balaam refuses to do what is expected of him. "How shall I curse whom God hath not cursed?" he inquires.

Balak takes him to another point of vantage, hoping that in another position Balaam may feel differently, and here more sacrifices are offered. But it is all in vain. "Behold," says the Soothsayer, "I have received commandment to bless: and he hath blessed and I cannot reverse it." No magic could prevail against Israel, for God is with them.

"And Balak said unto Balaam, Come, I pray thee, I will bring thee unto another place; peradventure it will please God that thou mayest curse me them from thence." But the third position and a third set of sacrifices do nothing to change Balaam's attitude. He breaks out into a poem of blessing upon Israel, followed, after a renewed protest from Balak, by another, the detailed meaning of which is very obscure, but which certainly forecasts a glorious future for the people he had been hired to curse. "I shall see him, but not now . . . there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel . . . Out of Jacob shall come he that shall have dominion . . ." (xxiv, 17, 19).

Israel Encamped in the Plains of Moab

AFTER this picturesque excursion, the story returns to the camp. Association with the women of Moab lead many of the Israelites into idolatry, which is severely punished (xxv, 1-5). Then plague visits the people because of their association with Midianite women; but Phinehas, by killing one of these women and the man concerned, stays the plague and earns Jehovah's blessing for his zeal.

Next, another "numbering" of the people takes place, and much genealogical information acquired in the census is set forth (xxvi, 1-51). Instructions follow for the division of the Promised Land among the tribes, and a census is taken of the Levites.

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"AND THE PEOPLE GATHERED IT AND GROUND IT IN MILLS"

When the manna fell upon the wilderness and the Israelites collected its grains, which were "as coriander seeds," they ground it between stones, as if it had been ordinary wholemeal, before they "made cakes of it" (Numbers xi, 7, 8). One of the same kind of primitive mills then in use is the centre of interest in this family group of desert-dwellers. The two girls grinding corn "behind the mill" are enjoying their occupation. In the towns it is still the humblest of tasks, as it was when the highest to the lowest was implied by the Pentateuchal record that the tenth plague in Egypt bereaved all parents from Pharaoh to the woman grinding meal.

Photo. Newtonian Illustrated Press Service

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James Tissot, 1836-1902

"ISRAEL TOOK ALL THE WOMEN OF MIDIAN CAPTIVES"

The campaign against Midian, last act of the leadership of Moses, resulted in the massacre of the men and enslavement of the women by the Israelites. James Tissot's Biblical illustration shows these unfortunate captives being driven down to the victors' camp, in the plains of Moab, burdened with the spoils of war after the sack and burning of the cities. The way is lurid with smoke and flames from the "goodly castles" (Numbers xxxi, 9, 10). Further horrors of war awaited them. Fearful of pagan contamination, Moses commanded that all the married women among them should be killed and only the young girls kept alive.

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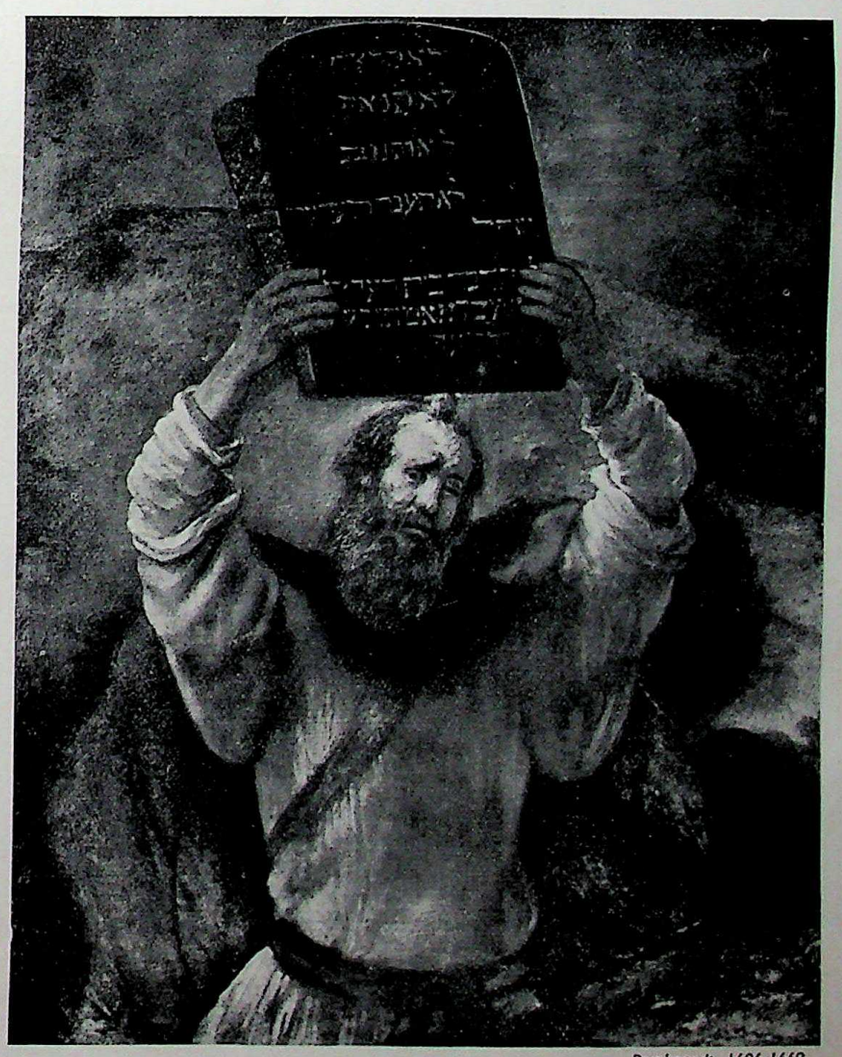
Raphael, 1483-1520

"THESE ARE THE WORDS . . . THE LORD HATH COMMANDED"

The moment of intense emotion when Moses in anger at the idolatry of the Israelites "cast the tables out of his hands and brake them beneath the mount" (Exodus xxxii, 19) was dramatically conceived by Rembrandt van Rijn, greatest of all Dutch Old Masters. His picture (right) is dated 1659 and thus belongs to the third and last phase of his development as a painter, when he had brought his method of light-and-dark, since described as Rembrandtesque, to its fullest expression.

Designed by Raphael and one of the Biblical series in the Vatican, the fresco reproduced above depicts the happier occasion when Moses, renewed in grace after his communing with God in the tabernacle, was enabled to present the people (Exodus xxxiv, 1) with "two tables of stone like unto the first . . . and upon these tables the words that were in the first tables" which had been destroyed.



Rembrandt, 1606-1669

MOSES BREAKING THE FIRST TABLES OF THE LAW

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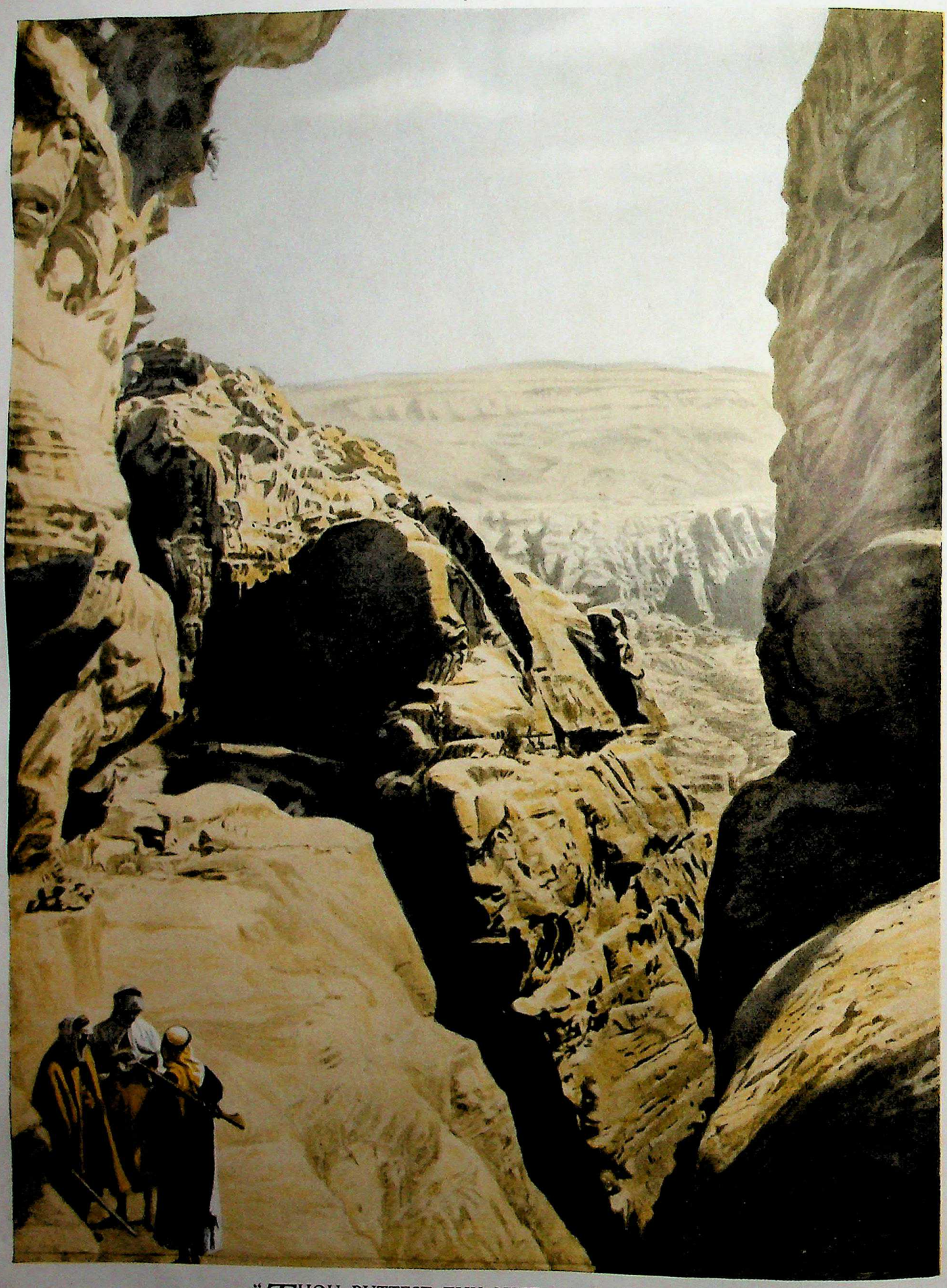

"THOU PUTTEST THY NEST IN A ROCK"

The site of Petra, "a rose-red city half as old as time," is here glimpsed from a height between the walls of the narrow gorge, the only means of approach to the stronghold. Fifty miles due south of the Dead Sea and in the heart of the Arabian Mountains of Seir, its Biblical name is Sela, the Rock. Founded by Esau's descendants, the Edomites, its famed red sandstone temples were unthought of when the Israelites wandered in the Wilderness. It has been conjectured that then it may have been the refuge of the Kenites referred to by Balaam (Numbers xxiv, 21) "Strong is thy dwellingplace, and thou puttest thy nest in a rock."

Photo: Rosita Forbes

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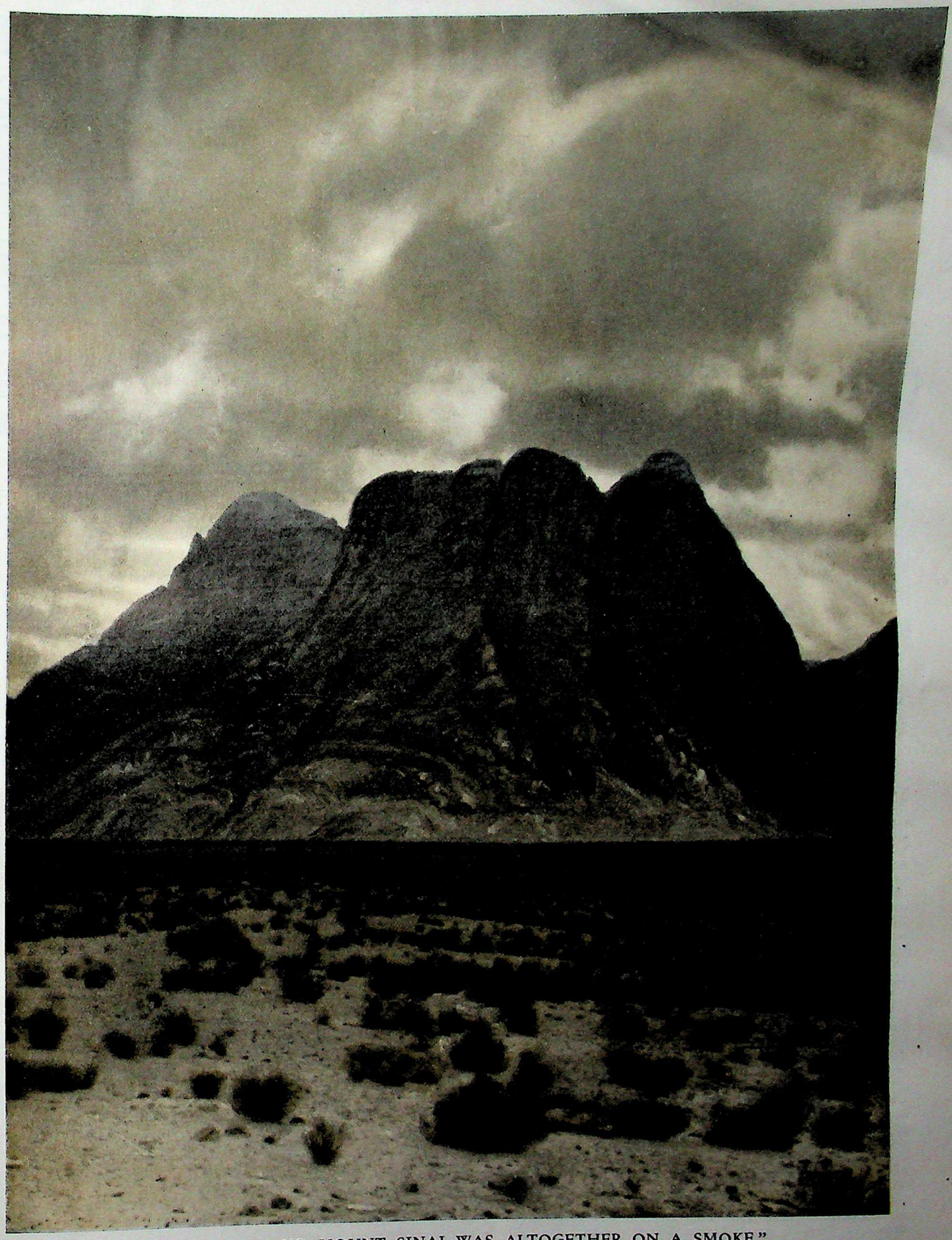

"AND MOUNT SINAI WAS ALTOGETHER ON A SMOKE"

This imposing view of Jebel Musa's towering granite mass wrapped in the mist of a violent storm recalls the references in Exodus xix, 16 and 18: "And it came to pass on the third day in the morning, that there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount . . . and Mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire." In the foreground is seen part of the great plain where the Israelites—if Jebel Musa is indeed identifiable with the Mountain of the Giving of the Law—encamped with their flocks and herds.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

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James Tissot, 1836-1902

"A FLAME FROM THE CITY OF SIHON"

Tissot vividly illustrated the taking of Heshbon, city of Sihon, King of the Amorites, "who would not suffer Israel to pass through his border" (Numbers xxi, 23, 30). Among the mountains of Arnon he fought the intruders and was utterly vanquished. "Heshbon is perished even unto Dibon," chanted the victorious Israelites.

One of the frescoes, painted by Hippolyte Flandrin, which decorate the walls of the church of St. Germain-des-Pres, in Paris, thus depicts Balaam uttering his fourth oracle of unwelcome prophecy before Balak, King of Moab (Numbers xxiv, 15-19). He foretells the birth of a Great King of Israel at a distant date—the Messiah prefigured by a Star.

Hippolyte Flandrin, 1809-1864

"THERE SHALL COME A STAR OUT OF JACOB"

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Rembrandt, 1606-1669

"WHEN THE ASS SAW THE ANGEL OF THE LORD, SHE FELL DOWN"

The episode of Balaam and the faithful ass who vocally reproached him for beating her when she turned aside three times to save him from the Angel's sword (Numbers xxii, 23-30), provided Rembrandt with one of his earliest pictorial subjects. He painted it, in 1626, at Leyden, his native town, when he was twenty. Already his excellent draughtsmanship, command of pigment and genius for composition were apparent, but he had not begun to develop his amazing powers of chiaroscuro, treatment of light and shade, which distinguish his later work and so profoundly influenced the art of painting.

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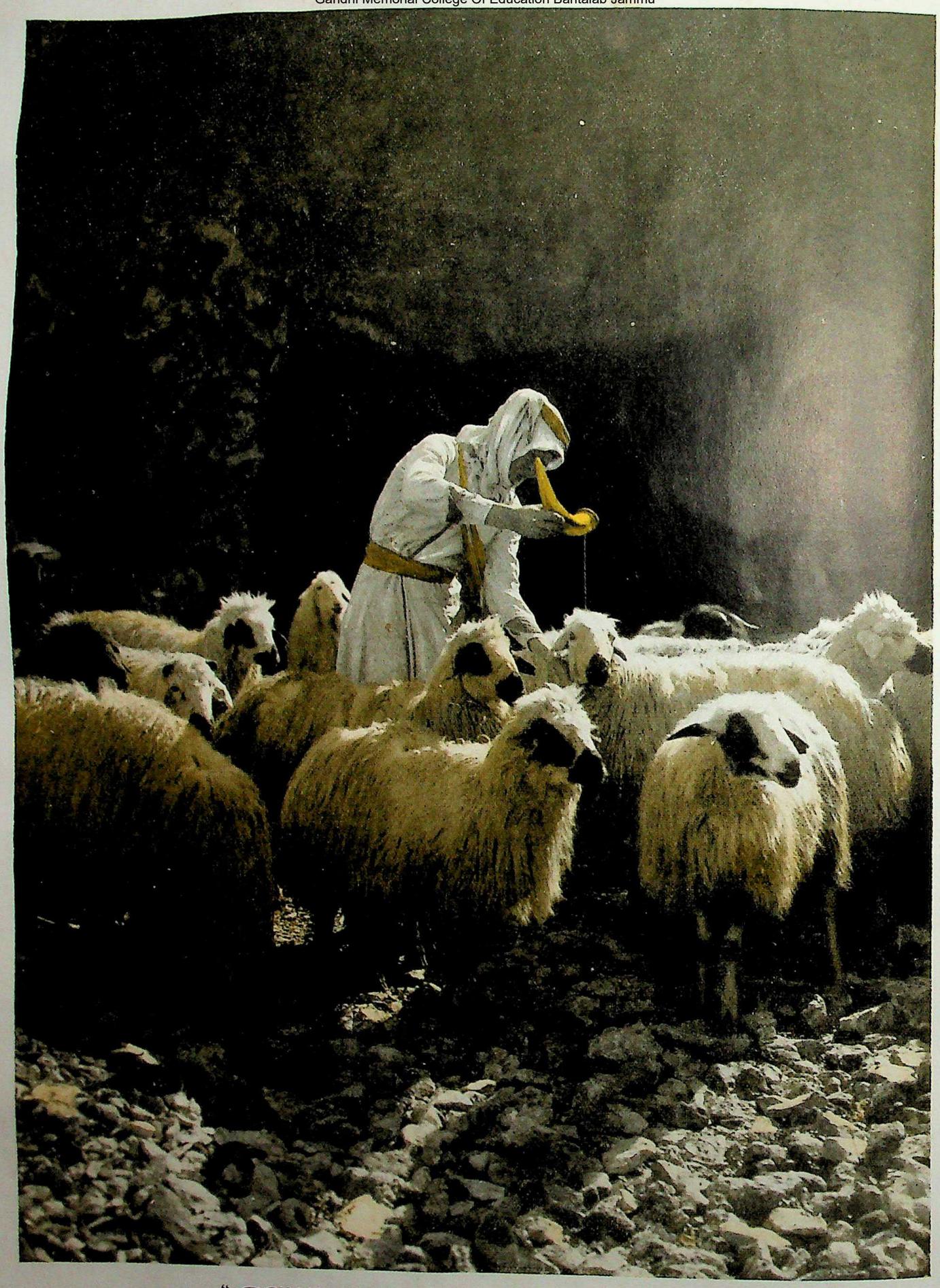

"THOU ANOINTEST MY HEAD WITH OIL"

Many lovely similes in the Bible are drawn from the care of the diligent shepherd constantly with his flock for their protection. The photograph shows an old Eastern custom, still followed, of anointing the heads of sheep with oil to preserve them from sunstroke, or to heal bramble scratches. In the background is seen the entrance to the sheepfold, a walled enclosure of rough unmortared stones such as is referred to in Numbers xxxii, 16, when the Reubenites and Gadites desired to "build sheepfolds" in Gilead instead of sharing the inheritance of Canaan. Across the opening to the fold the shepherd sleeps—a human door, guarding his flock at night.

Photo American Colony in Jerusalem

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In this second census no man is found to be alive of those who had been counted in the earlier census in the wilderness of Sinai, except Caleb and Joshua. "For the Lord had said of them, They shall surely die in the wilderness."

The daughters of Zelophehad having represented to Moses that as their father had no sons, in accordance with the customary rules of inheritance the family as a whole would receive nothing, Moses lays down regulations providing that in such a case the inheritance of the father shall pass to the daughters or failing them to other near kinsfolk (xxvii, 1-11).

And now Jehovah instructs Moses to prepare for his approaching death. He is not to be allowed to enter the Promised Land, but nevertheless he is to see it from the top of Mount Abarim (called also Nebo in Deuteronomy xxxii, 48-52).

Moses, thoughtful as ever for the welfare of Israel, asks Jehovah to appoint a leader for the people in his place, and is instructed to appoint Joshua. He presents him to Eleazar, and the priest, in the presence of the congregation, lays his hands upon him and gives him a charge. Joshua is to be guided in his actions by the divine counsel conveyed to him through Eleazar.

One would expect this to be followed by an account of the death of Moses, but the narrative breaks off, and the actual demise is not recorded until the end of the book of Deuteronomy.

Festivals of Common Observance

CHAPTERS xxviii and xxix are devoted to detailed instructions for offerings to be made daily, on the sabbath, or on the occasion of various festivals. Among the festivals to be so observed are the new moons, the feast of unleavened bread following the Passover, the day of the first fruits, the feast of the trumpets, the day of atonement and the feast of booths. Meal, oil, wine and different kinds of animals are to be offered in a succession of elaborate and costly sacrifices.

Certain regulations are to govern vows. When a man makes a vow, he must keep his word (xxx, 1-2), but there are special provisions for vows taken by women. Thus the vow of a young unmarried woman is subject to the consent of her father, and the husband is responsible for the vow of his wife; widows or divorced women are responsible for themselves.

War is begun against the Midianites, ordered by Moses as his last act of leadership. The account declares that all the Midianite men were put to death and the women and children, with all their possessions, captured. The Midianite cities are burned, and even the older women Moses commands to be killed. Instructions are given for the division of the spoil, and the captains make an offering of gold and jewels to Jehovah. All this massacre is said to have been carried out without the loss of a single Israelite—"Thy servants have taken the sum of the men of war which are under our charge, and there lacketh not one man of us" (xxxi, 49).

The tribes of Reuben and Gad are attracted by the land to the east of the Jordan and wish to settle there. They ask permission of Moses, but he thinks that they are trying to avoid their share in the fighting for the conquest of Canaan and accordingly reproaches them vigorously. The tribes thereupon explain that they propose to settle their women and children on the land, but that the fighting men will go with the main body until the conquest is completed. On this understanding, Moses grants permission, and hands over the former kingdoms of Sihon, king of the Amorites, and Og, king of Bashan, to the tribes of Gad and Reuben and to part of the tribe of Manasseh (xxxii).

Chapter xxxiii contains a kind of log book of the various encampments of Israel in the wilderness, but most of the places mentioned are only names to us.

Woe to Canaan's Conquered!

STRICT instructions are given that in the conquest the inhabitants of the land are to be ruthlessly driven out. All their sacred places and images are to be destroyed. To let any of the people remain living in their midst will be to court trouble.

The boundaries of the land to be conquered are described in Chapter xxxiv. Here again it is not easy to identify all the places, but it seems clear that the territories of Israel never in fact comprised all the land here delimited. One prince from every tribe is appointed to form a tribunal to divide the land among the people. Forty-eight cities are to be allotted to the Levites, and of these six are to be "Cities of Refuge," wherein a man who kills another accidentally may receive sanctuary. Those who take refuge in this way shall be brought to trial, but if the congregation is satisfied that the killing was accidental, the fugitive may remain in safety. A murderer, on the other hand, shall be put to death by "the revenger of blood," the dead man's next of kin. The proposal is a mitigation of the primeval law of "an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth" (xxxv).

Supplementary rulings regarding the inheritance of daughters are laid down in Chapter xxxvi; it is provided that daughters inheriting property shall marry only within their own tribe, so as to prevent the property from passing to another tribe.

The last verse of Numbers is a formal close to the third section dealing with life "in the plains of Moab," which began at the second verse of Chapter xxii.

Heroic Leader of God's Chosen People

TO sum up. Numbers is a medley; vivid and thrilling narrative is interspersed by dry legislative detail. But there is at least one unifying factor: amid much that can hardly fail to be tedious to the modern reader, much that is perplexing, and not a few passages that reflect sub-Christian views of God, there stands out vividly the figure of Moses. The stories of his selfless devotion to his people's welfare, his courage and his undaunted faith in the face of rebellion and opposition, combine to present to the imagination a majestic and heroic personality.

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NATURAL HISTORY OF THE BIBLE. II

Animal Life in the Scriptures

REPRESENTATIVES of that division of the animal creation comprising the mammals are separated in the Bible into "cattle," or domesticated animals, and "beasts of the field," or wild beasts. One of the latter is now entirely extinct, namely, the aurochs or wild ox, the "unicorn" of the Authorized Version.

Others have disappeared from Palestine, notably the lion, which is mentioned in Scripture more frequently than any other wild beast. This extinction is due to several factors: the gradual dwindling of forest areas; the great increase in population; and the introduction of firearms. So destructive was this animal to flocks and herds, that lion hunts were organized, the methods of capture being virtually identical with those that are practised in India today.

Among those "beasts of the field" still found in the Holy Land are the leopard, bear, wolf, jackal and hyena. In all the passages that refer to the bear, the species described is the same, and is unmistakably the Syrian bear that today haunts the range of the Lebanon, called by the author of the Song of Solomon "the lions' dens . . . the mountains of the leopards."

Animal	Scripture References	Notes
Antelope	Isaiah li, 20 (A. V. margin)	Biblical wild bull. The sable antelope (*Hippotragus niger*) is found in Syria at the present day. *See* Fallow Deer; Pygarg; Roebuck
Ape	I Kings x, 22; II Chronicles ix, 21	Imported, by Solomon's "navy of Tarshish," from South India or Ceylon
Ass (domestic)	Genesis xxii, 3, 5; xlix, 14; Numbers xxii, 21; Deuteronomy xxii, 10; Isaiah xxx, 24, etc.	Used (a) for riding; (b) for carrying burdens; (c) for ploughing. Persons of high rank rode on white asses
Ass (wild)	Job xi, 12; Isaiah xxxii, 14; Jeremiah ii, 24, etc.	Swift and untameable animal; still found in Asia and Africa
Badger	Exodus xxvi, 14; xxxv, 7; Ezekiel xvi, 10	The badger skins mentioned probably indicate skins of the dugong, a large member of the seal family inhabiting the Red Sea
Bat	Leviticus xi, 19; Deuteronomy xiv, 18; Isaiah ii, 20	Very common today in Palestine; mentioned in Bible among unclean winged things
Bear	II Samuel, xvii, 8; Proverbs xvii, 12; Hosea xiii, 8, etc.	Allusions to its fierceness and destructiveness
Behemoth	Job xl, 15	The hippopotamus. No longer found in Palestine, but quite certainly known to the ancient Hebrews
Boar (wild)	Psalms lxxx, 13	Probably as common in ancient days as now; very destructive to vineyards
Bull (wild)	Deuteronomy xiv, 5; Isaiah li, 20	Neither bison nor buffalo, but a species of large antelope
Camel	Genesis xii, 16; xxiv, 19; Judges vi, 5; Esther viii, 10; Isaiah xxi, 7, etc.	One of the earliest domesticated animals; essential to existence in desert countries
Cattle	Genesis xiii, 2; xxxiv, 5; Numbers iii, 41; Psalms l, 10; Isaiah vii, 25, etc.	Used from very ancient times for milk, for ploughing, treading corn, drawing waggons, and especially for sacrifice
Chamois	Deuteronomy xiv, 5	The wild sheep, or mouflon
Coney	Leviticus xi, 5; Psalms civ, 18; Proverbs xxx, 26	*Hyrax Syriacus*, a small animal found in rocky districts and common about Sinai. Not a rabbit
Deer		*See* Antelope; Fallow Deer; Pygarg; Roebuck
Dog	Exodus xxii, 31; I Kings xiv, 11; Job xxx, 1; Isaiah lvi, 10, etc.	Mostly held in aversion or contempt, owing to its use as a scavenging animal. Reference in Job to the dog protecting flocks and in Isaiah to its guarding the house
Dragon	Job xxx, 29; Isaiah xxxiv, 13; li, 9; Jeremiah li, 34; Ezekiel xxix, 3; xxxii, 2, etc.	Two words so rendered. One (Isaiah li, 9, etc.) means the crocodile; the other (Job xxx, 29, etc.) is thought to indicate the jackal. This animal is still very plentiful in Palestine and is the scavenger of the country as the dog is of the town
Dromedary	I Kings iv, 28; Esther viii, 10; Isaiah lx, 6; Jeremiah ii, 23	Three words thus rendered. In Isaiah and Jeremiah a finely-bred camel is indicated; in the other passages the translation should be swift horse or stallion
Elephant	I Maccabees, i, 16, 17; vi, 30, etc.	Ivory is mentioned several times in the O. T. and once in the N. T. The animal itself is named only in the Apocrypha, always as an engine of war. The Indian species was used for this purpose
Fallow Deer	Deuteronomy xiv, 5; I Kings iv, 23	Should probably be translated roebuck or gazelle
Ferret	Leviticus xi, 30	Not our ferret; probably a species of lizard. R.V. gecko
Fox	Judges xv, 4; Nehemiah iv, 3; Psalms lxiii, 10; Matthew viii, 20, etc.	The word used includes both fox and jackal; it is usually the latter that is meant
Goat	Genesis xv, 9; xxx, 32; Exodus xxvi, 7; Leviticus iii, 12; iv, 23; Deuteronomy xiv, 21; Judges vi, 19; Proverbs xxvii, 27; Ezekiel xxxiv, 17, etc.	Important in the hilly countries of the East. Goats were used for sacrifice; the milk and flesh were staple articles of food; the hair was woven into fabrics; and the skin was made into garments and water bottles
Goat (wild)	Deuteronomy xiv, 5; Psalms civ, 18	*Capra ibex*. Still found, especially in the region of the Dead Sea

(*Concluded in page* 306)

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Numbers

II

The Story of the Book

From Tribal Lays to Lofty Conceptions of Divine Purpose

by REV. L. ELLIOTT-BINNS, D.D.

Examining Chaplain to the Bishop of Hereford; Former Hulsean Lecturer, University of Cambridge; Author of Westminster Commentaries on Numbers and Jeremiah, "From Moses to Elisha," etc.

MOST people have heard of the ass that spoke and of Balaam the prophet to whom its warning came, and may even be aware that the incident is recorded in the Old Testament; but not many could say, offhand, in which book of the Old Testament it is to be found. It comes in the book of Numbers and forms part of the story of the fortunes and misfortunes of the people of Israel from the day that they left Mount Sinai until the time when they arrived on the borders of the Promised Land.

The title "Numbers" is derived, by way of the Latin, from the Greek version of the Old Testament, and was no doubt given to the book on account of the censuses or numberings which are described in Chapters i and xxvi. In the original Hebrew, however, the title is "In the Wilderness," which really, since the numberings occupy but little space, gives a better account of the contents of the Book.

Numbers is the fourth book of the so-called Pentateuch or Five Books of the Law of Moses. It nowhere claims, however, to have been written by him, and the note in Chapter xxxiii, 2 that Moses made a list of the journeyings is strong evidence that the other parts of the book were not from his hand. The fact that Moses is constantly referred to in the third person is also against his having written the book, though it is not quite conclusive, since it is by no means uncommon for those who have actually taken part in events to write of themselves in such a way. All the same, it would be very difficult to suppose that the statement in Chapter xii, 3 "Now the man Moses was very meek" could have come from Moses himself. A scholar of a cautious and conservative point of view, Dr. R. A. Watson, in his volume on Numbers in "The Expositor's Bible" (page 11), definitely rejects the theory "that a journal of the wanderings was kept by Moses or under his direction" as "quite untenable."

Ancient Poems in the Narrative

A CAREFUL reading of Numbers gives the impression that it was compiled from a collection of different sources, some very ancient, some coming from Moses and his times, and some from a date much more recent. These last would seem to have been added by way of supplement or even comment. Among the sources are a number of poems such as that taken from "The Book of the Wars of Jehovah" (xxi, 14f.), the Song of the Well (xxi, 17f.), and the series included in the narrative of Balaam in Chapters xxiii and xxiv. These poems give the impression of having come down from very ancient times, probably by word of mouth, as the reference to the "ballad singers"—the real translation of "they that speak in proverbs" in Chapter xxi, 27—suggests.

Those who arranged the sources and gave the book something like its final shape made but little attempt to reconcile accounts of the same event which had been derived from different sources; they simply placed them side by side, without troubling to combine them, as a modern writer or editor would have done, or even to remove apparent contradictions.

We must remember that the methods of authors in ancient times were very different from those current nowadays. The invention of printing and the wider circulation of every form of literature have entirely changed them. In the old days there was, for example, no idea of copyright; if a thing had been put in an interesting and impressive way by someone else, the author simply used it very much as it stood and did not even trouble to distinguish it from the rest of his work, as a modern writer would have done, by the use of quotation marks or some other device. Even when a book had left the hands of the author anyone into whose possession it came would feel at perfect liberty to make any alteration in it which he felt to be necessary or desirable; in particular he would often add fresh matter where space allowed. When a new copy of the book came to be made the scribe would include such alterations and additions without showing that they formed no part of the original composition.

Gradual Growth of the Mosaic Code

IN the case of books containing collections of laws, such as are contained in Numbers itself, the original nucleus would tend to be supplemented as fresh needs arose or new precedents were evolved. This fact has been well put by the late Professor Sayce, the famous archaeologist, in his "Early History of the Hebrews" (page 203), when he writes: "Laws and regulations which suited the life of the desert needed adaptation to the changed conditions of Canaan . . . the Mosaic legislation was a matter of growth."

It may be well also to remember that whilst inspiration fitted the writers of the Bible to be vehicles for the revelation of religious and spiritual truth, it did not make them historical critics or guarantee them against errors in non-essentials. They were not exempted from the labour of discovering facts for themselves any more than the writers of secular history. Religious truth, moreover, is quite independent of minute accuracy or the date of the narrative which enshrines it.

The fact that some of the stories in Numbers have already appeared elsewhere presents some little difficulty. Examples are the story of the quails and of the appointment of helpers for Moses in Chapter xi (cf. Exodus xvi and xviii, 21ff.) and the story of the striking of the rock in Chapter xx (cf. Exodus xvii, 1ff.). The various laws in Chapter v, 5-10, appear also in Leviticus v, 5ff., and vi, 5ff., whilst those in Chapter xv, 22-28 have a parallel in Leviticus iv, 13ff. The outline of the wanderings given in Deuteronomy i and ii, to give a final instance, cannot easily be reconciled with the detailed narratives in Numbers.

Various attempts have been made to explain these differences, which affect not only Numbers but the whole Pentateuch. The theory which has found the most favour with scholars is that commonly associated with the

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BY THE WATERS OF EGYPT. The Israelites murmuring in the Wilderness blamed Moses for bringing them out of Egypt into "this evil place" where there was no water (Numbers xx, 5), though it was easily obtained in the land of their bondage by means of the shaduf. This primitive apparatus for drawing water is still used on the Nile for the purpose of irrigation. The bucket attached to the weighted pole is lowered, filled and then swung round to be emptied into the ditch which conveys the water in the desired direction.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

names of Graf and Wellhausen, two German savants. It is not without its difficulties, and in recent years many modifications in detail have been suggested. In bare outline their theory runs as follows: The various differences, which affect not only details but also reveal distinct points of view and a considerable variety in literary style, are due to the combination in the final narrative of a number of different sources coming from different ages and representing different schools of thought.

THE first source that is distinguished displays a marked preference for the use of Jehovah, the personal name for God. It is generally held to have come from the Southern Kingdom and may be dated, very approximately, about the middle of the 9th century B.C. The idea of God set forth in this source is more primitive than that in other sources; He is thought of and described in terms suited to a man; for example, He is said to "come down" to the earth and so forth. On the other hand this source is less interested in miraculous stories than the second source; whilst it is further distinguished from it by speaking of the inhabitants of Palestine as Canaanites.

This second source avoids the personal name for God in the earlier narratives and uses instead the Hebrew word *Elohim* (i.e. god in the plural). It is usually regarded as belonging to the Northern Kingdom, and as being about a century later than the first source just referred to. The idea of God in the second source is much more sophisticated and advanced than that in the earlier, whilst the desire to edify is more prominent. As already suggested, it is fond of stories of miracles, and in this connexion it is worth while to notice that such stories in the books of Kings are most commonly found in connexion with Elijah and Elisha, both of whom exercised their prophetic ministry in the northern half of Israel. Furthermore, in this second source the inhabitants of Palestine are referred to as Amorites.

BY far the most important source for Numbers, however—since something like three-fourths of the book are derived from it—is one which gives the Priestly point of view and is held to have arisen during the exile in Babylon (586–538 B.C.), when the priests collected all that was to be known concerning their religion and nation and put it into written form so as to make it available for the people on their return to Palestine. Later on, the original collection was supplemented and revised to meet new needs, and did not indeed reach anything like a final form until the 5th century B.C. The compilers of this third source were greatly interested in the origins of Hebrew institutions and traditions, and there can be no doubt that much early material has been preserved by their labours.

At a date subsequent to the middle of the 5th century these various sources were combined together to form a single work. Probably previous combinations had already taken place, but in this final piece of editorial work something very like our present Pentateuch and Book of Numbers was produced. Jewish tradition has it that the Law had been burnt and that Ezra restored it from memory (II Esdras xiv). This tradition seems to reflect the thought that it was under Ezra that the Pentateuch as a whole first became known to the Jewish people. The late H. M. Wiener, in his "Essays in Pentateuchal Criticism" (p.219) put forward the idea that Ezra's action in giving the books of the Law to the people was a definite innovation, and that previously they had been in the possession of the priests only, and that it was through their mouths that the Law was declared to the people. There was certainly much emphasis on the teaching office of the priest in the closing years of the monarchy (*see* Deuteronomy xxiv, 8, xxxiii, 10, and Ezekiel xliv, 23, as well as other passages).

It has often been pointed out that the purpose of the writers and editors of the Old Testament books was not primarily historical but religious. They wished to exhibit God's dealings with men, His patience and long suffering, and also His righteousness and justice. For man, on the one side, the folly of sin and rebellion was

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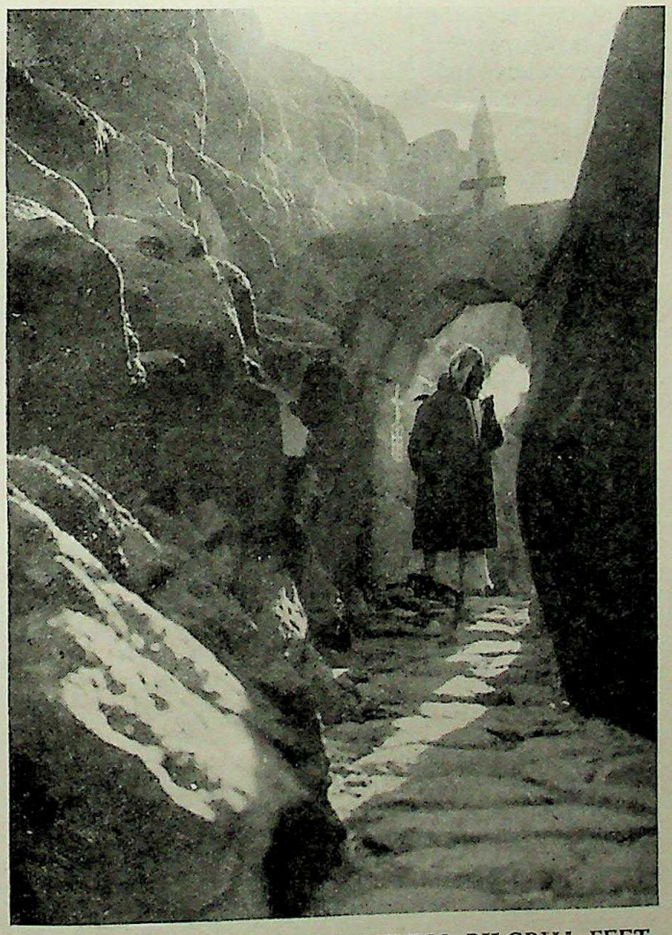
to be made clear, and on the other the material blessings which followed obedience to the Divine will. This statement, whilst perfectly true so far as it goes, does not go far enough; it is not the whole truth. The history itself is also important, for as Dr. R. A. Watson has said in the work quoted above: "If God was to be trusted as a Saviour . . . certain facts in the nation's history had to be known, believed, and kept in clear remembrance."

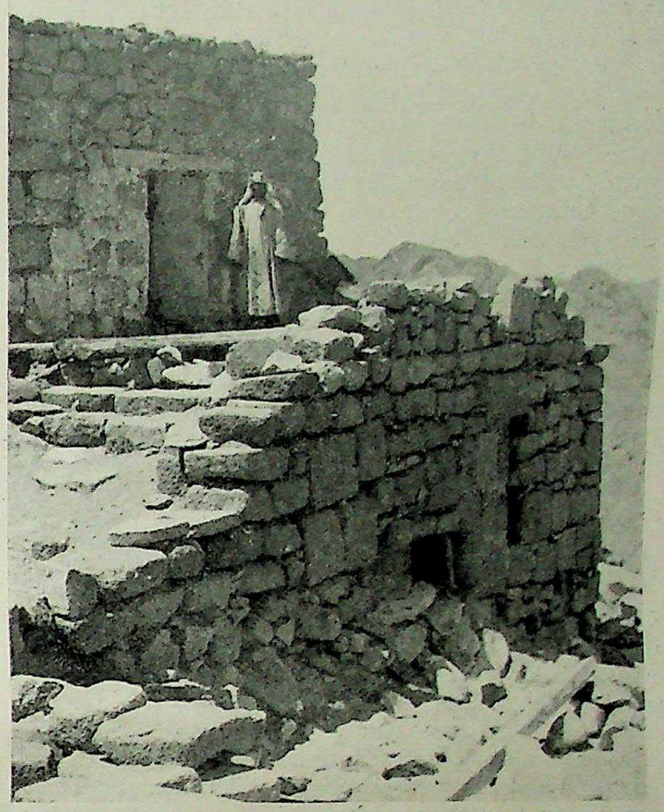
IF the account given above of the various sources from which Numbers was compiled is even approximately correct it follows that the narratives have value as showing forth the religious beliefs, not so much of the times to which they profess to belong, as of those in which they were actually written. This more accurate dating is of immense value, since it helps to place the development of man's search after God and God's revelation of Himself to man in truer perspective. At the same time it must not be forgotten that many of the truths set forth are of eternal value and independent of the time and place of their original revelation or discovery. In any case Numbers has been for more than two thousand years a single work; its real importance lies in the teaching about God which as a single unity it strives to proclaim.

In order to obtain from Numbers religious teaching which will be helpful for the present age, certain parts of it will need to be interpreted not in a literal but in an allegorical manner. This is especially true of the elaborate sacrificial system which no one, not even a restored



STEPS TRODDEN BY COUNTLESS PILGRIM FEET. Starting from the Monastery of St. Catherine, the Pilgrimage Steps grow steeper as they near the summit of Jebel Musa. At the point pictured, by the second gateway, the way is cut in a narrow slit of the granite; in places the sky is just visible through the overhanging walls. Round the bend, beyond the standing figure, the steps ascend to a chapel and mosque.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem



ON SINAI'S CHAPEL-CROWNED SUMMIT. On the plateau at the top of the Mount has been erected this small chapel near a rocky recess which tradition identifies with the spot where Moses witnessed the glory of God and received the Ten Commandments. When no mist shrouds the view, from this height can be discerned the Red Sea to the south and, far away to the east, the Gulf of Akabah.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

Jewish community in Jerusalem, would ever think of putting into practice in the 20th century. Yet taken in a symbolical manner it contains deep lessons which no age can afford to neglect, for it sets forth the awfulness of sin and the need of the offender for forgiveness and purification. Even the story of the Exodus and wanderings may furnish useful lessons when taken in an allegorical way (as indeed the earlier ages of the Church constantly did take it). The flight of the individual soul from sin and materialism, which are symbolized by Egypt and its flesh-pots; the setting out for the Promised Land; the entire dependence upon God for provision during the journey; the necessity of sacrificing the temporal for the eternal; the discipline necessary before the Jordan may be crossed—all these surely have much teaching contained in them.

SO much then for the allegorical teaching of Numbers. We come now to the actual teaching itself. Here we must remember that such teaching is much the same as that of the rest of the Pentateuch, and indeed of the whole of the Old Testament except for its later books. Any difference is one of emphasis and selection only. "Numbers has no theology peculiar to itself but is a series of illustrations of Old Testament theology in general" ("Numbers" in the "Westminster Commentaries," p. xlii). The chief characteristic of Hebrew religion was an intense belief in Jehovah as a living God, self-existent

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and in no way dependent upon mankind, not even upon the people of His choice, Israel itself. That the gods of other nations were real beings was probably believed in Israel until a quite late date, but Jehovah was supreme. This was a step to the recognition of Him as the sole god of the universe. In any case, whether such a belief came early or late, there was never a suggestion, as in the religion of the Greeks, that gods and men were alike subject to Fate.

When we think of the character of God it is very easy to speak as though He Himself were ever changing, and to contrast, for example, the God of the New Testament with that of the Old. But this habit is inexact and dangerous, for it is not God Who changes but man's conception of Him as he acquires greater knowledge and purer insight into His character. The people of Israel could not in reason be expected to rise to so high a conception of the Divine nature as those living after the revelation of Himself which He gave to mankind in Jesus Christ.

Jehovah as a God of Order

PERHAPS the first impression left upon the reader of Numbers is that Jehovah was a God of Order. The elaborate arrangements for the camp and the minute details of the sacrificial system all suggest this lesson which, it may be added, is driven home to the modern mind by the study of nature and the sciences connected with it. Then comes the realization that He was a "jealous" God, concerned that His name should be honoured and His precepts obeyed. An example of this can be found in the punishment of the sabbath-breaker (Chapter xv). This side of God's character had to be emphasized as a necessary stage in the religious training of mankind before a full realization and appreciation of other aspects of His character was possible. At the same time the mercifulness and patience of Jehovah were not concealed (xiv, 18ff.). Furthermore, it has to be realized that often what we regard as the punishment of failures and shortcomings is really their consequences. The exclusion, for example, of the whole people, with a few exceptions, from the Promised Land, was no merely arbitrary act. By their lack of discipline and faith they had demonstrated their utter unfitness for the tremendous task of conquering Canaan. The taint of slavery still clung to the generation which had been in servitude in Egypt, and the enterprise had to be delayed until their bones had been laid in the desert.

The minds of the Hebrews still retained many inadequate and crude ideas about Jehovah. They thought that the ark was a representation of Him so close that it could be addressed by His name (x, 35f., xiv, 44f.), and the pillar of cloud was looked upon in much the same way (xiv, 14). He is also thought of as having to be aroused by the sounding of trumpets (x, 9f.), and Moses feels that he can appeal to Jehovah's desire to preserve His reputation just as though He were a man (xiv, 16: cf. also Exodus xxxii, 12, and Deuteronomy xxxii, 27).

But the characteristic which distinguishes Jehovah from all others is His holiness. We must not at this early stage give to the term *holy* anything of a moral content, it is not, as in the religious vocabulary of today, the equivalent of saintly, or even of good. Its nearest equivalent is separate. Holiness was indeed a dangerous thing which might be communicated to persons or things coming into contact with objects that were holy. Hence the need for guarding the sanctuary. All this tended to emphasize the idea of Jehovah as a God Who was exclusive and mysterious. As in Egypt, the innermost shrine was the Holy of Holies, and it was surrounded by the most stringent restrictions. To all but the High Priest, and even to him except at certain intervals, it was forbidden ground.

With this exaltation of Jehovah as a holy and exclusive God went the exaltation of the priesthood which guarded His sanctuary and acted as His ministers. The priest was consecrated with elaborate ceremonies and was a member of a separate caste. Below him was the Levite, and he, too, must be carefully set apart for his task. For a Levite or a layman to aspire to the priesthood was a deadly sin, as the story of Korah and his companions (xvi) is intended to teach. The entire exclusion of the laity from any kind of religious office in the developed priestly system can be seen in the regulations concerning the water of purification (xix, 1–22). It owed its efficacy entirely to the previous act of the priest, but the layman who made use of it did not even offer up a prayer in applying it.

As Jehovah was the God of Israel so Israel was in an especial sense the people of Jehovah (xi, 29), and His name was put upon them (vi, 27). One of the great objects of the wilderness period and its harsh discipline was to convince the people, once and for all, that they were dependent upon Him, and that the ordinary material resources were inadequate to supply their needs. The whole sacrificial system was also intended to disclose and emphasize the extent to which man was indebted to God as the controller of nature. Thus faith was drawn out from the people by their experiences. The lack of it brought failure and disaster, as did indeed also a presumptuous daring which was not truly based on obedience to God (xiv, 40).

Faith and trust in Jehovah gave to the people of Israel a confidence and hope such as was found amongst no other people. To the Greek the Golden Age lay in the remote past; to the Hebrew it belonged to the future. But this future hope was, in early times at least, not one for the individual, but for the nation as a whole; nor did it concern a life different from the present, earthly existence. Although Immortality was taught and believed in Egypt, among the Hebrews it was at best only a dim and uncertain doctrine. Our Lord Himself, however, could find it among them when He referred to Moses as calling upon the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; for God was the God of the living, not of the dead (Mark xii, 26f.). Possibly some kind of life after death may lie behind the passionate cry of Moses that God would blot him out of His book (Exodus xxxii, 32); but in view of Psalm lxix, 28, Isaiah iv, 3, and other passages it is hardly likely.

Steps in Israel's Moral Training

THE peculiar bond between Jehovah and the nation had, however, direct consequences for the individual Israelite; it was his duty to obey the laws of Jehovah. As higher and purer conceptions of Jehovah began to prevail religion began to be more ethical and less magical. In the later prophets, in Ezekiel especially, the attempt is made to give ritual itself an ethical basis; but the ritual laws of Numbers often fail to contain anything which may be called moral, and the distinction between clean and unclean has no apparent connexion with either morals or utility. It was, however, the supreme and unique achievement of Israel that morals and religion ultimately became closely allied. The gods of the heathen

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were not interested in moral questions—that was left to philosophers—and their own standards in such matters were deplorably low.

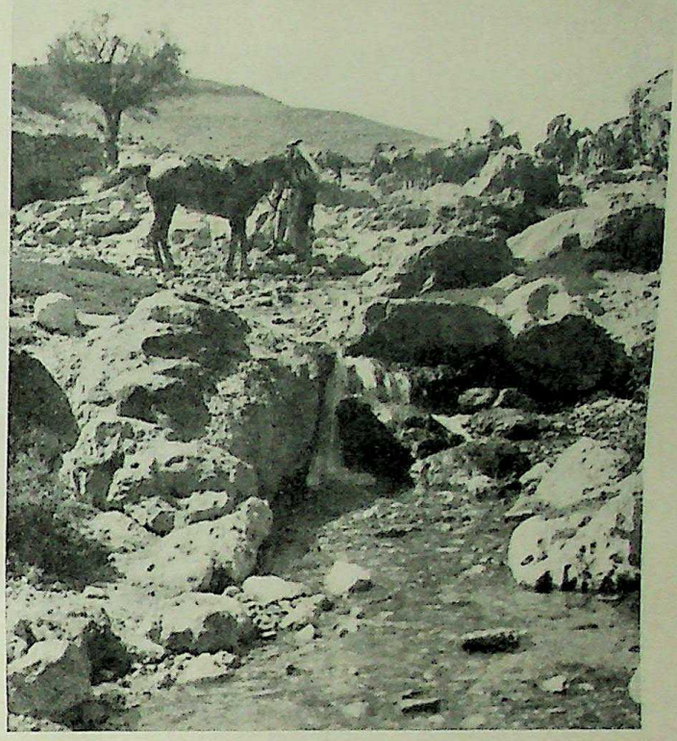
The method by which Israel's moral training was carried out was that of definite command and prohibition, with definite pains and penalties attached to every breach of the law. Such a method was a preliminary and negative stage to the great positive Christian teaching by which attitude of mind is regarded as of greater importance than the mere keeping of enactments—the recognition that love is the fulfilling of the law. From the standpoint of psychology such a method is imperfect because it fails to take account of motive or intention and regards merely the action itself. The result of the system was to produce a race of stern and harsh Puritans who seemed almost to rejoice in inflicting punishment on all who offended. They were all too anxious to be the instruments of the Divine vengeance. Numbers, indeed, " belongs to an age when moral ideas had often to be enforced with indifference to human life ; when conversely, the plagues and disasters that befell men were always connected with moral offences "—so Dr. Watson concludes (Numbers, page 16 in the " Expositor's Bible "). He ought, in order to give a complete idea of the position, to have added ritual offences to moral.

ONE result of identifying Israel with Jehovah and regarding her enemies as His was that war was exalted and cruelties were practised in the name of God which reveal a low religious standard. In other directions, however, the discipline and self-denial to which those engaged in warfare had to submit had decided moral advantages.

Much of the moral teaching in Numbers, as in the Old Testament in general, was already known and practised before its laws were promulgated ; but by them revelation added its sanction to what was already recognized as right and advantageous through man's own conscience and experience.

Before leaving the subject of the moral and social teaching of the book it is only right that something should be said about its attitude towards the position of women. Among the Hebrews woman was treated very unfairly ; she was the property first of her father and then of her husband, just like an ox or an ass. The husband had very considerable rights against his wife ; she had none at all against him. Numbers, however, contains several passages which point to better things. The ordeal of jealousy (v, 11-31) to which a woman suspected of adultery had to submit must have been a real help ; for though the knowledge of guilt might make it effective against an offender, many an innocent woman must have escaped by its means. Again, the recognition of the right of the daughters of Zelophehad (xxvii) to succeed to their father's property in the absence of any brother was a step towards a fuller life for women. On the other hand it is in Numbers, in the story of Miriam's ambition and punishment (xii), that undue prominence is declared to be dangerous for women.

No account of the story of Numbers would be complete without some reference to the work and character of Moses, for he it is who forms the link binding its various parts together. From an historical point of view he ranks with Hammurabi of Babylon, Lycurgus of Sparta, Solon of Athens, and other great lawgivers who have stood at the dawn of their nation's life. But Moses was also something much more, for he influenced every phase of Israelite life, the social and moral and even the military as well as the legal. Above all he was the first of the prophets, one



" THE WATER OF MERIBAH." According to an early Arab tradition this stream, which has worn a way through the low ridge of white sandstone, is the one that " came out abundantly " when Moses struck the rock near Kadesh (Numbers xx, 11). Known locally as the Spring of Moses, it flows through the Wady Musa, the main valley, at Petra, where the same tradition places Kadesh.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

who brought to the people a new conception of the character of Jehovah. That legends have gathered round his name and that much of the legislation attributed to him is really of later date can hardly be denied, but that does not mean that he was not an historical figure. The fact that his name was given to it is a tribute to his supreme importance as a teacher and leader in the critical days of the wanderings in the wilderness.

Final Estimate of Moses' Character

NUMBERS is at no pains to conceal the fact that the people to whom Moses devoted himself were not at all appreciative of his greatness and self-sacrifice. They murmured against him, as men have always murmured against every great leader who strives to raise them to an ideal which is still beyond their comprehension. Even his own brother and sister joined in the complaints ; but he bore them with patience and magnanimity. On one critical occasion he apparently proved inadequate ; but by that time he was old and weary and the frayed spirit gave way at last, and he advanced presumptuous and self-regarding claims (xx). Perhaps there had been a secret growth of self-esteem and self-complacency, which the crisis at length laid bare. But if on this occasion Moses showed the arrogant spirit of the dictator rather than the simple faith of the true prophet of Jehovah, it may well be forgotten, save as a warning that even the greatest of God's servants may fall into sin The final thought of him that we would cherish is of one who was faithful in all God's house, one to whom Jehovah spoke mouth to mouth and not in dark speeches

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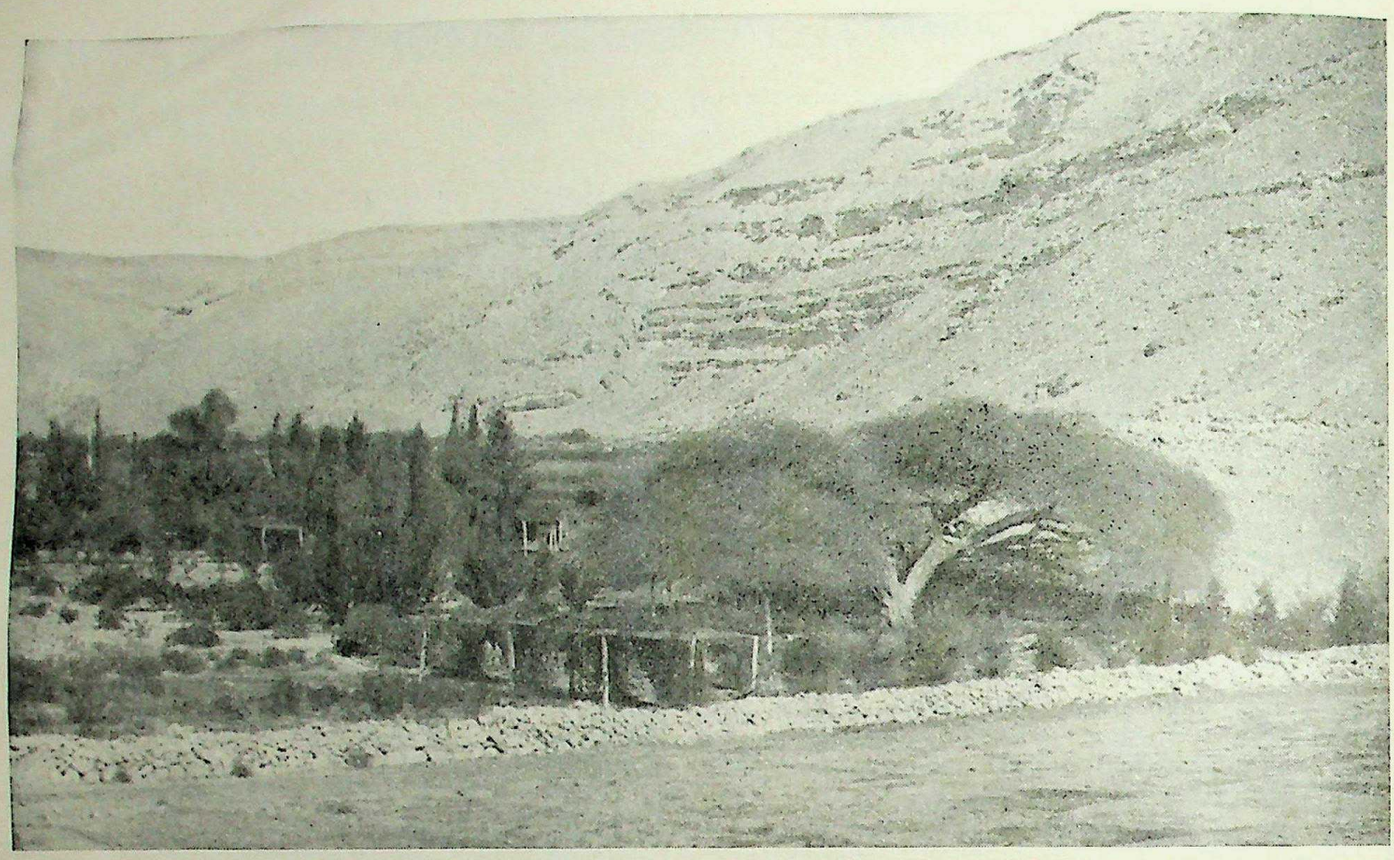

SITE OF ISRAEL'S HEADQUARTERS? Ain Gedeirat is one of the various places identified with Kadesh, camping ground of the Israelites during a long period of their wanderings. In the valley is a strong rivulet and an ancient stone reservoir which might conceivably date to that remote time. Here are trellised vines and cultivated enclosures. Over a corner of the garden pictured a fine acacia spreads its shade. This tree belongs to the species which provided wood for the tabernacle.

PERHAPS KADESH WAS AT AIN KADEIS. Five miles south of Ain Gedeirat, on the Palestine frontier of Sinai, is Ain Kadeis where Kadesh—called also Kadesh Barnea (Numbers xxxii, 8)—has been located by many. In a narrow rocky bed a small stream trickles and splashes a difficult way. It is so small in fact that it lacks significant association with the Meribah episode of the gushing water from the rock. It was at Kadesh that Miriam died a short time before the advance into Canaan.

Photos. American Colony in Jerusalem

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Numbers

III

The Land of the Book

With the Children of Israel from Sinai to Jordan

by REV. A. E. GOODMAN, M.A.

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IN attempting to reconstruct the historical and geographical background of the book of Numbers we are in precisely the same position as with Exodus. The account of the wilderness wanderings and journey to Canaan begun in Exodus and continued in Numbers is given in retrospect, or rather in a combined series of retrospects many centuries later, and in such a way as to emphasize above all else the Divine vocation of the Hebrew race. That on this account historical accuracy should have suffered is not in the circumstances surprising nor need it cause us dismay, but it should serve to temper our judgement as to the reliance we may place upon our sources. Added to this is the fact that there is extremely scanty evidence outside the Biblical accounts of this chapter of Hebrew history.

Israelites' Sojourn in Sinai

THE book of Exodus leaves us with the Children of Israel encamped in the wilderness of Sinai before the Holy Mount. Between their arrival there (Exodus xix, 1) and their departure (Numbers x, 11, 12) the Israelites had passed through a great religious experience. The intervening chapters of Exodus and Numbers, as well as the whole of Leviticus, are intended to convey to the reader what that experience was, and also to describe the subsequent organization of the people into a religious community. A great deal of this is, however, of late date and merely reflects the beliefs and practices of a later age. Two historical facts, however seem to stand out: first, that after a period spent in a nomadic state a company of Hebrew tribes emerged from pastureland and desert, welded together into a single whole under their leader; and secondly, that this new organic unity lay in the acknowledgement of a solemn covenant existing between themselves and their newly revealed God, Jahveh (Jehovah).

Beyond this we must use great care if we are to extract from the Biblical accounts dealing with this formative period what can be regarded as historically true. Thus, for example, the number and organization described in the opening chapters of Numbers cannot possibly be taken literally, and is in fact a fanciful reconstruction by the so-called Priestly school of writers that flourished about one thousand years later than the time of the Exodus.

According to Numbers x, 11, the Israelites left Sinai in "the second year, in the second month, on the twentieth day of the month," i.e. some ten or eleven months after their arrival there (c.f. Exodus xix, 1). Their route led them to the wilderness of Paran. The precise boundaries of this district are not known, but there is reason to believe that it extended as far as the wilderness of Zin and Kadesh. It was at all events in this district that the greater part of the "Wanderings" was spent (a period of 40 years according to xiv, 34). Indeed some would hold that the Israelites never travelled south into the Sinai Peninsula at all but came direct from Egypt to the neighbourhood of Kadesh and that Mount Sinai itself is to be found in this locality.

The possibility of a northern route has already arisen in connexion with the book of Exodus (*see* page 124), but we must touch on it again here. In the first place we read in Numbers x, 29 that on setting out from Mount Sinai Moses asks his father-in-law Hobab the Midianite to accompany him. This he refuses to do, stating his intention to return to his own land. Now what evidence we have seems to point to the fact that the land of Midian lay beyond the Gulf of Akabah and to the east of the 'Arabah, the great mountain chain to the east of this deep rift forming their natural western boundary.

Midianite Allies of the Hebrews

THE Midianite, Kenite, and Edomite tribes who inhabited this district all appear to have been related in some way to the Israelites. Thus Israel is Edom's "brother" (Numbers xx, 14), and Moses' father-in-law is variously described as Hobab the Midianite and Jethro, the Kenite. Indeed it is likely that at this period the solidarity and exclusiveness of the Israelite tribes was by no means so fixed as the Hebrew historians would have us believe, and their connexions with neighbouring tribes may well have been quite close. Some have conjectured that Jahveh was originally a Kenite deity. Whatever we may think of this theory it seems most likely that the Kenites influenced and helped the Israelites a great deal during the period of their wanderings. The presence of these and other Semitic tribes in or near the borders of Palestine was due to those waves of immigration which from time to time spread to the north and north-west from the Arabian Peninsula.

To resume. It has been argued with some show of plausibility that when the interview between Moses and Hobab took place they were on the borders of Midian, to the north of the Gulf of Akabah. If, as the text seems to indicate, this coincided with the departure from the Holy Mount, one might naturally conclude that the site of Sinai-Horeb is to be found among the volcanic peaks of which there are several in this district. But as we cannot be certain that there were no Midianites west of the Gulf of Akabah in Moses' day this argument remains inconclusive.

Numbers' Parallel with the Exodus Story

SECONDLY, we have double accounts of the Coming of the Quails and Manna (Exodus xvi, Numbers xi), and of the Striking of the Rock (Exodus xvii, Numbers xx). Moreover, the place names mentioned in Exodus xvii and xviii, namely *Massah*, *Meribah* and *Rephidim*, as being in the same district as the Holy Mount, appear again in Numbers xx as places near Kadesh. Here again there is a possible indication of a northerly route direct to the district of Kadesh, and that Mount Sinai is to be found somewhere in this direction. Various sites have been suggested. Some would even locate the Holy Mount south of Midian to the east of the Gulf. But the survey of what may be different traditions within the Biblical accounts and the various theories that have been put forward can only leave us with the knowledge that it is impossible to dogmatize, or to make any final decision between the traditional site to the south of the Sinai Peninsula, and some location to the north-east or east.

Of the twenty halting places between Sinai and Kadesh as given in Numbers xxxiii, 16-36, the first nineteen are unknown. Attempts have been made to place them but they are largely conjectural. The twentieth station, however, Ezion-geber, is famous for its connexion with king Solomon. It was here that he built his fleet for trading in the south (I Kings, ix, 26), and here at a later date Jehoshaphat's ships were overwhelmed by some kind of disaster (I Kings xxii, 48). The town has been variously identified —in the neighbourhood of the modern Akabah, with 'Ain-el-Ghudyan some 12 miles north of the head of the gulf, and el-Meniyyeh, about 15 miles in the same direction. In support of the last two sites it is claimed that at that time the Gulf of Akabah extended further northwards than it does today.

The identification of Kadesh (Kadesh Barnea) has been the subject of a good deal of controversy.

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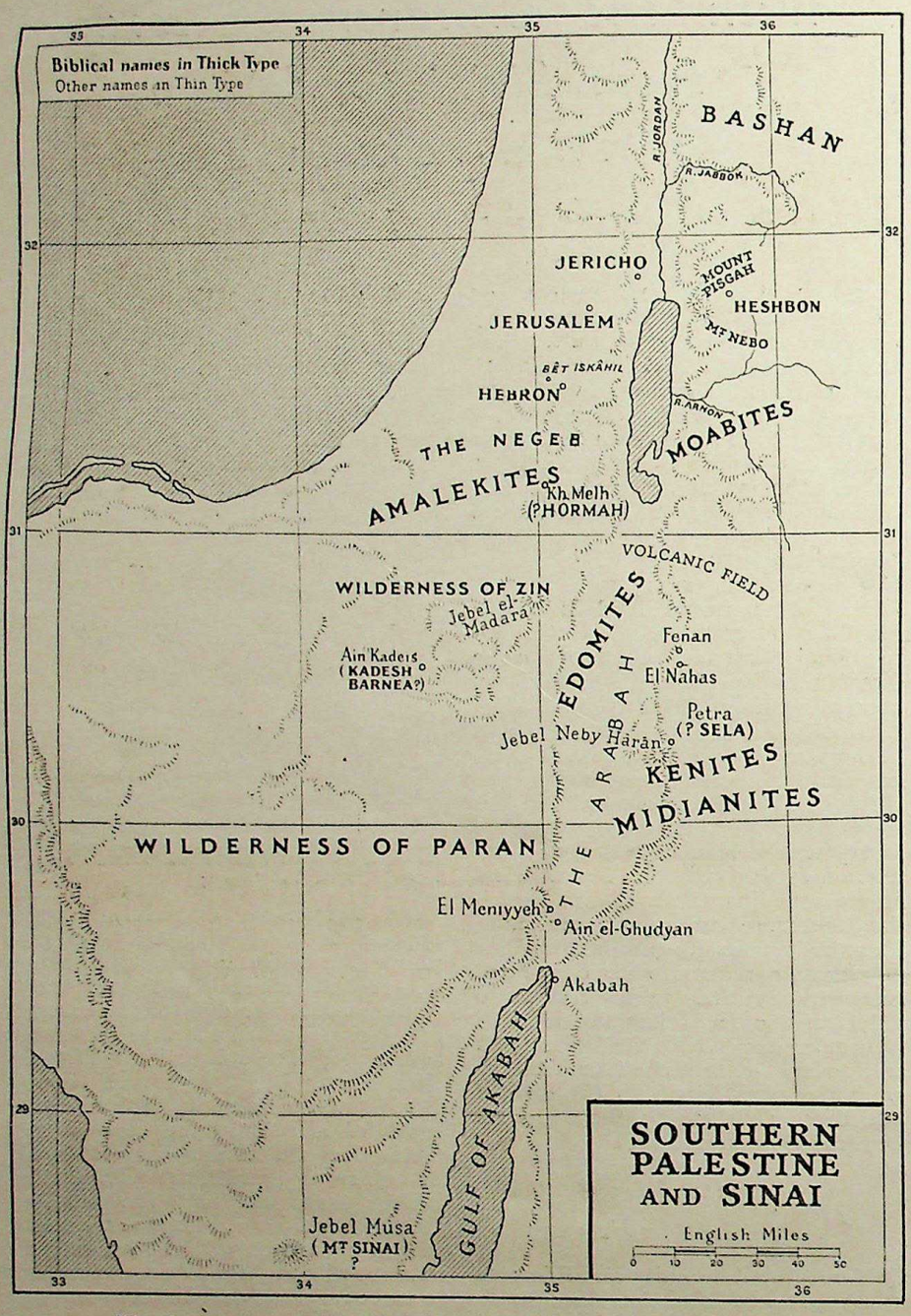

The journeyings of the Israelites from Sinai to the River Jordan

Prepared under the direction of the Author

There are some who would accept the traditional site, namely Petra, which lies to the east of the 'Arabah. Here, according to an early tradition, was where Moses struck the rock and the waters flowed. There is in fact to be seen here a remarkable stream which issues out of the solid rock and flows through the valley named Wady Musa. Near by, according to the same tradition, is the mount on which Aaron died, the Jebel Neby Haran (i.e. Mount of the Prophet Aaron), a lofty mountain in coloured strata to be seen from miles around.

Petra, famous at a later date as the capital of the Nabataean kingdom, had a long history. We do not, however, know much about its history in the time of Moses. Its position must have given it great importance from quite early times as it was near to the famous copper mines of el-Nahas and Fenan to the north. Phythian-Adams would identify Petra with the Edomite Sela or Joktheel (II Kings xiv, 7), and claims that this was the home town of the Kenites, and is referred to by Balaam in his prophecy concerning this people:

"And he looked on the Kenites and took up his parable and said, Strong (lit. *overflowing*) is thy dwellingplace, And thy nest is set in the rock."—(Numbers xxiv, 21 R.V.).

This theory is not, however, accepted by all critics, and many have followed Trumbull in identifying Kadesh with 'Ain Kadeis in the Negeb some 75 miles south-west of Hebron, and Mount Hor with Jebel el Madara which is situated to the north-east.

TWO incidents deserve our attention at this point, namely, the two-fold rebellion of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, and the mission of the spies. Both these took place during the sojourn at Kadesh. As regards the first, Dathan and Abiram were Reubenites, and we seem to have evidence here of an attempt by this tribe to gain the leadership: maybe they actually held ascendancy for a time, but lost it through their arrogance. In the ancient poem (Genesis xlix, 3) there seems to be a similar tradition. We hear little of the tribe of Reuben in subsequent history.

It was from Kadesh that the spies were sent out to reconnoitre the land of Canaan. Passing through the wilderness of Zin they are represented as surveying the district as far north as Rehob which lay at the head of the Jordan valley, and "the entering in of Hamath," possibly the cleft between Lebanon and Hermon near to the modern Hama on the Orontes. Eshcol, where they are said to have gathered grapes, may be the Wady Bêt Iskâhil to the north-west of Hebron.

What historical basis underlies the story of the spies and its sequel? Their report on returning was that the land was good but that the cities were fenced; the country was filled with many inhabitants, the children of Anak, Amalekites to the south, and Hittites, Jebusites and Amorites in the mountains. These are some of the many different peoples who inhabited Palestine at this time, and we shall find in Deuteronomy and Joshua fuller lists of them.

Those Who Dwelt in Palestine

THE children of Anak (or the Anakim, i.e. the "long-necked") belonged properly to the Stone age in Palestine. We hear of other aborigines such as the Emim, the Horim, and the Zamzummim, all classed under the general term Rephaim (i.e. *ghosts*). Many of these were probably cave-dwellers and were of abnormally large stature. A term of somewhat varying application for the inhabitants of Palestine was Canaanite, from which the designation Canaan was derived. The word properly means "trader," but it seems to have been used in quite a wide sense. Thus it seems to refer successively to the Palestinian aborigines mentioned above, to the inhabitants of the land as a whole, and to the Phoenicians, to whom this term would have been specially applicable.

Two great racial movements which had a profound effect on the history of Palestine were those of the Amorites and the Hittites.

The former entered Palestine at a very early age, perhaps a thousand years before the days of Abraham. Whether they were Semitic and of the same stock as the Hebrews, or whether they were a Nordic people, is a question on which there is some disagreement among archaeologists. Pictures of them on the monuments show them to possess a refined, intelligent appearance, with aquiline nose and pointed beard (*see* illustration in page 182). The extent of their influence and power, together with that of the Hittites, is reflected in Ezekiel's taunt against Israel: "The Amorite was thy father and thy mother was an Hittite." (Ezekiel xvi, 3 R.V.).

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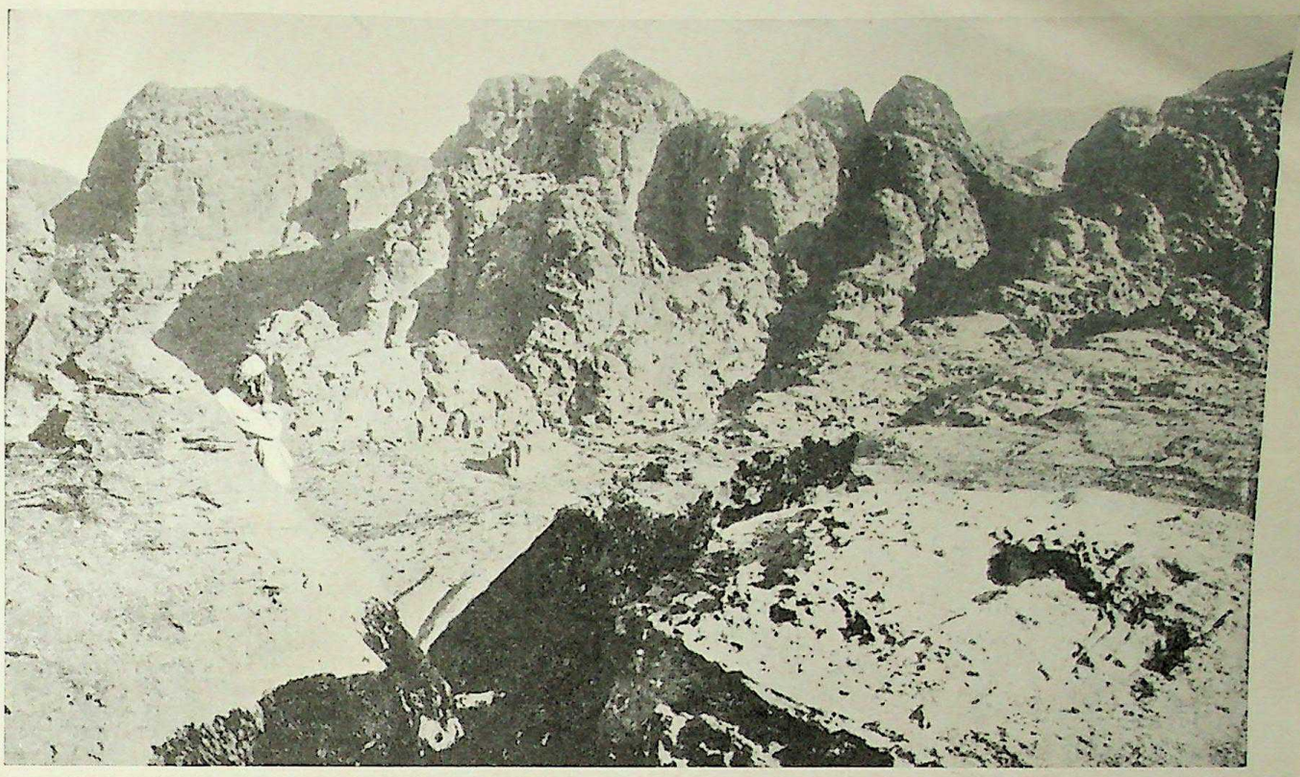
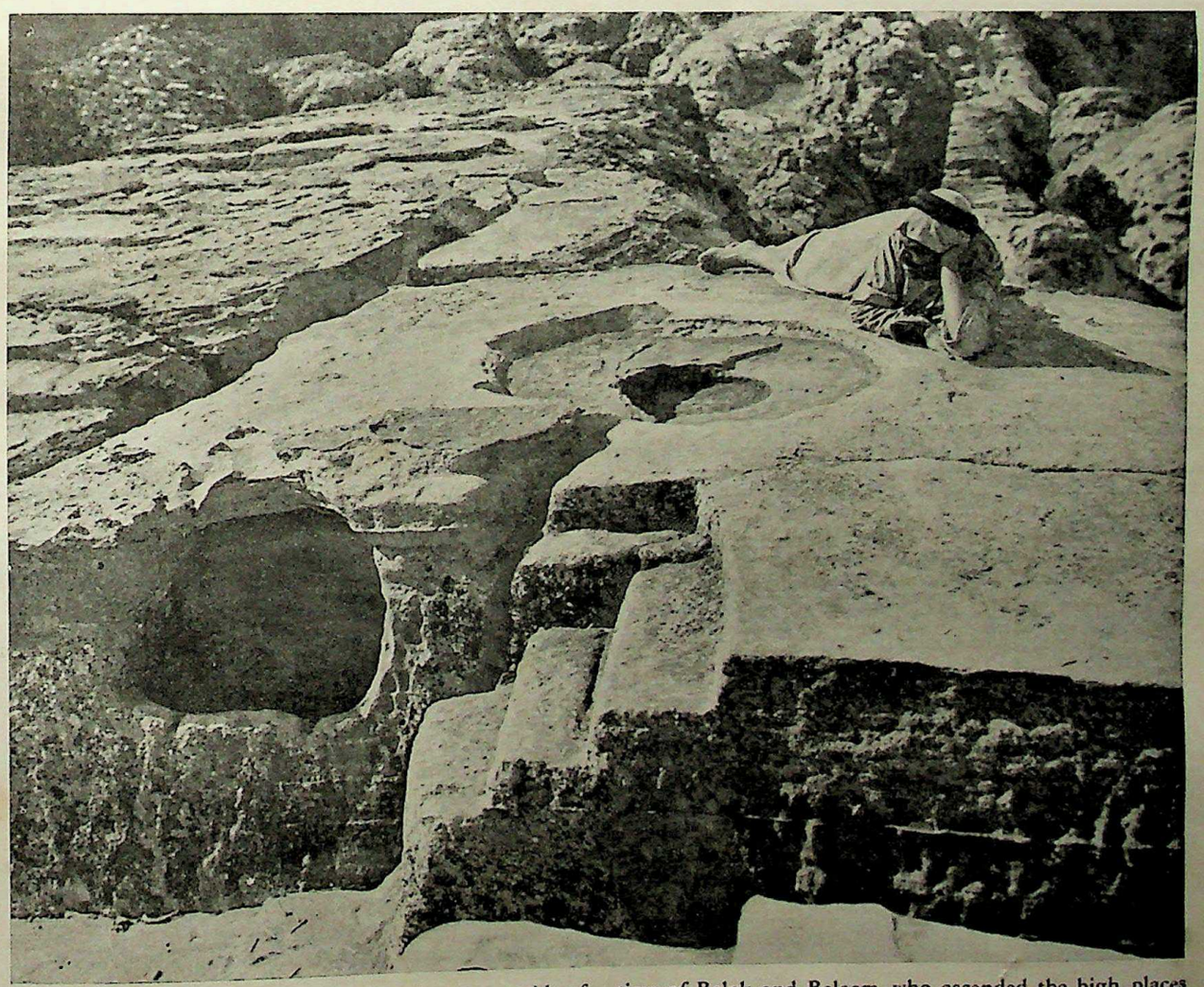


HEART OF THE MOUNTAINS OF SEIR. This is a general view, looking northward, of the deserted stronghold of Petra (*see* illustration in page 166), marvellous city of the Nabataeans, who first came into its history in 312 B.C. Before that era the place was owned by Edomites, and it is commonly believed that Sela is the ancient Hebrew form of Petra, both words signifying Rock. The site has been identified by some with Kadesh and associated with Midian.

Photo, E.N.A.



HIGH PLACE OF SACRIFICE. On the eastern side of Petra's valley is the Mount of Obelisks. A rock-hewn path, with intermittent stairways, leads to a Place of Sacrifice, such as those where oxen and rams were slaughtered in the time of Balak and Balaam, who ascended the high places of Moab thinking to appease Jehovah with such offerings. On the altar shown, which is provided with a channel to carry off the blood, the bodies of the beasts were burnt.

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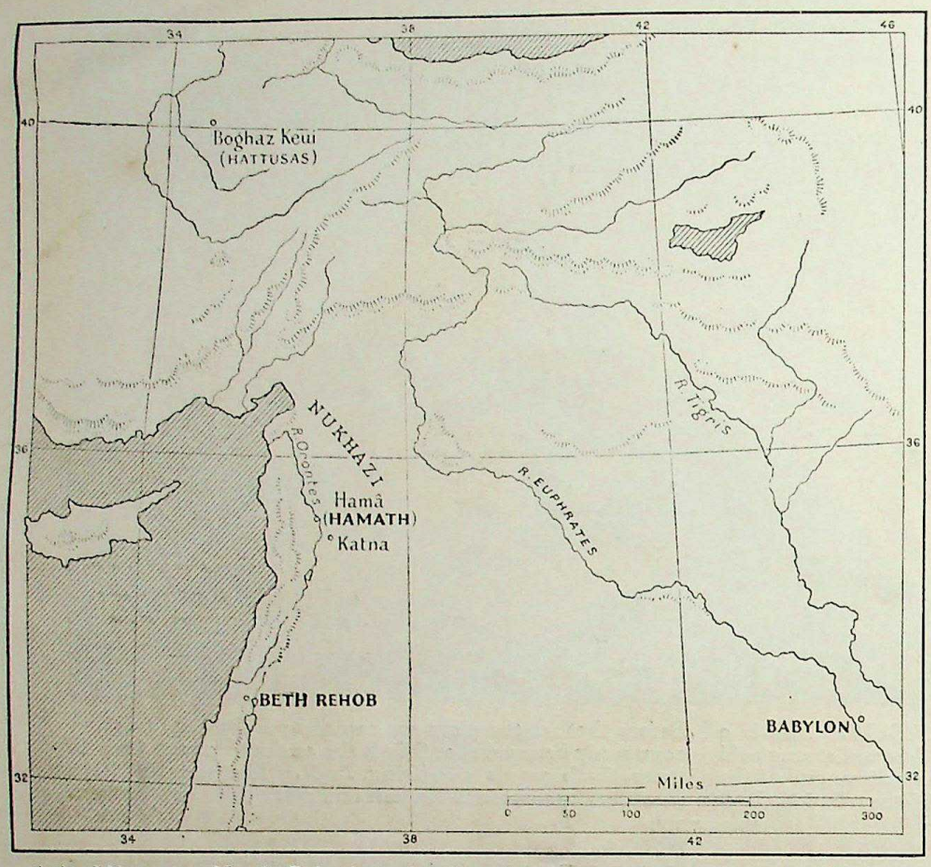

Asia Minor to North Palestine, showing the southward spread of the Hittites
Prepared under the direction of the Author

The history of the Hittites likewise goes back into the dim ages. The earliest references to them have been found in Cuneiform inscriptions of about the year 2500 B.C. Early portraits depict them as clean shaven, thick set, with high cheek bones and retreating forehead. Particularly noticeable is the resemblance to the "Jewish" nose, which may well point to racial admixture of Hebrews and Hittites. The home country of this great people was Asia Minor and their first king, Pamba, is dated 2750 B.C. About 2000 B.C. Hattusil made his capital at Hattusas, Boghaz Keui (*see* the map above).

From Asia Minor the Hittites spread southwards and eastwards. In 1925 B.C. they sacked Babylon, bringing to an end the First Babylonian Dynasty. The "Great King" of the Hittites, Subbiluliuma, came to the throne about 1400 B.C., and it was to him that the Hittite Empire owed its subsequent consolidation and strength.

Hittite Invaders of Canaan

IT was no doubt during this monarch's reign that we find references to a Hittite invasion of Northern Palestine in the Tell-el-Amarna tablets (*see* page 115). The faithful Akizzi of Katna (*see* the map above) writes to the Pharaoh at Tell-el-Amarna:

> Let my Lord the king of Egypt know that now the king of the Hittites has burnt our cities with fire and carried off their gods and their inhabitants. . . . The king of the Hittites has taken up his quarters in the land of the Nukhazi and I fear he may go up into the land of the Amorite.

Amongst this correspondence also are letters dealing with the invasion of the "Habiru" from the south, to which reference has already been made in a previous article. The mention of Hittites therefore as being seen in Palestine by the spies at this juncture gives additional support to the dating of the Exodus at about 1445 B.C. and the entry into Canaan at about 1400 B.C.

Of the other inhabitants seen by the spies the Amalekites were nomads living in the deserts in the south of Palestine, and the Jebusites, a small tribe, perhaps Semitic in origin, living in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem.

The report of the spies caused discontent and resentment. Numbers xiv, 39–45, tells of an attack on Canaan from the south which was repulsed by the Amalekites and Canaanites, the Israelites being driven back to Hormah, tentatively identified by Garstang with *Kh. Mehl* about 8 miles S.W. of Tell Arad. However, in Numbers xxi, 1–3, we read of a reprisal by Israel on "the Canaanite, the king of Arad" who had captured a number of Israelites. "And they (the Israelites) utterly destroyed them and their cities: and the name of the place was called Hormah." Hormah is again mentioned in Judges where Judah, Simeon and the Kenites are said to have attacked Arad and laid waste Zephath to which they gave the name Hormah (Judges i, 16f). If, as seems possible, we have here different forms of a common tradition, it may be that Canaan was in fact invaded from the south, and that a footing was gained by the tribes of Judah and Simeon in spite of the fact that the whole people are later represented as moving across Jordan under Joshua.

On the March to Jordan's Banks

IT remains for us to consider the journey from Kadesh to the east bank of the Jordan, opposite the steppes of Jericho. Along the direct route lay two Semitic tribes, the Edomites, whose territory lay south and east of the Dead Sea, and the Moabites, whose territory extended from Edom to the river Arnon. The Israelites were forced to make a détour to avoid passing through the territories of these tribes.

North of the Moabites were the Amorite kingdoms of Sihon and Og, namely Heshbon and Bashan. These proved hostile and were defeated by the Israelites and the victory is commemorated by an ancient poem (Numbers xxi, 27–29), in which Israel claims Moab as its rightful booty since it had previously been defeated by the Amorites.

Most of the halting places on this stage of the journey are unidentified, but we can conjecture, with a certain degree of confidence, the approximate route. As before, the itinerary is repeated with variations in Chapter xxxiii.

After leaving Kadesh and Mount Hor, the Israelites encircled the land of Edom via Ezion-geber (*see* Deuteronomy ii, 8), and came to Oboth, which Sir George Adam Smith locates on the flinty plateau to the east of Edom. From here the route went northwards along the eastern boundary of Moab

AMORITE PRISONERS OF WAR. These figures represent captive Amorites, early inhabitants of Canaan and of the country north of Moab, ruled by Sihon, who "went out against Israel into the wilderness" (Numbers xxi, 23, 24). There "Israel smote him with the edge of the sword and possessed his land from Arnon unto Jabbok."
Photo, courtesy of Professor Garstang

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"HE SHALL POUR THE WATER OUT OF HIS BUCKETS"

Wells in the Arabian desert, all too few and far apart, are not furnished with a windlass or mechanical means for drawing up water. The nomad employs his own rope and tanned goatskin "buckets" of a type that has survived since Bible times because of its portability. To keep these clear from the side of the well the rope may be passed through a rough wooden contrivance projecting from the brink, as seen in this photograph. Water is so precious in the desert that Balaam's words, "He shall pour the water out of his buckets, and his seed shall be in many waters" (Numbers xxiv, 7), are an expression of Israel's abundant supply.

Photo Mondiale

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DAILY BREAD DESCENDING FOR THE HUNGRY ON MOUNT SINAI

In this lift the monks of the Monastery of St. Catherine, who belong to the Greek Orthodox Church, lower bread each morning to any Arabs lacking food. Situated in a cleft on the north-east slope of Jebel Musa, the monastery, where once was treasured the Codex Sinaiticus (*see* illustration in page 13), was founded by the Emperor Justinian in A.D. 530. It was built in fortress style, a stronghold for the existing Christian settlement, frequently marauded by Beduin tribes. Above is shown part of the north wall, where a windlass, centuries old, works the primitive elevator. In more dangerous times this was used as a visitor's entrance.

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WHERE THE ISRAELITES ENCAMPED BY THE GULF OF AKABAH

The site of Ezion-gaber, twentieth halting place of the Israelites on their journey to the Promised Land (Numbers xxxiii, 35), and later the naval port of King Solomon, has been approximately located at the head of the Gulf of Akabah. As viewed above, we get a good idea of the kind of place in which Moses sought to encamp his people—a sheltered plain by a well-watered oasis. The district has many traditional associations with their wanderings. Some authorities have conjectured that east of the Gulf were both the Land of Midian and the Holy Mount, Horeb-Sinai, thus placing them in the volcanic area of Northern Arabia and not within the Peninsula.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

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TREADING OUT CORN ON THE THRESHING FLOOR

In Palestine this most primitive method for threshing corn is still frequently employed. Round and about the heap of barley or wheat spread over the threshing floor—which is merely a circular patch of earth beaten hard and level—the oxen are driven. Out of the ears of corn, tossed and pounded by their feet, the grain is shaken, the straw being afterwards easily separated from the mass. The Hebrew word for threshing signifies trampled down. Disregarded today is the humane edict "thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out the corn" (Deuteronomy xxv, 4). The poorly-fed beasts would all too hungrily take their fill of abundance.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

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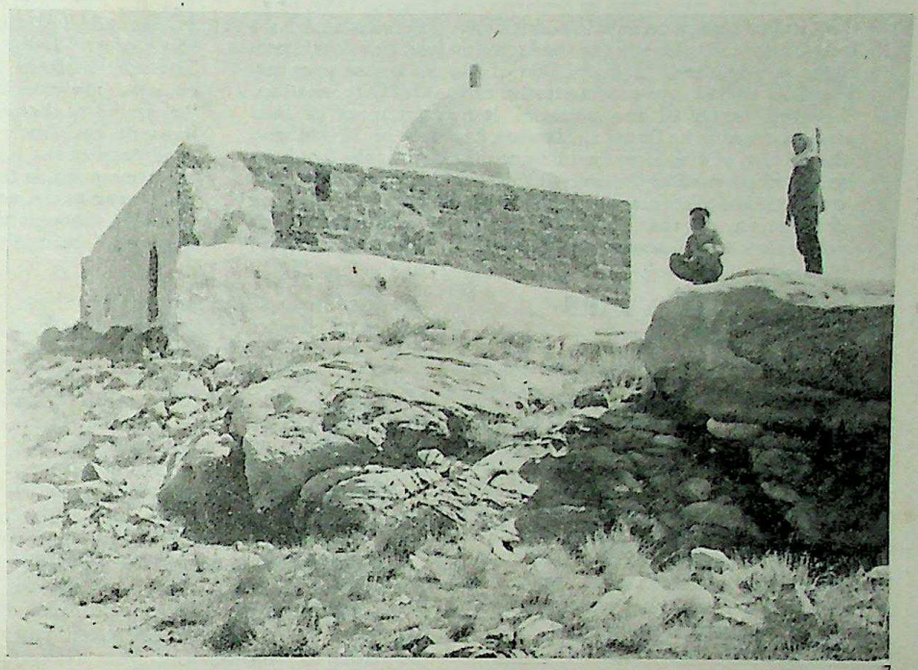
and across the river Arnon. The next station, "the top of Pisgah" in Moab, is mentioned again (Numbers xxiii, 14) as the scene of Balaam's second oracle. According to Sir George Adam Smith this is "one of the projections from the Moabite Plateau from which a wide view across the whole of western Palestine is to be obtained." The "high places of Baal," the scene of Balaam's first oracle, must also be somewhere in this locality. "Pethor which is by the River," from whence Balaam is said to have come, is unknown; "the River" would appear to mean the Euphrates.

The final chapters of Numbers contain a heterogeneous collection of incidents and laws. Some historical basis appears to underlie the story of the sin of Baal-Peor, though the site of Shittim is uncertain. The account of the Holy War against Midian, however, gives the impression of an attempt to justify certain laws by appeal to Mosaic precedent.

The tradition that the tribes of Reuben, Gad and half Manasseh settled on the coast of Jordan, related in Numbers xxxii, is supported by later writers, but there is some reason for believing that the reference to Manasseh (verse 33) is an interpolation and that the correct view is that Reuben and Gad settled first and that subsequently the tribe of Manasseh invaded the land from the west, owing to their lack of room east of Jordan.

The "mountain of Abarim" where Moses ascended to view the land before he died means simply the range of mountains to the east of Jordan. In Deuteronomy xxxii, 49 the particular mountain is designated as being "Mount Nebo which is in the land of Moab, that is over against Jericho."

In conclusion we may say that the Book of Numbers gives us a picture of the beliefs of the Hebrews as to their origin and vocation; behind this lie the facts of a religious experience and a social development. Whatever may be the relative value of the component parts of the Book of Numbers for historical research, we can learn from its pages something of that experience and of that development, and see a people, conscious of a divine purpose revealed to them through the guidance of a great leader.



"MOUNT OF AARON'S TOMB." On the desert highway continuing northward from Akabah to Gaza and Hebron is seen the majestic, two-peaked Jebel Neby Hurun—Mount of the Tomb of Aaron—in the Petra range, about fifty miles from the Gulf. A tradition identifying it with Mount Hor, death and burial-place of Aaron (Numbers xx, 22-28), is very ancient and is mentioned by Josephus, the Jewish historian writing in the first century A.D. The tomb, on the eastern peak, is in Moslem custody. In the modern edifice, shown in the upper photograph, a passage descends to the sepulchre.

Photos, American Colony in Jerusalem

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Eloquence of Deuteronomy

THE law-book of Deuteronomy, called in the Hebrew, Words, provides magnificent studies in rhetoric, by turns persuasive, threatening, passionate and hortatory. Its fervent eloquence is inspired by the idea of God, whether presented as Jehovah the Terrible One, or as the God of mercy and loving-kindness. It consists of three long-sustained addresses to the Israelites and two poetic passages, all delivered in the person of Moses, leader, prophet, lawgiver and unique representative of the Old Dispensation. Though much of the material is a restatement of laws and customs to be found in Exodus, Leviticus and Numbers, the diction of the oratorical compositions gives the book its great vitality of style and distinctive literary shape. At one time the discourses encourage the hearers by a glowing description of the Promised Land; at another they admonish the Chosen People against self-righteousness; then may be found a passage of eloquent tenderness, such as the excerpt from the tenth chapter, each section leading up to its climax in true rhetorical style.

IN the two important poems, contained in the thirty-second and thirty-third chapters, are to be found some of the best-known lines and phrases in the Bible. The whole of the passages should be read, though only excerpts are possible here. Particularly beautiful is the "rhyming of thought," or parallelism, in the group of four lines in the Song of Moses, beginning "My doctrine shall drop as the rain." Another well-known quatrain in the same poem is the concise analogy of the eagle teaching her young to fly, used to show God's upbringing and care of Israel through the wilderness to the Land of Promise, a grateful recognition of His loving-kindness.

AFTER FORTY YEARS
viii, 1, 2, 5—10

ALL the commandments which I command thee this day shall ye observe to do, that ye may live, and multiply, and go in and possess the land which the Lord sware unto your fathers. And thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments, or no.

Thou shalt also consider in thine heart, that, as a man chasteneth his son, so the Lord thy God chasteneth thee. Therefore thou shalt keep the commandments of the Lord thy God, to walk in his ways, and to fear him.

For the Lord thy God bringeth thee into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths that spring out of valleys and hills; a land of wheat, and barley, and vines, and fig trees, and pomegranates; a land of oil olive, and honey; a land wherein thou shalt eat bread without scarceness, thou shalt not lack any thing in it; a land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills thou mayest dig brass. When thou hast eaten and art full, then thou shalt bless the Lord thy God for the good land which he hath given thee.

SONS OF ANAK
ix, 1—5

HEAR, O Israel: Thou art to pass over Jordan this day, to go in to possess nations greater and mightier than thyself, cities great and fenced up to heaven, a people great and tall, the children of the Anakims, whom thou knowest, and of whom thou hast heard say, Who can stand before the children of Anak!

Understand therefore this day, that the Lord thy God is he which goeth over before thee; as a consuming fire he shall destroy them, and he shall bring them down before thy face; so shalt thou drive them out, and destroy them quickly, as the Lord hath said unto thee.

Speak not thou in thine heart, after that the Lord thy God hath cast them out from before thee, saying, For my righteousness the Lord hath brought me in to possess this land: but for the wickedness of these nations the Lord doth drive them out from before thee. Not for thy righteousness, or for the uprightness of thine heart, dost thou go to possess their land: but for the wickedness of these nations the Lord thy God doth drive them out from before thee, and that he may perform the word which the Lord sware unto thy fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

GOD'S REQUIREMENT
x, 12—14, 17—22

AND now, Israel, what doth the Lord thy God require of thee but to fear the Lord thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, to keep the commandments of the Lord, and his statutes, which I command thee this day for thy good? Behold, the heaven and the heaven of heavens is the Lord's thy God, the earth also, with all that therein is.

For the Lord your God is God of gods, and Lord of lords, a great God, a mighty, and a terrible, which regardeth not persons, nor taketh reward: He doth execute the judgment of the fatherless and widow, and loveth the stranger, in giving him food and raiment. Love ye therefore the stranger: for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt.

Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God; him shalt thou serve, and to him shalt thou cleave, and swear by his name. He is thy praise, and he is thy God, that hath done for thee these great and terrible things, which thine eyes have seen. Thy fathers went down into Egypt with threescore and ten persons; and now the Lord thy God hath made thee as the stars of heaven for multitude.

SONG OF MOSES
xxxii, 1—4, 9—12

GIVE ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak; [mouth.
And hear, O earth, the words of my
My doctrine shall drop as the rain,
My speech shall distil as the dew,
As the small rain upon the tender herb,
And as the showers upon the grass:
Because I will publish the name of the Lord:
Ascribe ye greatness unto our God.
He is the Rock, his work is perfect:
For all his ways are judgment:
A God of truth and without iniquity,
Just and right is he.

For the Lord's portion is his people;
Jacob is the lot of his inheritance.
He found him in a desert land,
And in the waste howling wilderness;
He led him about, he instructed him,
He kept him as the apple of his eye.
As an eagle stirreth up her nest,
Fluttereth over her young, [them,
Spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh
Beareth them on her wings:
So the Lord alone did lead him,
And there was no strange god with him.

THE MAJESTY OF GOD
xxxiii, 2, 26—29

THE Lord came from Sinai
And rose up from Seir unto them;
He shined forth from mount Paran,
And he came with ten thousands of saints: [for them.
From his right hand went a fiery law

There is none like unto the God of Jeshurun,
Who rideth upon the heaven in thy help,
And in his excellency on the sky.
The eternal God is thy refuge,
And underneath are the everlasting arms:
And he shall thrust out the enemy from before thee;
And shall say, Destroy them.
Israel then shall dwell in safety alone:
The fountain of Jacob shall be upon a land of corn and wine;
Also his heavens shall drop down dew.
Happy art thou, O Israel:
Who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord,
The shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellency!
And thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee; [places.
And thou shalt tread upon their high

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Deuteronomy

I

The Book in Outline

The Last Words of Moses Within Sight of the Promised Land

by REV. C. R. NORTH, M.A.

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THE Book of Deuteronomy consists of a series of addresses, said to have been delivered by Moses in the plains of Moab, at the close of the fortieth year after the Exodus, as the Israelites were on the point of entering the Promised Land. The central portion of the book is a collection of laws (xii-xxvi). Two of the addresses (i, 6 to iv, 40 and v to xi) are by way of introduction to the laws, and each of them is preceded by a few verses stating when and where it was delivered. The laws are followed by a third address (xxix-xxx). The last section of the book is miscellaneous in content, and includes two poems, the so-called Song (xxxii, 1-43) and Blessing (xxxiii) of Moses. The concluding chapter (xxxiv) relates the death of the leader.

The first address falls naturally into two divisions: (a) An historical survey of the events which have befallen the Israelites since they set out on their journeyings from Mount Horeb, emphasizing the providence that has preserved them in the desert and brought them safely through the territories of hostile peoples (i, 6 to end of iii); and (b) An appeal to the nation to be faithful to the God who has protected them (iv, 1-40).

Looking Back on the Way Traversed

FIRST, the historical survey. Jehovah had bidden His people depart from Horeb and journey to the Promised Land (i, 6-8). Thereupon, in order that he might be free from the intolerable burden of having to judge every trifling dispute, Moses had delegated part of his judicial responsibilities to trusted subordinates, retaining for himself the final authority in difficult cases (i, 9-18). On their arrival at Kadesh Barnea, which was to become the main centre of their wanderings, the people had asked that before they began the invasion, spies might be sent to discover what the land was like, and what were their prospects of success. This course was approved by Moses; but when the report was received the people were so fearful of making the attempt that God had condemned them for their mistrust to wander in the wilderness for a whole generation, until all should die save Caleb and Joshua. With this sentence in their ears, they had nevertheless presumed to make the attempt forthwith, only to be driven back like men pursued by swarms of bees (i, 19-46).

After their long wandering in the wilderness Moses had been directed once more to turn the steps of his people northward. They had passed through the land of their near kinsmen, the Edomites, paying their hosts for food and water, and making no hostile gestures. They had conducted themselves similarly as they passed through the territories of Moab and Ammon, with whom also they claimed relationship, though not so close as with the Edomites (ii, 1-25). To Sihon, king of Heshbon, they had sent a like request for permission to pass by the highway, with a promise to pay for whatever they should need. When Sihon had refused them passage he was attacked and defeated, his people and cities put to the ban, and his land taken in possession (ii, 26-37).

A SIMILAR fate awaited Og the king of Bashan (iii, 1-11). The territory now conquered had been assigned to the tribes of Reuben and Gad, together with half the tribe of Manasseh, on the condition that their warriors should assist in the subjugation of the country west of the Jordan (iii, 12-22). With this foretaste of victory Moses had ventured to ask God that the sentence passed upon him that he should not set foot in the Promised Land should be revoked. He was emphatically told that he might *see* the land, but that he should *not enter* it (iii, 23-29).

Now we come to the appeal for loyalty. This is based upon the sole deity of Jehovah, than whom there is no other God, whether in heaven or upon the earth. He will brook no rivals, the more so since other gods are but "the work of men's hands, wood and stone, which neither see, nor hear, nor eat, nor smell." To obey Him is therefore wisdom and understanding. He had spoken out of the fire of the sacred mountain to the people whom He had chosen, and embodied His commandments in His own handwriting upon two tablets of stone. They had beheld no form of Him, and they were not to represent Him in the likeness of any object in heaven or upon earth. They were to make His laws known to their children.

Significant Changes in the Code

THE second address begins with a repetition of the Decalogue (v), which is more familiar to most readers in the form that it has in Exodus xx. The differences between the two versions are few, but they are highly significant. The humanitarianism of Deuteronomy will become apparent as we proceed, and it meets us here in the fourth commandment. The reason why the Israelites are to keep the Sabbath is that slaves may rest as well as their masters. Moreover, the people are to remember that they were once slaves in Egypt. In the tenth commandment the wife heads the list of things which man must not covet, and is placed in a class by herself. In Exodus she is only one of a wider catalogue of possessions.

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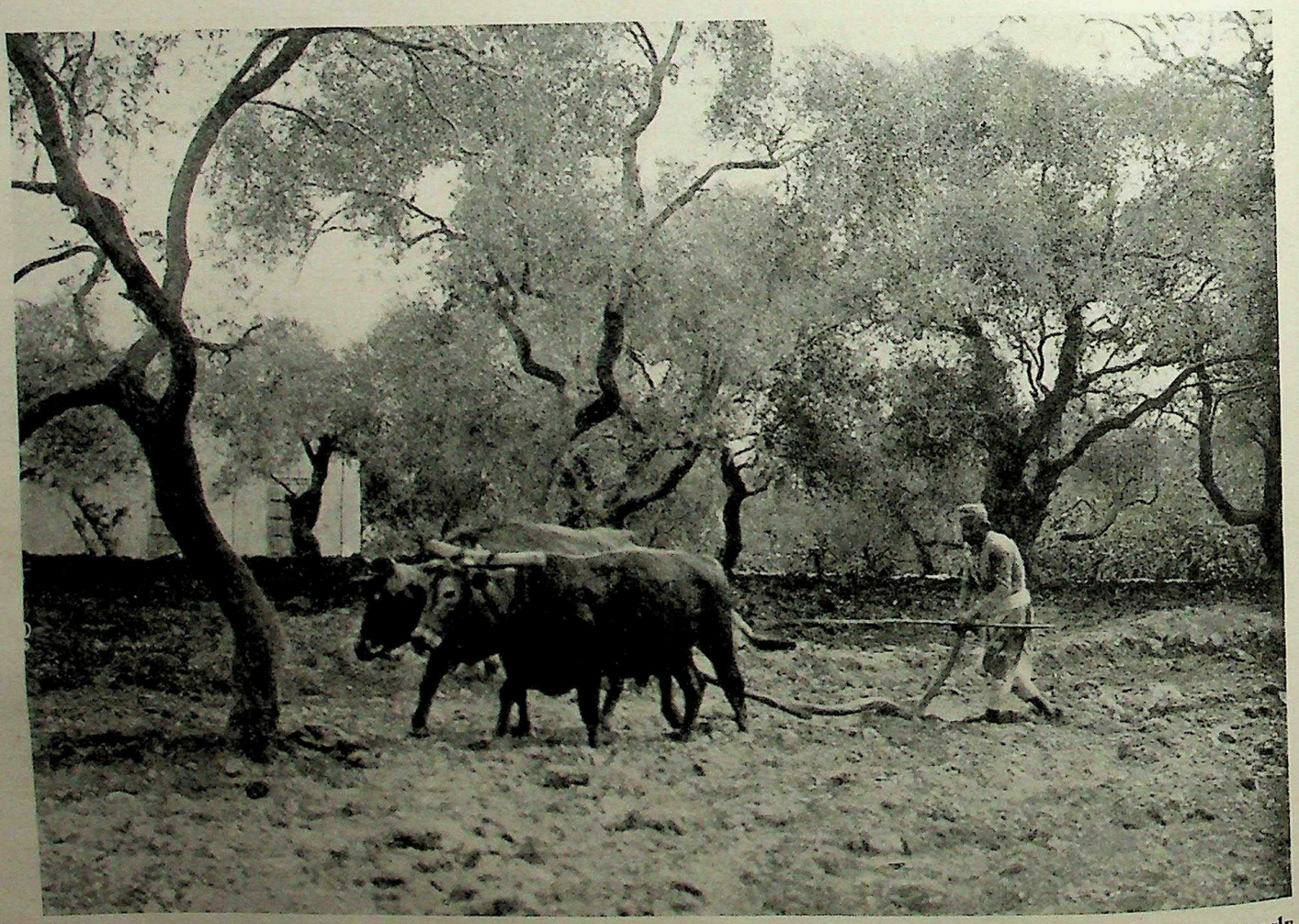
A LAND OF VINES AND FIG TREES. This peasant girl is gathering summer figs on a farm in the uplands of Ephraim. The trees yield three crops; large juicy figs in spring, of finer flavour in summer and poorer quality in autumn. It is the second crop that is saved for winter consumption. Seen on the slopes in the distance are cornfields and walled vineyards—truly a fruitful land "of valleys and hills; a land of wheat, and barley, and vines, and fig trees" (Deuteronomy viii, 7, 8).



"THOU SHALT HAVE OLIVE TREES." Palestine is mainly cultivated by peasant farmers, "the people of the land." Its rich earth requires little dressing; the hardest labour is with the plough, usually drawn by small red oxen, after the winter rains have softened the ground. The olive flourishes nearly everywhere in silvery-foliaged groves, or occasionally rearing its stunted, twisted growth in the fields. The soil round the trees must be carefully tilled and, on the hill slopes, irrigated.

Upper photo, American Colony in Jerusalem; lower, Bible Lands Studio

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The remainder of the second address is a development of the first commandment of the Decalogue, and an exposition of the main principles by which Israel is to be governed. The motive underlying all service of Jehovah is to be love of Him. "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord; and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might" (vi, 4-5). These words were quoted by Christ as summing up man's whole duty to God, and to Jews they have been equally precious. They are, together with the commandments that follow, to be written upon the heart; they are to be diligently taught in the family circle, and are to be the subject of constant meditation and converse, both in private and in public (vi, 6-9).

When the people settle down to the comforts of agricultural and city life—comforts which will be God's gift to them, and not of their own acquiring or devising—they are to beware lest they forget their Benefactor (vi, 10-15). And when, in time to come, their children shall ask them the meaning of what they do, they are to rehearse the deliverance that Jehovah has wrought for them, and the bounden allegiance which is therefore His due.

NO sort of treaty is to be made with the Canaanitish peoples, nor compromise with their worship, since that will inevitably result in the contamination of the pure worship of Jehovah. All idols, therefore, together with their shrines and appurtenances, are without pity to be destroyed. Faithfulness in this regard will result in moral and religious purity, and bring with it material and spiritual blessing (vii). The privations of the wilderness had been for their chastening, as a father chastens his son, that they might learn that man does not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God. Even the power to get wealth is the divine gift (viii).

The conquest of Canaan will not be accomplished by their own force of arms, for they are an insignificant people, but by the might of Jehovah. Nor will it be because they are virtuous, but because the inhabitants of the land are wicked. So far from their having any virtue to commend them, they are, indeed, an obstinate people, who have provoked God continually; and had it not been for the intercession of their leader they would long before now have been blotted out (ix). But God has always been ready to pardon, and when Moses, in dismay at their sin, had cast down and broken the first tablets inscribed with the commandments, He had graciously provided others in their stead (x, 1-11). All that Jehovah requires of them is that they should reverence and love Him with all their heart and soul (x, 12). The exhortation to loyalty is reiterated, with varied illustrations and promises, to the end of Chapter xi.

DEUTERONOMY: A SYNOPSIS

First Address of Moses

	Chapters
Historical Survey	i, 6—iii
Appeal for Loyalty	iv

Second Address of Moses

The Covenant with Israel	v, 1-21
Homily on the First Commandment	vi—ix, 6
Survey of Legislation on Mount Horeb	ix, 7—x, 11
Resumption of Homily	x, 12—xi

The Laws

Sacrifice	xii
Seduction to Idolatry	xiii
Permitted and Prohibited Foods ...	xiv, 3-21
Tithes	xiv, 22-29
Year of Release	xv, 1-11
Release of Slaves	xv, 12-18
Firstlings of Cattle and Sheep ...	xv, 19-23
Annual Pilgrimage Festivals ...	xvi, 1-17
Concerning the Nation's Officials ...	xvi, 18—xviii, 22
Right of Asylum	xix
Conduct of War	xx; xxi, 10-14; xxiii, 9-14
Marriage and Family Life	xxi; xxii; xxiv, 1-4; xxv, 5-10
Various Humanitarian Regulations ...	xxi; xxii; xxiv; xxv
Blessings and Curses on the People ..	xxvii
Results of Observance and of Neglect	xxviii

Last Days of Moses

Third Address	xxix-xxx
Last Words and Acts	xxxi-xxxiii
Death and Burial of Moses	xxxiv

IN the third section of the book (xii-xxvi) laws which relate to similar subjects are usually, though not invariably, placed together. For the convenience of the reader the principle of grouping according to subject will, where it makes for clarity, be more strictly followed than in the book as it stands, and chapter and verse references will be given in order to prevent confusion.

Sacrifice. The laws in Chapter xii relate to the place of sacrifice. Sacrifice may not be offered anywhere, because many altars would result, in practice, in the worship of many gods. (This is abundantly clear from the words of the prophets.) The only way to preserve the worship of the *one* God was to confine sacrifice to *one* altar. All heathen altars are therefore to be destroyed, and it shall only be lawful to sacrifice at "the place which the Lord your God shall choose out of all your tribes." The place intended is, of course, the Jerusalem temple. Further, in early times all slaughter of domestic animals was a sacrificial act. But now permission is given for the non-sacrificial slaughter of domestic animals. The one stipulation is that the blood—in which the life of the beast was supposed to reside—should first be drained from the flesh.

Seduction to Idolatry (xiii, compare xvii, 2-7). No credence is to be given to a prophet or wonder-worker who incites to idolatry, even though his proffered sign or wonder comes to pass. Such an one shall be put

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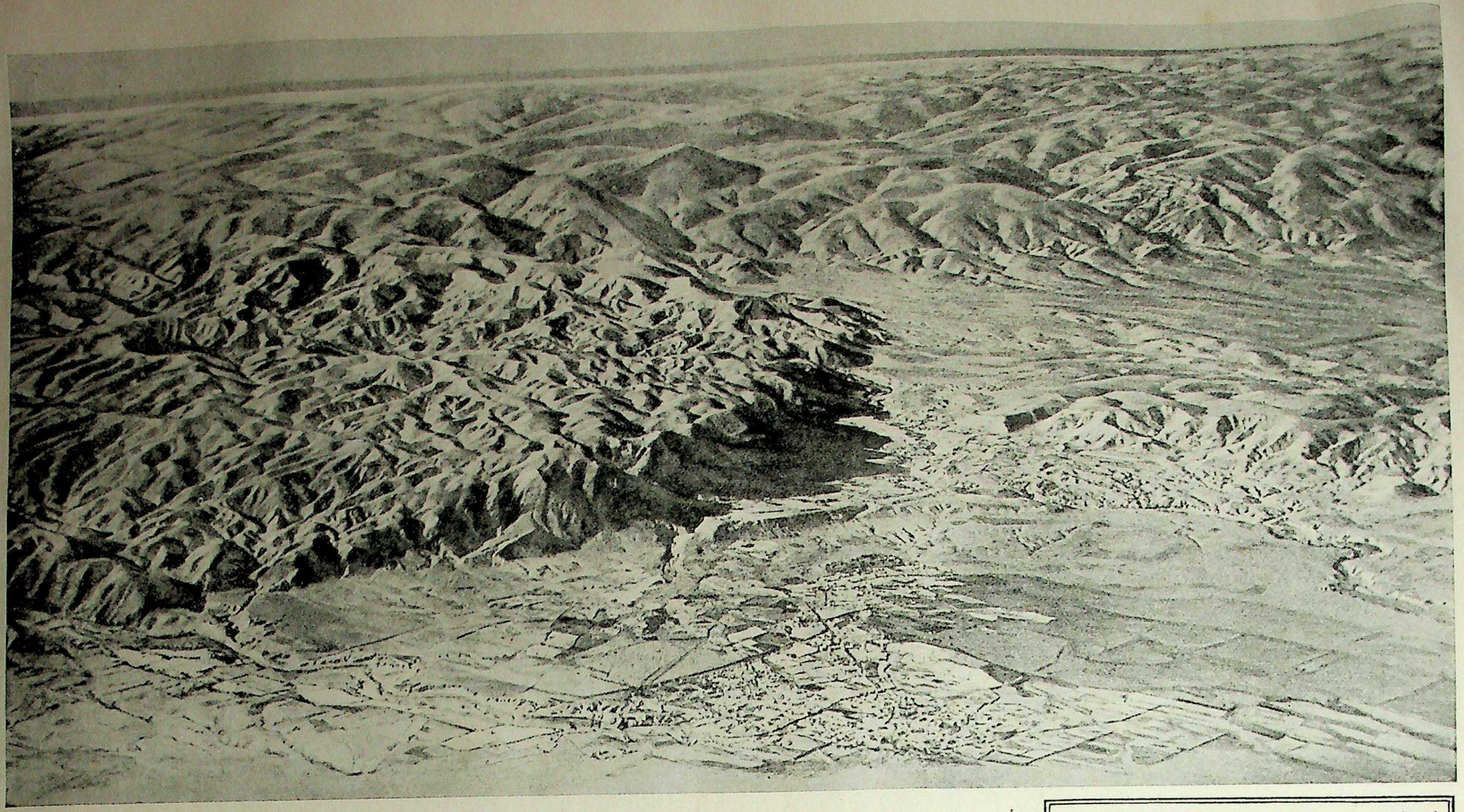

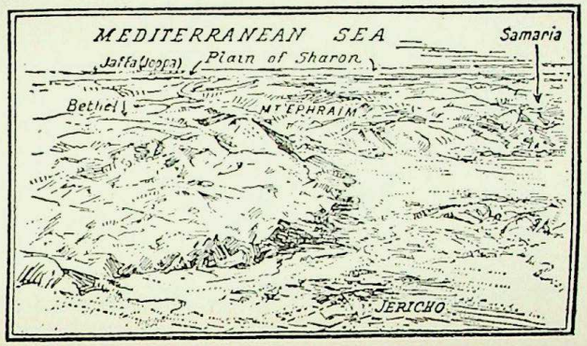

THE HOLY LAND FROM THE AIR. From an aeroplane flying East this infra-red panorama of Palestine was taken at a great height north of the Dead Sea. In the foreground of the photograph are Jericho and the edge of the Jordan Valley (*see* aerial view in page 72). From here the country allotted by Joshua to the tribe of Benjamin (Joshua xviii, 11-28) extends to the region of the Mount Ephraim group and Bethel. Samaria is on the right, near which are Nablus (Sichem), Mount Gerizim, and Mount Ebal. The view stretches to the Mediterranean across the plain of Sharon with Jaffa (Joppa) on the left. The diagram indicates approximate positions of some of the features in the panorama.

Photo, "The Times"

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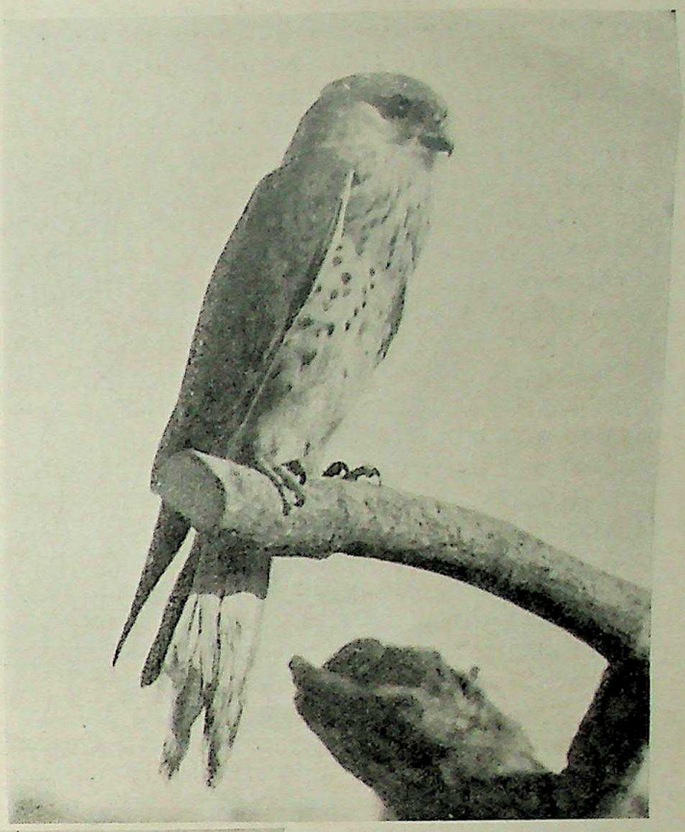
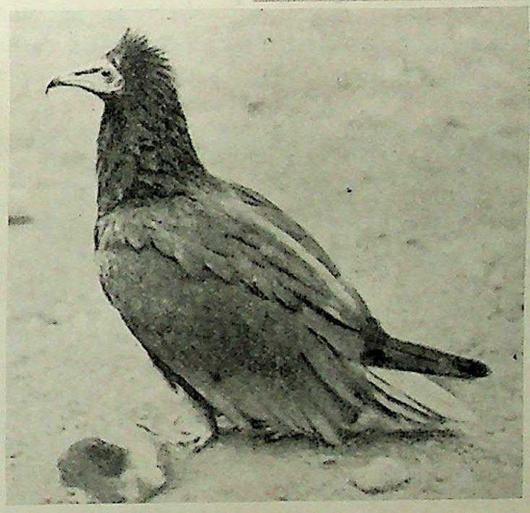
to death. The same shall apply even to brother, son, daughter, wife, or friend who entices to idolatry. There must be no concealment of the offence. The offender must be stoned—a method of death in which the whole community shares the responsibility—and he whose duty it is to report the offence shall cast the first stone. If report is made concerning any city that there are in it worthless people who are inciting their neighbours to idolatry, inquiry is to be made. If the report proves to be true, the city and all that is in it is to be destroyed, and it shall be left a mound for ever.

Permitted and Prohibited Foods (xiv, 3-21). This section is preceded by a short paragraph (xiv, 1-2) forbidding mourners to disfigure themselves. The exact significance of such practices is uncertain; but it is clear that they had heathen associations, and were therefore not to be engaged in by those who were the people of Jehovah's own possession.

Only such quadrupeds may be eaten as have cloven hoofs and chew the cud. These included the ordinary domestic animals of the Hebrews, together with some game animals. The law was so framed as to exclude the camel, the hare, the rabbit, and the pig. The ultimate reason why these were forbidden is almost certainly that they were "sacred" animals in heathen cults, and therefore "unclean" to the Hebrews. Of fishes, those may be eaten which have fins and scales. Of birds, the general principle is that carrion birds and birds of prey are forbidden as food. All others are "clean." No animal may be eaten that has "died of itself," though it may be given to aliens or sold to foreigners.





"FOWLS OF THE AIR." In the Old Testament the term "fowls of the air" is applied to birds of prey and carrion-feeders, listed as unfit for human food in Deuteronomy xiv, 12-18. Included are "the hawk after his kind, the little owl . . . and the vulture." Of the last, the lower photograph on the right shows one of the most repulsive species—the Egyptian vulture, or Pharaoh's hen. Above it is seen a sparrow-hawk, common among the migratory birds of Palestine. The little owl is ubiquitous and friendly, haunting wells and habitations at sunset.

Upper photo, American Colony in Jerusalem; lower photos, J. T. Roberts and W. S. Berridge

Tithes (xiv, 22-29). A tenth of all produce is to be eaten by the offerer and his family at the central sanctuary, in a sacred feast to which the levitical-priest shall be invited. Those who reside at a distance from the sanctuary may take money instead of produce, and buy with the money whatever they may fancy on arrival. Every third year the tithe is to be distributed locally to the priest, the alien, the orphan, and the widow. This distribution of the triennial tithe is to be accompanied by thanksgiving (*see* xxvi, 12-15). By these means philanthropy was encouraged, and the work of husbandry was kept in association with religion.

The Year of Release (xv, 1-11). Every seventh year it shall be unlawful for a creditor to distrain for debt. It has sometimes been supposed that this means that all debts were to be permanently cancelled in the seventh year, but this is probably going beyond the intention of the passage. The law applies only to debts outstanding from a "brother," that is a fellow Israelite, and not to those owing by foreigners. It would be only natural if the wealthy were unwilling to lend as the "year of release" drew near.

For this reason they are exhorted not to let the approach of the year interfere with their charitable duty toward the poor. They are to lend to those in need, whatever the year may be. In xxiii, 19-20, there is a law which may well be mentioned here. It enacts that no "usury" shall be charged on loans to a fellow Israelite, though it may be charged to a foreigner. "Usury" here does not mean exorbitant

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interest, but simply interest. This may seem an impossible law to us; but it should be remembered that in ancient societies loans were not sought for the purpose of developing commercial enterprises, but to ward off destitution. Moreover, if interest was charged at all, it was likely to be exorbitant, as it still is in the East. To charge interest on a loan would therefore be to make a profit out of a neighbour's distress.

Release of Slaves (xv, 12-18). It might be that a man became so reduced in circumstances that the only way to compound for his debts was to sell himself and his wife into slavery (cf. II Kings iv, 1). Or he might sell his daughter. Hebrews, whether men or women, who became slaves in this way, might unconditionally claim their freedom at the end of six years. If they wished to be free, it was their master's ungrudging duty to give them a present sufficient to enable them to make a fresh start in life. If they elected to remain in slavery—and if they had beenkindly treated they might prefer to continue as they were rather than struggle for existence as daily wage-earners (cf. xxiv, 14-15)—they were to become, by a symbolic ceremony, the life-long property of their master. (Note that the corresponding law in Exodus xxi, 2-6 does not apply to female slaves—another illustration of the humanitarianism that is a characteristic of Deuteronomy.)

A law in Chapter xxiii, 15-16 enacts that a fugitive slave from a foreign land is not to be returned to his master. This is in marked contrast to a harsh provision in the Code of Hammurabi.

Firstlings (xv, 19-23). The firstborn of cattle and sheep are not to be put to secular uses, but dedicated as a sacrifice at the central sanctuary. If they have any blemish they may still be eaten, but not as part of a sacrificial meal. The law that sacrifices must be without blemish is confirmed in xvii, 1.

Pilgrimage Festivals (xvi, 1-17). The three annual pilgrimage festivals are to be kept at the central sanctuary. They are (a) The Passover, with which, in the period after the settlement in Palestine, the festival of Unleavened Bread came to be associated; (b) The Feast of Weeks, later known as Pentecost; and (c) The Feast of "Booths" (so Revised Version margin of verse 13, rightly) or Ingathering.

Passover and Unleavened Bread were once distinct, but became fused into one because they were coincident in time, the former being originally a spring-time lambing festival, the latter coming at the beginning of the barley harvest. Here in Deuteronomy the Passover is a feast commemorating the Exodus. It is to be eaten with unleavened bread. None of the flesh must be left over until the morning, and no leavened bread must be eaten during the week following. The Feast of Weeks marked the conclusion of the wheat harvest, seven weeks later. It was also called the Feast of Harvest (Ex. xxiii, 16) and the Day of First-fruits (Numb. xxviii, 26). The Feast of Booths was

"A SHADOW FROM THE HEAT." In the oases of Arabia and the valleys where the Israelites wandered for forty years, the desert acacias grow sometimes to a height of fifteen to twenty feet. They are of the species which yielded the shittim wood of the Scriptures, used for the structure of the tabernacle. The tall, wide spread of their angular, feathery-foliaged branches affords pleasant shade for a camping pitch. The goats belonging to this Beduin family have gathered of their own accord from their scanty pastures as the shadows lengthen towards the evening milking time. Goats' milk is the staple fare.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

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YOKE-FELLOWS PROHIBITED BY THE CODE. Mosaic law enjoined "Thou shalt not plow with an ox and an ass together" (Deuteronomy xxii, 10), but the modern tiller of the soil in Palestine finds such a team satisfactory, when, as seen in the photograph, the animals are not too unequal in size. A slow, heavy ox would act as a drag on its more spirited companion, thus giving the latter an unfair proportion of work. Ploughing in the hilly country is superficial, as there is little depth of soil on the stony ground; the wooden plough in use is of the lightest type and merely scratches the friable earth.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

to be observed at the close of the agricultural year, and had the character of a final "harvest-home." The "booths" were made of the leafy fronds of trees (cf. Jonah iv, 5), and were the only shelters the people had during the festival. The festivals were to be marked by joyousness and liberality, Levites and resident aliens, widows and orphans, together with the household slaves, being invited to the family board. In xxvi, 1-11 there is an ordinance directing how the first-fruits are to be offered at the sanctuary, and emphasizing the memorial character and joyousness of the occasion.

Judges (xvi, 18-20). **The Supreme Tribunal** (xvii, 8-13). **The Law of Witness** (xix, 15-21). Judges are to be appointed in all cities. They are to be impartial, and not to take bribes. Any case that is too hard for the local justices shall be referred to the supreme court at the central sanctuary, and its decision shall be final. Sentence may only be passed at the mouth of at least two witnesses, and anyone who bears false witness shall receive the same penalty that his victim would have received.

Concerning the King (xvii, 14-20). Any king who may be chosen shall be a native Israelite. His subjects are his "brethren," and he must not be a despot over them. He shall not multiply horses, nor wives, nor be greedy of gold. The words of this law-book shall be his constant study.

Concerning the Priests (xviii, 1-8). The tribe of Levi is to have no landed inheritance in Israel. It shall be theirs to exercise the functions of priests. For this they shall receive specified dues, and it shall be the right of any Levite to share in the ministrations and emoluments of the central sanctuary.

Concerning Prophets (xviii, 9-22). Child-sacrifice and divination and magic of every kind are forbidden to the Hebrews. Jehovah will raise up for His people from among themselves another prophet like unto Moses. Any prophet who utters false oracles shall die, and the proof that he has spoken falsely shall be manifested by the non-fulfilment of what he has prophesied.

Right of Asylum (xix, 1-13). **Expiation for Untraced Murder** (xxi, 1-9). In very early times no distinction was made between murder and unintentional homicide. It was sufficient that a life had been taken for the law of retaliation to operate. A kinsman of the dead man would, if he could, take the life of the manslayer. Now, in order that a man who has accidentally killed his fellow may not be slain without a chance of clearing himself, cities are to be appointed to which he may flee, and where he may receive a fair trial. If he can establish his innocence he is to be set free. If murder is proved against him, he is to be delivered over to suffer death at the hands of his victim's relatives.

In Chapter xxi, 1-9 there is an ordinance which provides for the expiation of an untraced murder. The elders of the nearest city are solemnly to declare the innocence of their community by a symbolic act of purification, washing their hands over the body of a slain heifer.

Conduct of War (xx, xxi, 10-14; xxiii, 9-14). Anyone who has built a house and not yet dedicated it, or planted a vineyard and not yet used the fruit of it, or betrothed a wife and not yet married her, shall be exempted from military service. Anyone who is fearful may also return home, lest he spread panic among his fellows. The spirit in which battle is to be approached is to be one of trustful confidence in Jehovah. Before any city is attacked, an offer of peace on surrender is to be made to it. Canaanitish

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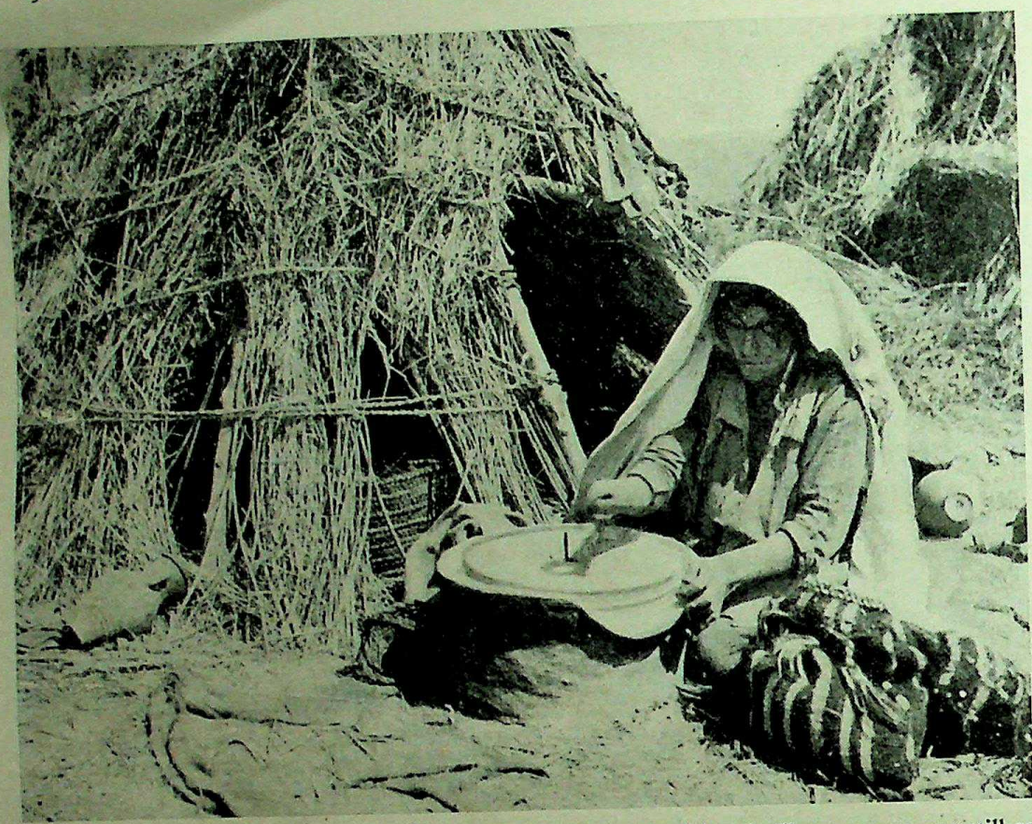

GRINDING THE CORN. For preparation of the daily bread handmills or querns are still as indispensable in humble eastern households as they were when the humane law forbade the creditor to take "the nether or the upper millstone . . . for he taketh a man's life to pledge" (Deuteronomy xxiv, 6). Here we see an Arab woman outside her reed hovel in southern Sharon grinding meal in this primitive fashion. Through a hole in the upper stone the corn is introduced by handfuls and comes out at the edge when ground by rotation.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

cities, if they refuse to submit, are to be put to the ban, that is to say, no living being or creature is to be left alive in them.

The motive underlying this savage enactment is fear of religious contamination (*see* vii and xiii), and it should be said, by way of apology, that there are many indications (*e.g.* in Judges i) that it was not strictly carried out. Foreign cities are to be dealt with less severely, only their male warriors being killed. Fruit trees are not to be destroyed, "for is the tree of the field man, that it should be besieged of thee?" A female captive may become the wife of her captor. If later he finds that he has no delight in her, he shall let her go whither she will, and shall have no power to sell her as he might an ordinary slave. Strict regulations are given for the cleanliness of the camp.

Marriage and Family Life. If a man has two wives, and loves one of them more than the other, and if his eldest son be the child of the unloved wife, he shall have no power to disinherit him in favour of the son of the wife whom he loves. The inheritance of the firstborn shall be double that of the other sons, no matter who his mother may be (xxi, 15-17). A stubborn and rebellious son shall be arraigned before the city elders, and stoned (xxi, 18-21). Adultery is to be punished by the death of both offenders (xxii, 22). This law shall apply if the woman is betrothed to another, but not yet married (xxii, 23-24); though if the offence takes place away from a city, it is to be presumed that the man has taken advantage of her, and he alone shall die (xxii, 25-27). A man who forces an unbetrothed maiden must pay compensation to her father, and marry her, and he shall forfeit the right to divorce her (xxii, 28-29). Neither shall a man have power ever to divorce a wife against whom he has brought a false charge of pre-marital unchastity (xxii, 13-21).

Ordinarily a man may divorce his wife at will, though if he does so he shall never have the right to remarry her (xxiv, 1-4). This last clause would act as a check upon the merely frivolous exercise of the husband's right, and would make him hesitate before sending his wife off in a fit of temper. If a man dies childless, one of his brothers shall marry his widow, and the first-born of such a union shall count as the child of the deceased man, and succeed to his inheritance. This was incumbent upon the brother-in-law as a duty, the purpose behind such a law being to prevent any male line from becoming extinct (xxv, 5-10).

Humanitarian Regulations. Great concern is shown throughout the book for the alien, the fatherless, and the widow. A widow's garment must not be taken as a pledge (xxiv, 17). Neither must any family millstone be so taken, or how should the family prepare its food? (xxiv, 6). No man shall enter into his neighbour's house and take a pledge, but shall wait decently outside until it be brought to him. If the pledge be the raiment of a poor man, it must be restored to him before nightfall, since he will need it as a coverlet (xxiv, 10-13). A hired servant must be paid his wage on the same day that he earns it (xxiv, 14-15). Strayed animals and lost property must be restored to their owner with all possible dispatch (xxii, 1-4). If a man passes through his neighbour's field, he may pluck ears of corn with his hand, but he is not permitted to use a sickle (xxiii, 25). The husbandman who has forgetfully left a sheaf in the field may not go back to fetch it. Nor may he glean his olive trees and vines; he must leave what remains for the needy (xxiv, 19-22).

Consideration must be shown to dumb creatures: eggs or fledglings may be taken out of a nest, but not the mother bird (xxii, 6-7); and an ox must not be muzzled while he is threshing out the corn (xxv, 4). The flat roofs of houses must be provided with parapets (xxii, 8). Finally, there are regulations to mitigate the sufferings of malefactors: corporal punishment must not exceed forty stripes, lest the victim lose his self-respect (xxv, 1-3). It shall not be lawful, as it had been in earlier times, for capital punishment to be

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"WHEN THOU BEATEST THINE OLIVE TREE." This age-old method of gathering the olive harvest in November and December is still followed. With long canes the branches, which do not shed their grey-green leaves in winter, are lashed till the ripe fruit falls to the ground to be collected in baskets. Many olives remain on the tree. Formerly, in the interests of the fatherless, widows and strangers, towards whom Deuteronomic legislation shows special kindness, the boughs were not even to be gone over a second time (Deuteronomy xxiv, 20), thus providing the needy with a means for supply of oil.

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inflicted upon the children of a criminal (xxiv, 16); and no corpse shall be left overnight on the gallows (xxi, 22-23).

Blessings and Curses. This section (xxviii) is, properly speaking, the conclusion of the law-book, and would follow naturally upon Chapter xxvi. The blessings are enumerated in the first fourteen verses of the chapter. They may strike the modern reader as predominantly material rather than spiritual.

It should, however, be remembered that the exhortations are to the nation as a whole, not to individual Israelites; and we may well ask how a *community* is to be blessed, if not in the manner described? Moreover, to the Hebrew, material blessing was always thought of as evidence of the spiritual favour of God, as it were the outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace. The enumeration of the curses extends to more than fifty verses. This should not be taken to mean that the Hebrews magnified the terrors of God more than His mercies. That certainly is not true of the Old Testament as a whole. The explanation is that the writer had a presentiment that the laws would not be so strictly obeyed as they should be, and in the light of the sufferings of the Jews in the Exile this presentiment was entirely justified. The concluding verses of the chapter seem definitely to have the Exile in mind.

When the Land Has Been Conquered

IN Chapter xxvii, probably a later addition to the book, Moses is referred to in the third person. It directs that, after the conquest, a solemn ceremony shall be enacted on the adjacent mountains of Gerizim and Ebal, half the tribes standing on Gerizim to invoke a blessing upon the people if they obey the laws, and the other half standing on Ebal to invoke a curse if they disobey them.

The matter of the third address (xxix-xxx) is very much the same as that of the first two, though some new ideas are introduced in the second chapter. There is renewed insistence on the primary duty of loyalty to Jehovah, together with warnings of the dire consequences of disobedience. In Chapter xxx there is the same presentiment of the Exile that is found in Chapter xxviii, coupled now with a promise of restoration, provided that in the land of exile there is repentance. Even the penalties of disobedience shall not mean an end of Jehovah's gracious dealings with His people. The law is not too hard to obey, nor is it afar off. It is not in heaven, nor is it beyond the sea. "But the word is nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it." Life and good, death and evil, are set before the people. A final, emphatic word, bids them make choice of life.

The aged leader explains (xxxi-xxxiii) once more that he is not to pass over Jordan, and proceeds to hand over his commission to Joshua. Together they present themselves before Jehovah in the tent of meeting, and Moses gives to his successor a charge, bidding him "Be strong and of a good courage" (xxxi, 1-8, 14-15, 23). Moses delivers the law to the Levitical priests, with instructions to read it, in the hearing of all Israel, every seventh year, on the occasion of the feast of booths (xxxi, 9-13). The book of the law was to be deposited by the side of the ark of the covenant, that it might be for a witness against the people. "For," says Moses ominously, "I know that after my death ye will utterly corrupt yourselves, and turn aside from the way which I have commanded you; and evil shall befall you in the latter days" (xxxi, 24-29).

Valedictory of the Great Leader

HEREUPON follow the Song (xxxii) and Blessing (xxxiii) of Moses. No prose summary can do justice to these magnificent poems: they must be read for themselves. The theme of the Song is the vindication of the justice and faithfulness of Jehovah, as manifested in His dealings with an ungrateful people. He had brought them through the wilderness, and settled them in a hospitable land (xxxii, 7-14). They had been spoiled by prosperity, and had lapsed into idolatry (15-18). For this they were threatened with extinction (19-26), but grace and pity would preserve them through all.

In the blessing the several tribes are passed in review—all except Simeon—and in a series of short eulogies their distinctive features of character, or occupation, or geographical situation, are emphasized. Thus Reuben is threatened with extinction, which the poet prays may not be complete. Levi is destined to the priesthood, Ephraim and Manasseh to military strength and leadership. In the opening (1-5) and closing (26-29) verses the tribes are considered as a national unity. No God is like Jeshurun's (*i.e.* Israel's) God, who rides upon the heaven for the help of His people. The eternal God is their refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms. Happy is Israel, a people unique, saved by Jehovah.

Death and Burial of Moses

THE concluding chapter (xxxiv) describes how Moses went up from the plains of Moab to Mount Pisgah, opposite Jericho. There Jehovah showed him all the land, from north to south, and westward to the Mediterranean, which was in store for the people in fulfilment of the solemn promise made to their forefathers the patriarchs. There did Moses die, and his grave lies in a valley in the land of Moab; but no man knows where it is.

He had far outlived the normal span of life; but to the end it was as if he were still in his prime: "his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated." Thirty days of mourning were observed for him, and the leadership was assumed by Joshua, who was "full of the spirit of wisdom," by reason of the laying of Moses' hands upon him. Never since has there arisen in Israel a prophet like unto Moses, "whom Jehovah knew face to face" (xxxiv, 10).

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"HE SHALL WRITE HIM A COPY OF THE LAW"

Among the mandatory precepts incumbent on every Israelite was the writing of a copy of the Pentateuch on a scroll, "and he shall read therein all the days of his life" (Deuteronomy xvii, 18, 19). If unable to write he might employ a scribe. This dignified member of the Jewish community in Jerusalem is studying such a "scroll of the Law." Written on parchment, it is fastened at either end to rollers. He is arrayed for prayer and wears on his forehead a phylactery, or small leather box in which texts are enclosed, reminding the wearer to fulfil the law with head as well as heart.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

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Rubens, 1577-1640

"AND MOSES MADE A SERPENT OF BRASS"

With a sense of tragic beauty, Peter Paul Rubens, grandest representative of Flemish art, pictured the healing of the Israelites afflicted by the plague of fiery serpents (Numbers xxi, 4-9). Exquisitely expressive are the supplicatory attitudes of the hands.

The uplifting of the brazen serpent by Moses in the Wilderness was regarded by Our Lord as symbolic of the crucifixion (John iii, 14, 15): "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life."

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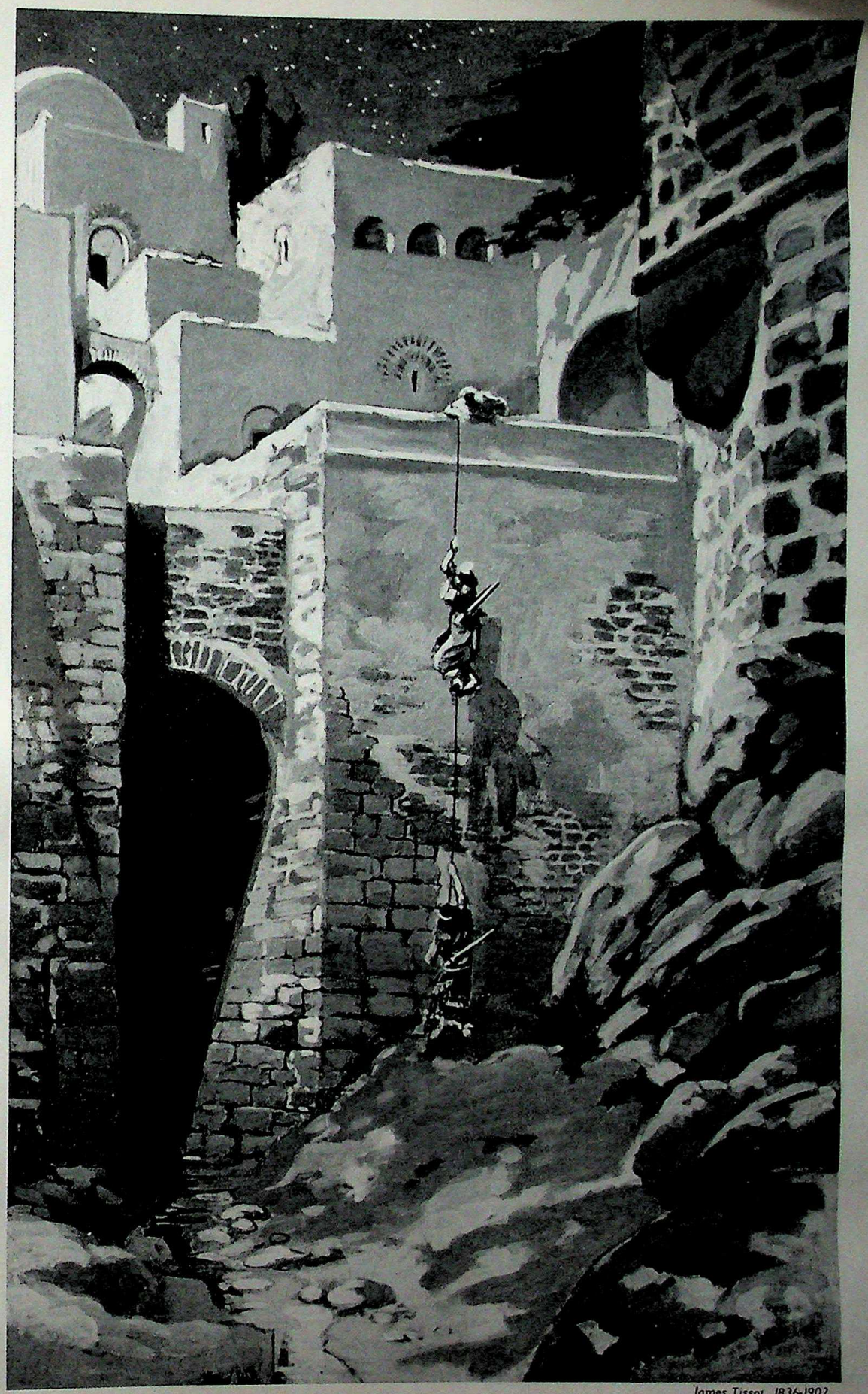

James Tissot, 1836-1902

"SHE LET THEM DOWN BY A CORD"

Dramatically James Tissot has illustrated one of the most dramatic stories of escape in the Bible—the flight of Joshua's two spies from Jericho. Rahab, having hidden them on her roof from the king's men, let them down, when the way was clear, by a line of scarlet thread "for her house was upon the town wall, and she dwelt upon the wall" (Joshua ii, 15). Every city in Canaan at the time of its conquest by the Israelites was fortified by walls of great thickness, and houses built upon these, or upon their surmounting parapets, were not unusual.

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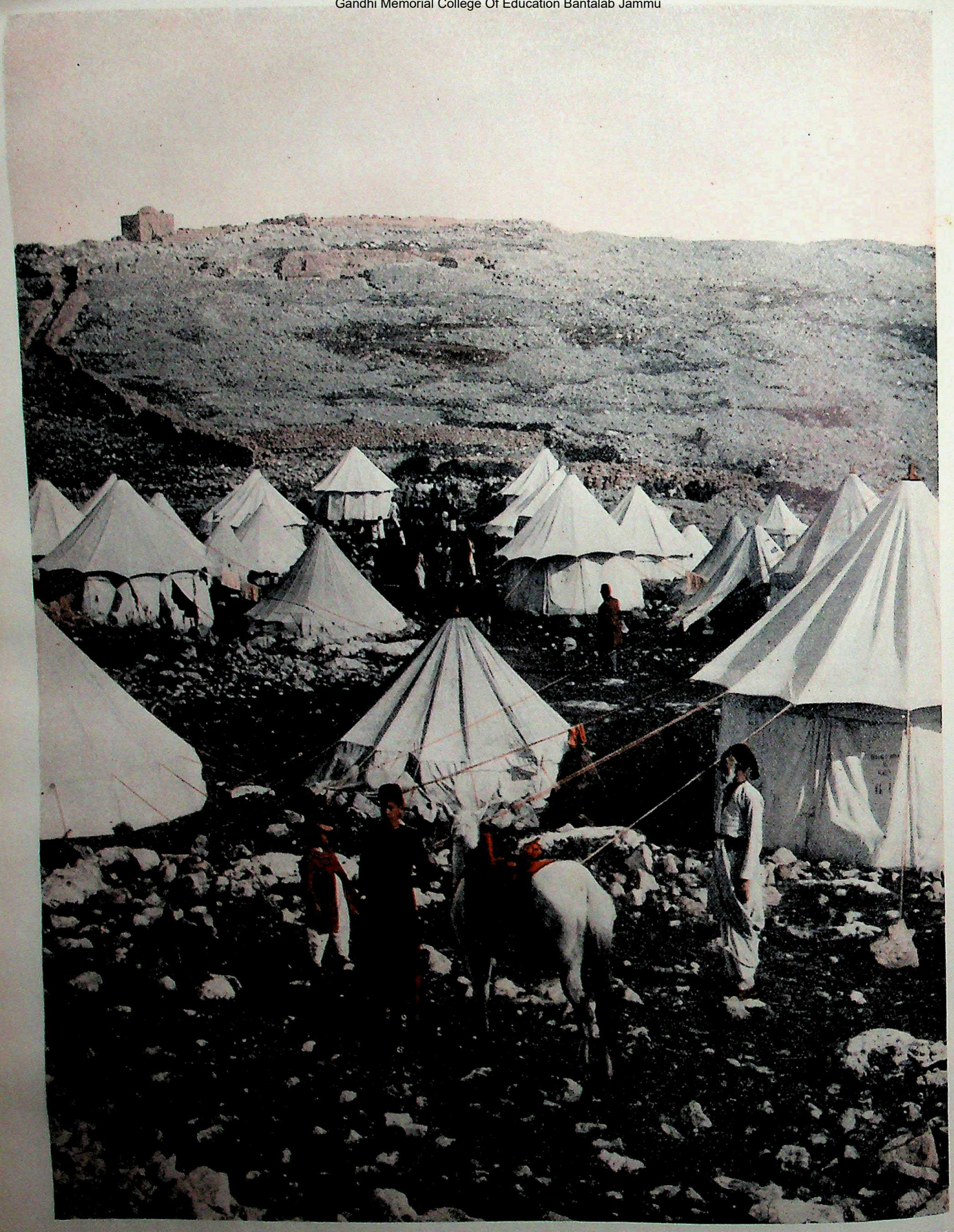

SAMARITANS ENCAMPED FOR THE PASSOVER ON MOUNT GERIZIM

Claiming to be the only true representatives of the Children of Israel, the Samaritans celebrate all the Mosaic festivals. Members of this ancient sect, ruled by a High Priest, go from their quarter on the outskirts of Nablus to encamp on the sacred Mount Gerizim three times a year—during the feasts of the Passover, of Weeks, and of Tabernacles. They pitch their tents on the slope, as viewed above, about ten minutes' climb from the summit. The Passover pilgrimage is in accordance with the words of Moses (Deuteronomy xvi, 5): "Thou mayest not sacrifice the passover within any of thy gates." Strangers witness the ceremony but may not partake of the feast.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

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"OUR FATHERS WORSHIPPED IN THIS MOUNTAIN"

On the eve of the Passover, preparations for the feast being completed, the Samaritans assemble before the rock, on the summit of Mount Gerizim, which marks the traditional site of the Holy of Holies of the Samaritan temple destroyed about 120 B.C. Here the High Priest stands, as seen in the photograph. The congregation prostrate themselves in prayer during the service while waiting for sunset. Just before this he faces them and reads the verses from Exodus xii, 1-6. At the words "the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening," the lambs are killed by official slayers, who are here seen in the background at the sacrificial pit.

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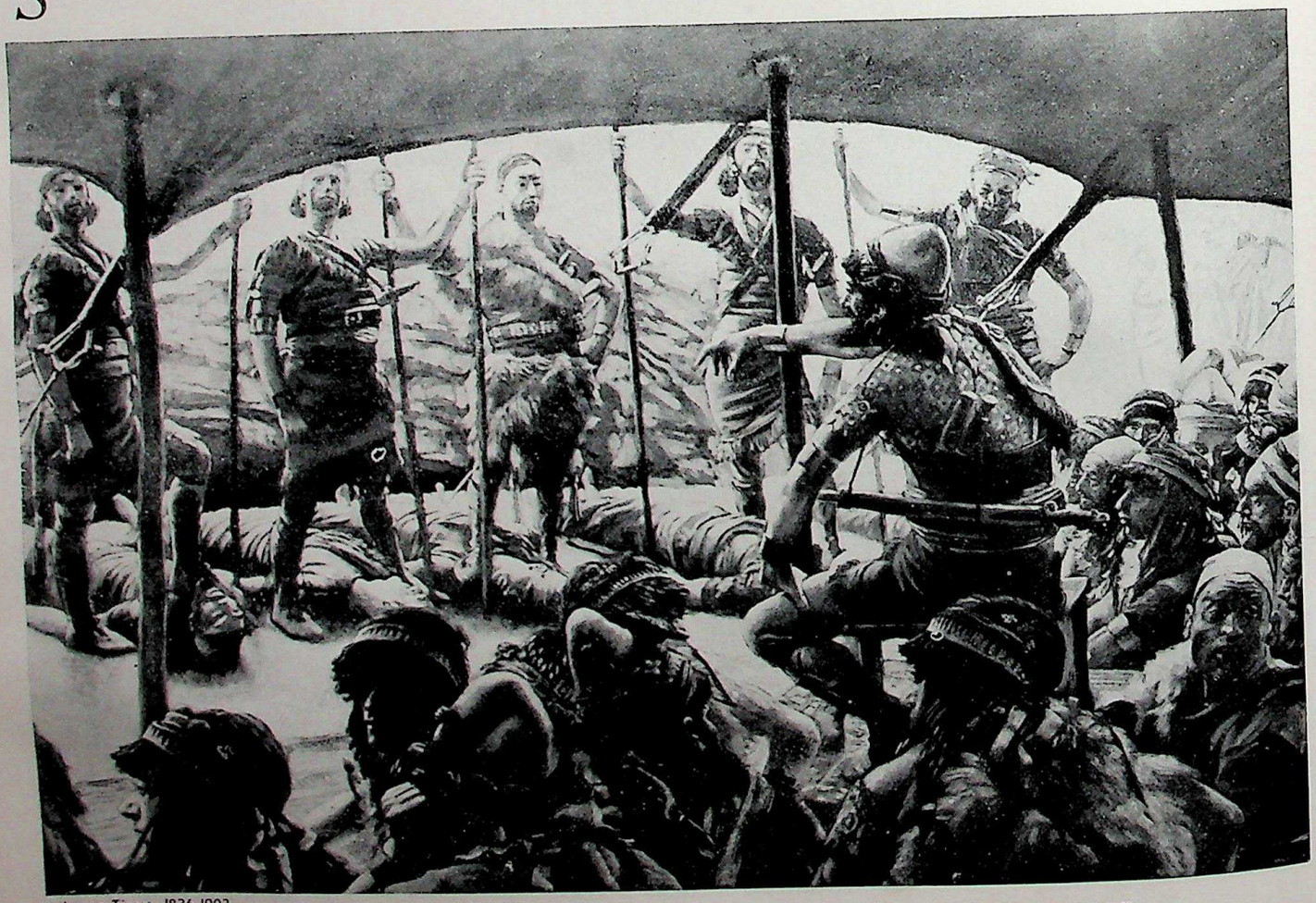
James Tissot, 1836-1902

"SO THE ARK OF THE LORD COMPASSED THE CITY"



James Tissot, 1836-1902

"PUT YOUR FEET UPON THE NECKS OF THESE KINGS"

In the epic of Joshua it is related that that great military commander, having led the Israelites across the Jordan, besieged Jericho. "And seven priests bearing seven trumpets . . . before the ark of the Lord went on continually, and blew with the trumpets: and the armed men went on before them; but the rereward came after the ark of the Lord" (Joshua vi, 11, 13). James Tissot has illustrated this procession encompassing the Walls of Jericho, and also a later incident of the epic: Joshua pronouncing the doom of the five kings of the Amorites. After the battle of Beth-horon they were captured and he commanded his captains to "put their feet upon the necks of them" (Joshua x, 24, 26) and afterwards "hanged them on five trees."

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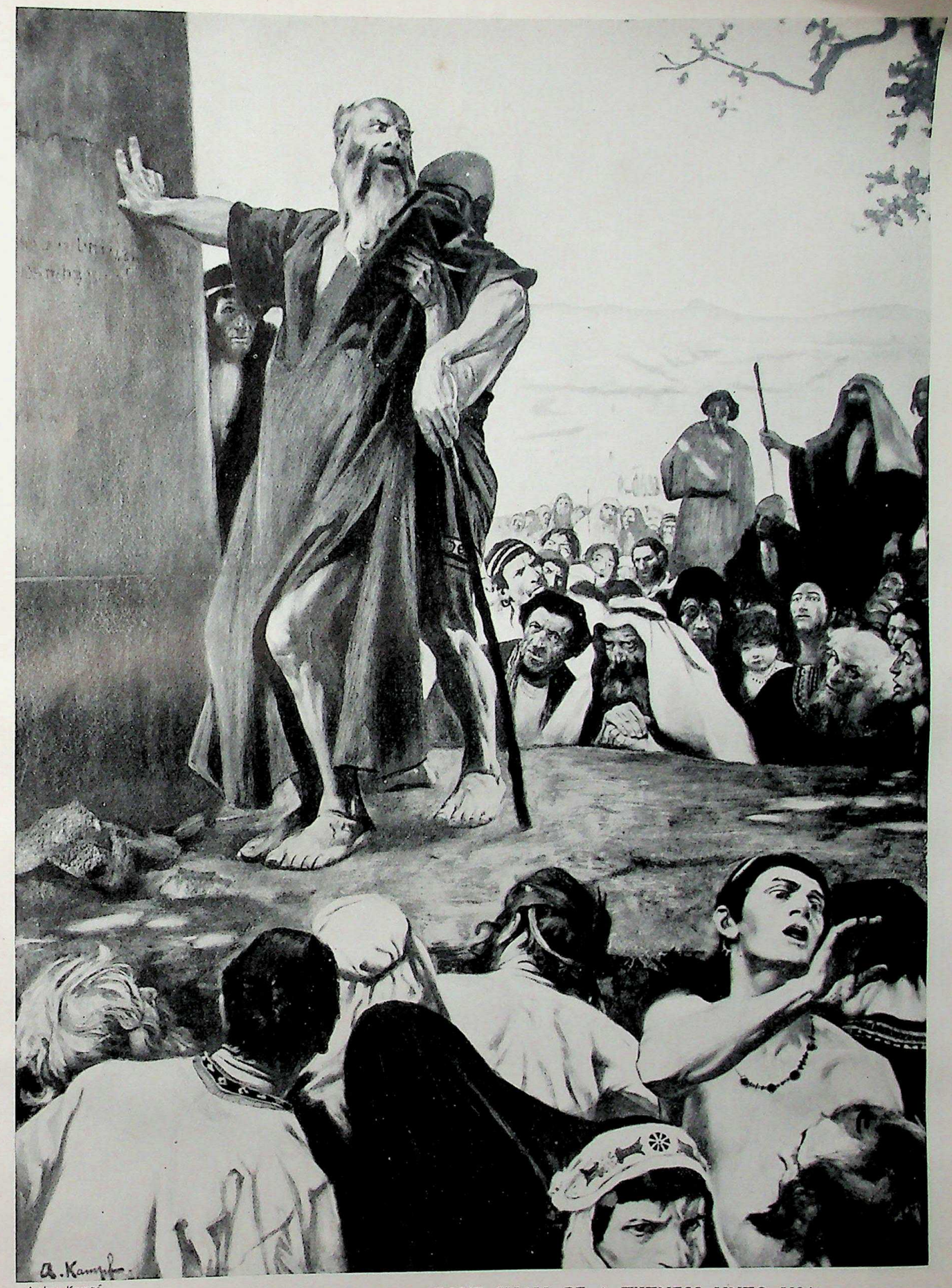

Arthur Kampf

"BEHOLD, THIS STONE SHALL BE A WITNESS UNTO US"

The last recorded actions of Joshua were the summoning of an assembly of the Israelites to Shechem, at that time the headquarters of the united tribes, and the making of a covenant with them. In gratitude for their victories and accomplished settlement in Canaan they decided to put away idols from their midst, to serve Jehovah only and obey His voice. "Joshua wrote these words in the book of the law of God, and took a great stone, and set it up there under an oak, that was by the sanctuary of the Lord. And Joshua said unto all the people, Behold, this stone shall be a witness unto us" (Joshua xxiv, 26, 27). A well-known illustrator of the Bible, Arthur Kampf, has thus effectively depicted the scene of the aged Joshua's valediction.

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"SEA OF THE PLAIN, EVEN THE SALT SEA"

Through a cleft in formations of the rock-salt which mainly composes Jebel Usdum's ten-mile ridge, we glimpse a barren salt-streaked shore and the Dead Sea, called in Deuteronomy iii, 17, Sea of the Plain and the Salt Sea. The three names are appropriate. The mineral character of the sea's basin, saline elements from the in-pouring Jordan and rapidity of evaporation make the waters bitter and uninhabitable for any kind of fish—dead remains of those brought down by the river may be seen floating on the surface. The ridge is at the west of the southern extremity, where there is also a plain, the beginning of the great valley of Jordan.

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Deuteronomy

II

The Story of the Book

How Moses Spoke Again in the Age of Prophecy

by REV. STEPHEN L. CAIGER, B.D.

Vicar of Wirksworth, Derbyshire; Author of "Bible and Spade," "Lives of the Prophets," etc.

ONLY in comparatively recent years has Deuteronomy come into its own as one of the most interesting and important books of the Old Testament. In days gone by, the ordinary Bible reader was apt to neglect it as apparently no more than a recapitulation of the tale already told in Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers, or a collection of ancient laws and regulations which had but little application to his own life.

Today all this is changed. Deuteronomy has become central for the study of the Old Testament, from whatever angle it is approached. Here the "Higher Critic" discovers his most valuable clues to the literary problem of the Pentateuch—as he calls the five Books of Moses; here the historian reaches a firm starting-point for his study of the development of Hebrew religion and law; and here the devotional reader may find inspiration, comfort, strength, and all the stern yet tender spirituality of the Old Testament at its best.

Indeed, it is strange that Christians should ever have neglected a book so dear to the heart of their Master and His disciples. Since Deuteronomy tells of the end of the famous forty years' wandering of the Israelites in the desert, it seems to have been very much in Our Lord's mind as He approached the end of His hard "forty days and forty nights" in the wilderness of the Temptation. Thus it was in the very words of Deuteronomy that He routed the Devil: "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Matthew iv, 4=Deuteronomy viii, 3), "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God" (Matthew iv, 7=Deuteronomy vi, 16), and "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve" (Matthew iv, 10), which is a summary in brief of the main theme of Deuteronomy.

New Testament References to Deuteronomy

OFT and again did He and His followers refer to this great book. Deuteronomy is quoted over thirty times in the New Testament, apart from more than eighty indirect allusions to it. And indeed it expresses as high and holy an idealism as any other volume of the Old Testament outside certain of the Psalms and Prophets. "Nowhere else in the Old Testament do we breathe such an atmosphere of generous devotion to God, and of large-hearted benevolence towards man; and nowhere else is it shown with the same fulness of detail how these principles may be made to permeate the entire life of the community" (Driver).

Modern research has helped us to realize more fully than ever before how great an influence this book had upon the religious outlook and the sacred writings of the Jews. Composed, as we now know, in the Golden Age of Hebrew prophecy, the Book of Deuteronomy succeeded in re-capturing all that was noblest and best in early Hebrew religion at an age that was in danger of forgetting. It breathed its benign spirit upon most of the sacred volumes which followed it, and re-shaped in some degree all that had been written earlier. And it ranks with Isaiah and the Psalms in preparing the way for the Greatest Prophet of all.

The name by which we know this wonderful book is adopted from that famous Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible, called the Septuagint, made about 250 years before Christ. "Deuteronomy" signifies "The Second Giving of the Law," that is to say the detailed review of his work and teaching with which Moses bade farewell to the Israelites before his death on the summit of Mount Pisgah.

The book thus forms a comprehensive summary of the whole Pentateuch, so far as it concerns the daily moral and spiritual life of the God-fearing Jew. No technical treatise, intended neither for priest nor for lawyer nor for scribe, it made an ideal manual of holy living which the ordinary layman might practise himself and teach his children to revere. And though, of course, the circumstances are entirely changed and much of the book can have no *direct* bearing on our lives today, yet the spirit animating it is that one and the self-same Spirit which still guides men to God, and between the lines of Deuteronomy has left a deposit of imperishable truth.

How the Book Was first Discovered

APART from its intrinsic value and importance, the Book of Deuteronomy makes a unique claim upon our interest. The story of how it came to be discovered first of all makes a tale of mystery and romance which must thrill the heart of everyone with imagination.

It was in the days of the young King Josiah of Jerusalem—621 B.C., to be exact—that this epoch-making discovery was made. For many years, as long, indeed, as old men could remember, the cause of true religion had been well-nigh lost in Judah. King Manasseh the Bad, who reigned 696-641, had done his worst to undo the work of the prophets by introducing all sorts of false gods into the country, by practising and encouraging the vilest kind of immorality, by re-introducing heathen and even human sacrifices, and by persecuting to the death such prophets as ventured to protest. For the worshippers of Jehovah it had been a veritable reign of terror.

Needless to say, the Temple in which Solomon had taken such pride and in which Hezekiah had brought his troubles to the Lord, had been allowed to fall into gross neglect and disrepair. The Temple taxes were still paid—the Temple officers saw to that—but somehow the money disappeared mysteriously from the treasury and no accounts were rendered by the priests. So the timbers of the roof were rotting, the stone walls crumbling, the whole building a danger and a disgrace.

Manasseh's son, Amon, carried on the same evil practices during his reign of two years. For a while the boy King Josiah—he was but eight years old when he succeeded his father, Amon—could only look helplessly on. But the fires weres mouldering, and eventually there flared up in his breast a fierce passion for reform.

Without seeing his way, perhaps, very clearly at first, he determined that at least the embezzlement of the

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THE SNOW-CLAD PEAKS OF HERMON. Across the sparkling surface of the Lake of Galilee, far to the north, can be seen the cloudlike whiteness of Hermon's three-peaked summit. Highest mountain in Syria, it is a spur of the Anti-Lebanon range, and rises 9,380 feet. From remote antiquity it was set apart as sacred; Hermon means sanctuary. According to Deuteronomy iii, 9 the Sidonians called it Sirion and the Amorites Shenir. Snow lies in fields upon it throughout the summer, but by the autumn has usually melted into patches. There is always a heavy dew which is locally known as Hermon's gift. The streams which break from its slopes are discharged where the Jordan has its sources at the mountain's foot.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

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THE LAND OF MOAB CROSSED BY THE INVADING ISRAELITES. A great undulating tableland cleft by deep valleys, Moab has cliffs rather than mountains. It is divided from Palestine by the depression of the Dead Sea rift, 4,300 feet below. The precipitous ridge at the edge of its tableland, appearing as a long range of hills, forms the eastern horizon of Judea which lies beyond the skyline of this photograph. To the east the tableland slopes gently to Arabia. The land of Moab, therefore, unlike Canaan, was easily invaded by tribes from the desert. The Israelites advancing from Edom (Seir) would find no natural barriers of rift or mountains between the wilderness and the "plains of Moab" rolling away north-west.

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Temple funds should cease and the restoration of God's House should be taken in hand. We can read about it all in the Second Book of Kings (Chapters xxii, xxiii). Hilkiah, the High Priest at that time, was ordered to render an account of the moneys collected from the people, and to set carpenters, builders, and masons on to the work of repair at once. On this task the workmen were only too eager to start. The subsequent course of the reformation shows that many of the people had long grown weary of ill-doing and were but awaiting a leader. More honest than their employers, the labourers needed no check on their receipts, and the work of restoration proceeded apace.

Now it was no uncommon practice in the ancient East to leave a small cavity within the foundation of a building in order to preserve the name of the builder or other records. Some of these records have been discovered by excavators within the past few years, as in the temple at Ur of the Chaldees. And some we ourselves have deposited—like the Bradshaw's time-table in the base of Cleopatra's Needle in London—for future ages to discover. Josiah's workmen, therefore, were not altogether surprised when in the course of repairing the broken wall of the Temple they suddenly came upon a small cavity in the stonework, and found within it, yellow with age and covered with dust, the roll of a book.

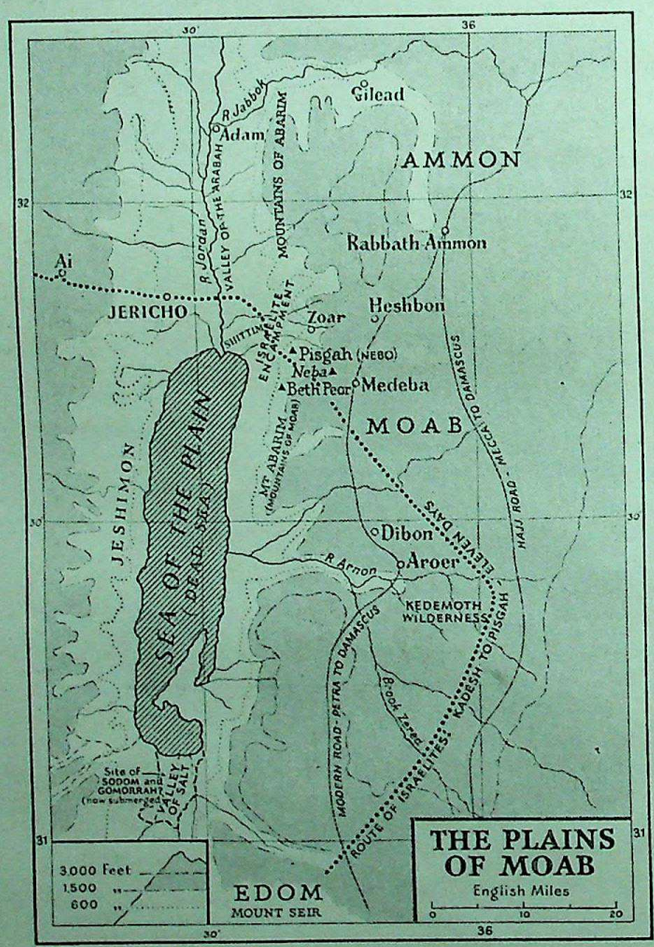
Books in those days were not bound in pages, as they are today, but consisted of a long roll of parchment wound about two sticks, so that the title of the book was not visible at first glance. Hilkiah, the High Priest, however, was no sooner summoned to inspect the discovery, than he unrolled a few inches of the parchment and perceived at once that here was no ordinary book. One can picture him trembling with awe and wonder as his old eyes made out the opening words of the book he held in his hands—"These be the words which Moses spake." Astounding, unbelievable! A new book about the great law-giver after all these years! How long had it been hidden in that cavity? What would be its message to a faithless generation? Was it a voice from the dead rising up to rebuke Israel for her long backsliding?

Not daring, or perhaps physically unable to read any further, the old priest murmured: "I have found the Book of the Law!" and handed it to Shaphan the Scribe, whose profession it was to decipher ancient manuscripts.

Shaphan, in turn, glanced at the book, realized its unique importance, and hastened with it straight to the King himself. "And Shaphan read it before the King." Hour after hour the reading went on, the King growing more and more disturbed as that voice from the past thundered in his ear denunciations of God's wrath for just those very sins which Israel had most committed. Never before had Josiah realized how utterly the Law of Moses had been forgotten, how terribly the nation's duty to God neglected, how sadly the kings of Israel had failed in their allegiance to the King of Kings.

As Shaphan's reading came to an end, Josiah sprang to his feet, rending his clothes in an agony of remorse: "Great is the wrath of the LORD that is kindled against us, because our fathers have not hearkened unto the words of this book" (II Kings, xxii, 13).

So the King summoned all his counsellors around him, Hilkiah, Shaphan and the rest, to ask what was to be done. But they were speechless. Shame, despair, a sense of unforgivable guilt—who were they that they should dare to advise the King in such a pass?



Route of the Israelites from Edom to Ai

Prepared under the direction of the Author

This was no matter for priest or scribe or court official. It was the sort of thing upon which none but a prophet, inspired by a direct revelation of the Divine Will, could give advice. But how few and far between were the prophets, the *true* Prophets, of those degenerate days! There had been rumours of one called Jeremiah, and another called Zephaniah, but there was no time to seek for them now. In Jerusalem there remained just one—not a prophet, but a prophetess—who had stood always shoulder-high above the rising tide of idolatry, and remained austerely faithful to her God.

So, hot-foot they sped to "the college" where lived Huldah the Prophetess, the wife of Shallum of the Wardrobe. And she at all events spake with no uncertain voice. How good it was to hear once more that confident "Thus saith the Lord" on her lips! "Tell the man that sent you to me, Thus saith the Lord." But her message was one of comfort and encouragement to the stricken King. All was not yet lost, if the nation could be brought to repent and obey the Law of the Lord, as set forth in that holy Book which had been discovered in the Temple.

So Josiah, more hopeful, gathered all the people together to a great assembly in the Temple and "read in their ears all the words of the Book of the Covenant which was found in the House of the Lord." One can imagine the effect, in those days when every line of written word was a rarity and a marvellous thing, when the familiar story of Moses in all its grandeur, but with a new grace, was unfolded before the attentive people, and they realized the full extent of their betrayal of the Lord their God. At the end, standing by a pillar in full view of the congregation, King Josiah pledged his word before God to be true in future to the teaching of that sacred volume of the Law which had been so providentially brought to light, and with one voice all the people in that great assembly made a solemn league and covenant to do the same.

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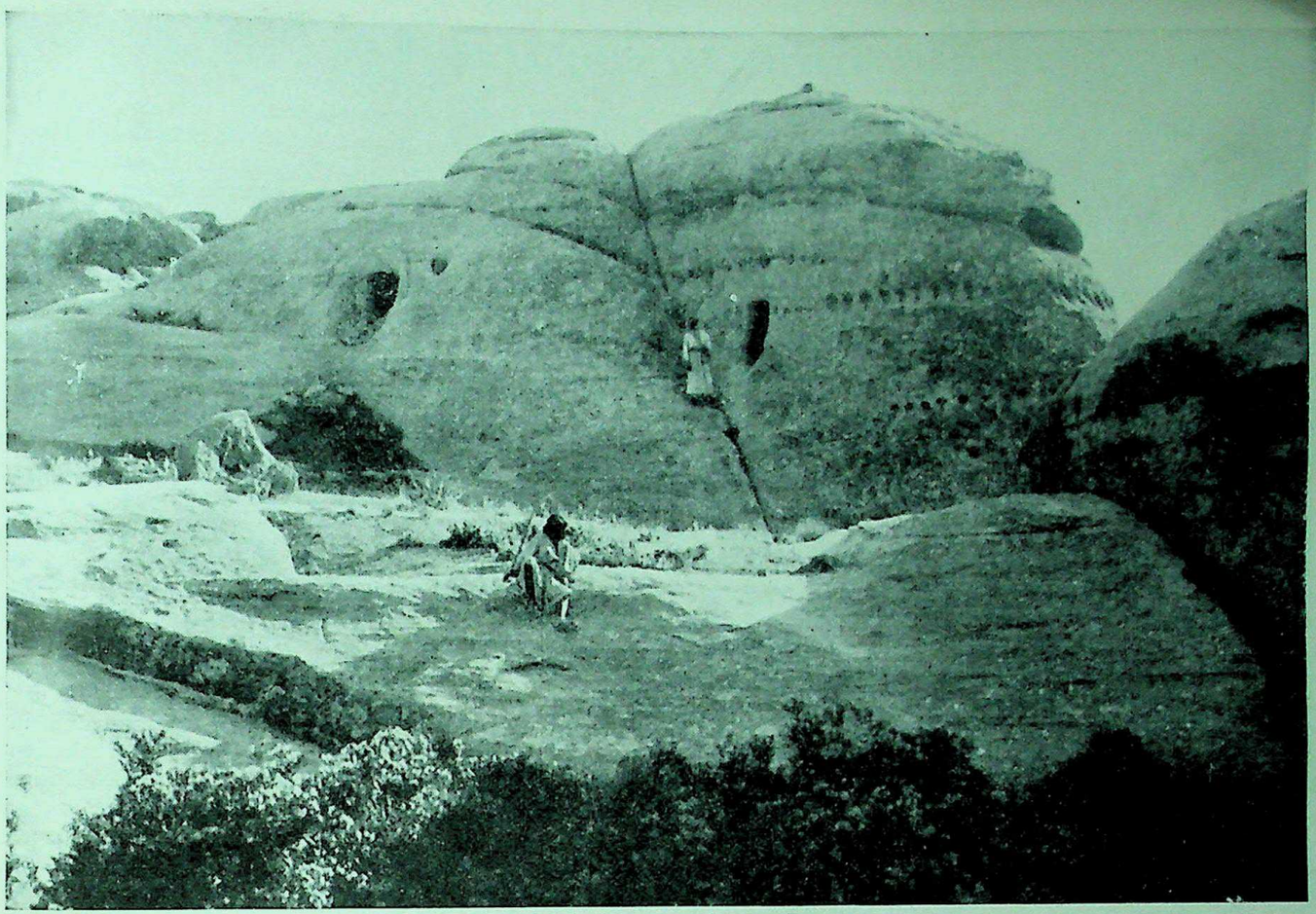

CAVE-DWELLINGS IN MOUNT SEIR. The Israelites on their way to Canaan found the descendants of Esau settled in the Land of Edom or Seir, a mountainous district, including Petra, east of the Arabah from the Gulf of Akabah to the Dead Sea. In a more remote age the Horite people had dwelt in Seir, " but the children of Esau succeeded them, when they had destroyed them from before them " (Deuteronomy ii, 12). They were immigrants from the great Hurrian empire, remains of which have only recently been discovered in Syria. They may have lived in the caves shown in the photograph.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

There followed such a change of spirit, so complete a reform of morals and religion, that for evermore the Reformation of Josiah marked an epoch in the evolution of Hebrew religion. A step was made from which, for all the inevitable ebb and flow of succeeding ages, the people of the Jews never went back. Henceforward, Jerusalem became the spiritual centre, and its Temple the only shrine of Jewry throughout the world. From this starting-point the reformation swept like a cleansing flood over everything that had so long defiled the land. Soon the dark days of Manasseh had been blotted out, forgiven and forgotten by Him Whom the book described again and again as a God of mercy and of love.

Now this " Book of the Law " which was found in the Temple, this book which more than anything else aroused that astonishing revulsion of feeling in Israel, was the very Book of Deuteronomy which we are now studying. Josiah's Covenant, in fact, is often spoken of as the " Deuteronomic Reforms." We do well to remember that the Book which now lies too often neglected in our Bibles was once the charge of dynamite which blew a heathen pantheon sky-high, and cleared the ground of the Holy Land for God.

BUT the human interest of Deuteronomy is not exhausted by the story of its discovery and publication. When we inquire how it got into the secret cavity in the Temple, and how it came to be written in the first place, we find no explicit answer in the Bible itself, but the scholars—those very Higher Critics who are usually supposed to be so dry and dusty —have suggested an explanation which is as romantic as it is reasonable.

We must go back a hundred years or so behind the Deuteronomic Reformation to the days of good King Hezekiah and the Golden Age of the eighth-century prophets, Amos, Hosea, Micah and Isaiah. These were the men who more than any other shaped the religious destiny of Israel. Finding Judaism, as it were, in the pliant years of adolescence, they guided it to a noble maturity, and mapped out the Way for it to climb still higher. They saw God clearly as One Holy Loving Lord Who through His chosen people Israel was working His purpose out for the salvation of mankind.

Religion Purified by Persecution

THE death of Hezekiah, however, and the accession of Manasseh the Bad called a sudden halt to their work. Isaiah, it is said, was sawn asunder by the reprobate king, and all who treasured the teaching of the prophets were either martyred or driven into underground hiding-places, for " Manasseh shed innocent blood very much, till he had filled Jerusalem from one end to another " (II Kings xxi, 16). In place of the pure worship of Jehovah, the land reeked with idolatry and sin, and the " famine of . . . hearing the words of the Lord " foretold by Amos (Amos viii, 11) prevailed for a period of over seventy years. It seemed the end of Judaism.

But in reality, so the scholars tell us, it was far otherwise. Driven below the surface, the fires of prophecy burnt with a flame all the fiercer for their suppression ; God was turning the blood-stained darkness of those terrible years to His own ends. The great Prophets were

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no more, but their followers, often endued with a double portion of their spirit, lived on in secret, working, praying, hoping for the Day when the Lord God of Sabaoth should come into His own again. Prohibited from uttering forth the word of the Lord aloud, these ardent believers spent their days in writing it down, and great was the volume of their written work.

Now it was that, in the spirit of the great prophets, they re-wrote, or re-edited for future publication the ancient traditions of the past. The Books of the Pentateuch—Genesis, Exodus, and so forth—as we have them today, bear the unmistakable marks of this prophetical re-editing in the seventh century B.C.

But the greatest achievement of these prophetical writers was the Book which we call Deuteronomy. It was this masterpiece of religious genius, set like a beacon on a hill, which constantly enlightened their eyes, guided their pens, and secured that unity of purpose which runs like a golden thread throughout their work. Of the actual authorship of Deuteronomy as we have it today, we know nothing, save that it must have been in the main the production of a single writer and a master-mind. But we know that his influence was all-compelling, and lasted for many centuries after he had gone, so that one can detect the sign-manual of the "Deuteronomic schools" right up to the days of the Exile.

To describe this unknown writer as the "author" of Deuteronomy would be, in a sense, misleading. That he wrote up and compiled his material in its present form, infusing it with the spirit of the great prophets (especially Hosea and Isaiah) is unquestionably true. But the bulk of his material lay already to hand, documents and oral traditions whose roots were embedded deep in the immemorial past. The moving story of Moses' farewell discourse to his children, of his final review of the Divine Law, and of his death upon the summit of Mount Pisgah had doubtless been incorporated in the unwritten traditions of Israel long before the art of reading and writing became common in the land. Memory is long amongst primitive peoples, and no doubt the story of Deuteronomy went back in essentials from son to father even unto the contemporaries of Moses himself.

The Laws of Moses Given Afresh

FOR this reason, again, there is little that is new in the legislation here codified. Most of it we have seen already recorded in the Book of Exodus, which in turn sets forth enactments of still greater antiquity. Moses was regarded as the giver of Law, rather than of laws. The laws themselves might change in detail with the changing times, but since they were promulgated in the spirit of the great law-giver, and with the authority of his church, then they were in effect the laws of Moses, and invested with the sanctions of Mount Sinai.

Thus Deuteronomy claimed, and the claim was never disputed, to be the paramount "Book of the Law" which set forth in compendious form the kernel of the Mosaic teaching about man's duty to his God and to his

SITE OF HESHBON, CITY OF SIHON. Modern Hesban, seen to the right in the middle distance of this view of the rugged country in northern Moab, marks the location of Heshbon first mentioned as belonging to the Moabites and afterwards as the city of "Sihon the Amorite," conqueror of the land, himself conquered by the Israelites (Deuteronomy ii, 30-35) fighting their way through to Bashan. The city had a commanding position on the heights above a valley, now called Wady Hesban. Close to the site, through a gap in the hills, the inhabitants could see Jordan's rift, twenty miles west.

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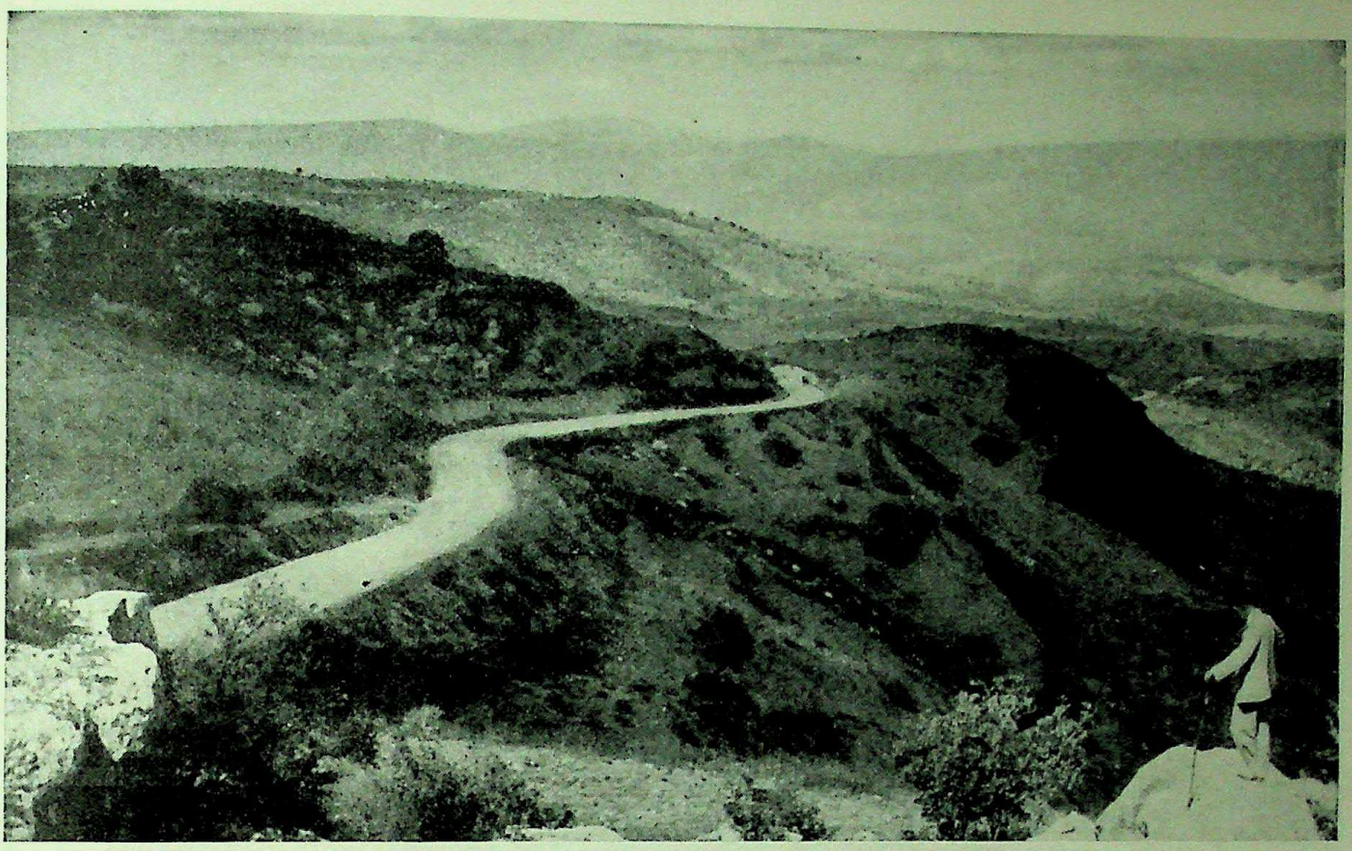

"BY THE WAY OF BASHAN." This is a general view of the Hauran country, a fertile upland district which corresponds with Biblical Bashan. We are looking westward to the Jordan valley and in the far distance the peak of Mount Tabor, seven miles east of Nazareth, is faintly discernible. Kingdom of Og, opponent of Israel, Bashan extended north of Moab to the mountains of Hauran, bounded on the west by the Sea of Galilee and the upper Jordan. The land was celebrated for flocks and pastures; its last period of culture was in the dawn of the Christian era and there are many Graeco-Roman ruins.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

neighbour. The circumstances of its discovery, and the solemn covenant which recognized it publicly and in the Temple of Jerusalem as the inspired Word of God, had the effect of making it a distinctively *Holy* Book in the eyes of Israel. It was the first time in Hebrew history that any book had been so "canonized," so that Deuteronomy in this sense was the earliest volume to be reckoned as Scripture, and actually the nucleus of our Holy Bible—a fact which gives it yet another claim upon our special interest.

Now the Journey Nears its End

THE opening verses of Deuteronomy find the Israelites nearing the completion of their long Forty Years of Wandering in the Wilderness. Their tents are pitched on the plains of Moab east of the River Jordan, which is now the only barrier between them and the Promised Land. It is a tremendous moment when the sun rises over the shoulder of Mount Pisgah at the dawn of this, the opening day of the very last month of the very last year of their long pilgrimage.

Over six hundred years had now passed since Jehovah first made the Great Promise to His Chosen People, and Abraham set forth from Ur of the Chaldees. Four centuries and more the children of Israel had sojourned in Egypt, learning the bitterness of hope deferred. It was just forty years since Moses had been raised up among them, diplomat, warrior, lawgiver, prophet, priest—a host in himself—and the hard-hearted Pharaoh had been forced to let the people go. For forty years, after crossing the Red Sea, they had been wandering through the arid wilderness, their heart often fainting within them, but still plodding onwards to the land flowing with milk and honey, which was always just beyond the next sand dune. And now at long last it lay spread before their eyes!

Their present encampment in the lush Plains of Moab gave promise of still better things to come. They had gained possession of these well-watered fields by their victories over Sihon, king of the Amorites, and Og, king of Bashan, and today the travel-worn goat-skin tents of Israel filled the fair valley of the Jordan Arabah from Abel-Shittim, the meadow of acacias, to the semi-tropical slopes of the Dead Sea.

A solemn hush descended upon the host as Moses himself came forth from his tent, standing in the midst of them, beckoning for silence. Perhaps they realized that this might be the last time he would address them, for everyone knew how their sorely-tried leader had sinned against the Lord at Meribah, the Waters of Strife, and how in consequence he was never to know the joy of entering with his people into the Promised Land.

It was too true! As Moses began to speak, they realized he was indeed bidding them farewell. In a little while, he said they would strike their tents, and cross the River Jordan, but it would be under the leadership of another and younger man, Joshua the son of Nun. For himself, a long last look across the river from the vantage point of Pisgah must suffice. He was an old man now, and the end was at hand. That very day, before the sun, already high over the Mountains of Moab, should have sunk in the waters of the Great Sea of the west, he would have breathed his last.

The Book of Deuteronomy, therefore, covers but a single day, the last in the life of Moses. And all but a few verses of the Book give the substance of what later ages recalled of Moses' parting words. It is a moving

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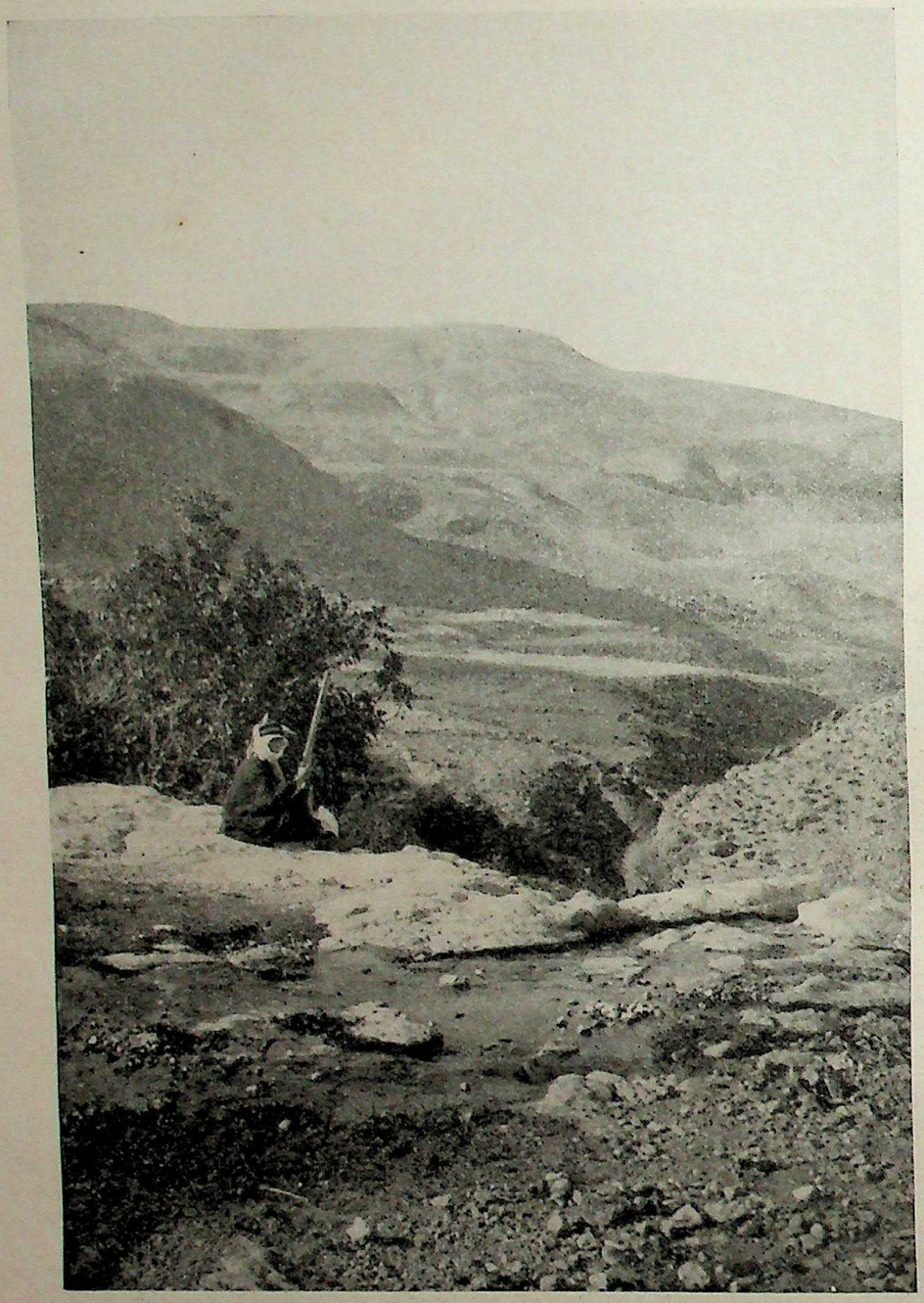

"UNTO THE MOUNTAIN OF NEBO." On the skyline to the left is seen the point, at the edge of the uplands of Moab, identified with Mount Nebo, last scene of the life of Moses. From there he viewed the Promised Land before his death (Deuteronomy xxxiv, 1-5). This headland, 2,643 feet above Mediterranean level, drops precipitously to the Dead Sea valley some 4,000 feet. Pisgah may have been the name of the ridge. In the foreground is the glen through which the "Wells of Moses" fall and stream.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

discourse, and it needs but little imagination to realize what its effect must have been, as well upon that spell-bound assembly in the Plains of Moab as upon the conscience-stricken populace who heard it in the days of King Josiah eight centuries afterwards.

The speaker began by reviewing the events of the wandering from the day when Jehovah gave them the Law on Mount Horeb up to the present. He reminded his hearers how faithful God had been to them, how unfaithful they to Him, and how disobedience had always brought its own punishment upon the sinner.

Let Israel therefore hearken unto the Law of God as revealed to their leader on the sacred mount. Let not one jot nor tittle of it pass away. "Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the LORD your God, which I command you. And what nation is there so great, that hath statutes and judgments so righteous as all this law, which I set before you this day? Only take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently, lest thou forget the things which thine eyes have seen, and lest they depart from thy heart all the days of thy life; but teach them thy sons and thy sons' sons; specially the day that thou stoodest before the LORD thy God in Horeb" (iv, 2, 8f).

Moses' Sermon from the Mount

THE great themes of Deuteronomy are the three eternal verities that God is One, that God is Love, and that Love is the fulfilling of the Law.

(a) GOD IS ONE. There is but one true God, Jehovah the Lord of Hosts, and to Him alone must worship be given. "Thou shalt have none other gods before Me" stands at the head of the great Ten Commandments (v, 7-21) which form the summary of Old Testament Law, for God is a jealous God, and will brook no divided allegiance. The sin of idolatry, whereby men forsake Jehovah, or make Him share their hearts with the strange deities of the heathen world, is the root sin of all. "The LORD he is God; there is none else beside Him" (iv, 35). Everything, therefore, which might seduce the eye or the heart to disloyalty, must be sternly eliminated from amongst them.

From the first, the spiritual genius of Israel distrusted anything that might tend to materialize or to localize the Divine. In earlier days, the setting up of altars and pillars of stone to Jehovah, and the use of emblems, figures, and other cult objects as aids to worship were not unknown.

But one thing is never found in Judaism, namely, an image or representation of Jehovah Himself, and the religious instincts of the Jews were increasingly against anything of a similar tendency. A living faith continually moves on to higher things, and it was now felt that what Jacob might have done at Bethel, or what even Moses might have permitted in the Wilderness, they would assuredly have discountenanced in the very different circumstances of settled life in Judah, when Israel had a Holy City and a Temple of her own.

Thus the writer of Deuteronomy, deliberately setting out to interpret the mind of Moses to later Jewry, had no hesitation in emphasizing and adapting to modern needs the jealousy of his Master for undivided allegiance to Jehovah, and his insistence on God's spiritual attributes.

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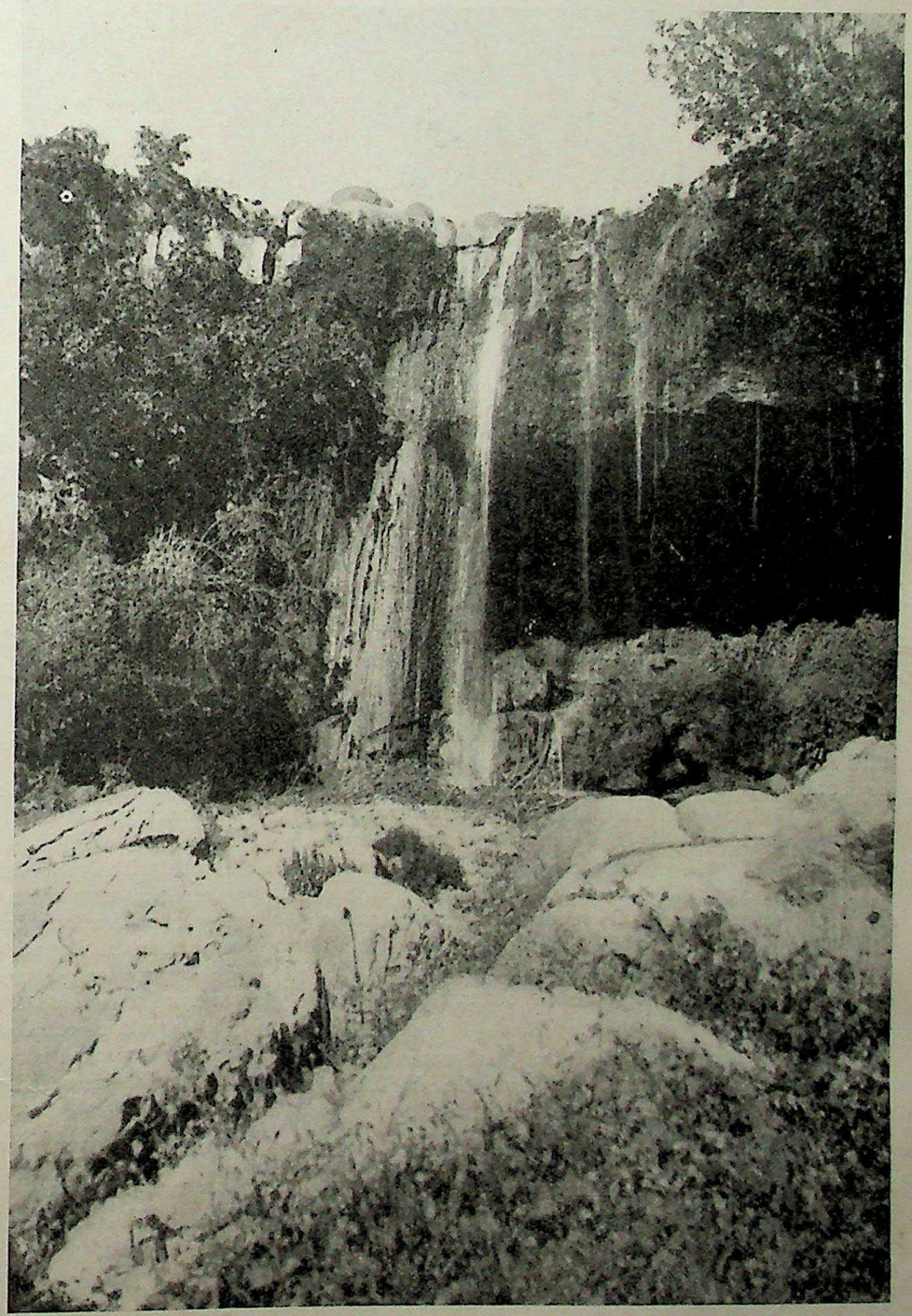
Hence the constant denunciation of idolatry in all its forms which we find in Deuteronomy—"Thou shalt not make thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the waters beneath the earth: thou shalt not bow down thyself unto them, nor serve them" (v, 8, 9).

Hence, too, the desire to establish one central shrine and altar as the only authorized Holy Place for all loyal worshippers of Jehovah. No doubt there was no original intention of disloyalty in the local "High Places" which had been set up all over Palestine, but experience had shown how easily these chapels-of-ease might drift into schism. Around each isolated altar had gathered an exclusive coterie of priests with traditions and a ritual all their own. Worse still, at many shrines the local superstitions of the Canaanites had insensibly contaminated the True Faith, and in some cases Jehovah was scarcely to be distinguished from an ordinary village Baal. So the local sanctuaries must go.

An attempt to abolish them had been made in the days of King Hezekiah, but it proved abortive. The dark days of Manasseh, however, and the long reign of terror which that idolatrous king inaugurated, convinced the spiritual heirs of Isaiah and the Prophets that the High Places must be abolished at all costs. Henceforward there must be but one central sanctuary, one altar of sacrifice, one holy priesthood, one ritual arbiter for the liturgy of the faith, and one authoritative standard for the interpretation of Israel's sacred tradition.

THE Book of Deuteronomy makes all this quite clear. "Ye shall utterly destroy all the places, wherein the nations which ye shall possess served their gods, upon the high mountains, and upon the hills, and under every green tree: And ye shall overthrow their altars and break their pillars, and burn their groves with fire; and ye shall hew down the graven images of their gods, and destroy the names of them out of that place. Ye shall not do so unto the LORD your God. But unto the place which the LORD your God shall choose out of all your tribes to put His name there, even unto His habitation shall ye seek, and thither thou shalt come. And thither ye shall bring your burnt-offerings, and your sacrifices" (xii, 2-6).

It was not claimed by the writer that Moses could foresee the actual Holy City to be so chosen by the Lord, but everything in the Book pointed towards Jerusalem, nor was there ever any question that this was meant. The Temple on Mount Moriah was the place which the Lord had chosen to put His name there. From the day of the Deuteronomic reformation until now, orthodox Jews have never raised an altar to Jehovah anywhere else. The sacrifices have now ceased for nearly two thousand years—since the destruction of the Temple in A.D. 70—but the pious Jew still weeps for the glory that is departed, and dreams of the day when from the ancient stone altar, now in captivity within the Mosque of Omar, the smoke of the sacrificial incense directed by the Mosaic Law shall again rise night and morning.



"THE WELLS OF MOSES." Below Nebo's slopes a glen is to this day called Valley of the Wells of Moses. Here a fountain gushes out of the sheer rock and wild flowers bloom abundantly in spring—rock roses, anemones, poppies, and gladioli. The bushes by the plunging stream then shelter many small birds; storks may be seen circling high above the uplands of Moab. Arabs use the waters of these springs for irrigating fairly extensive gardens and orchards of figs and pomegranates in the neighbourhood.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

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"JERICHO, THE CITY OF PALM TREES." El Richa, modern Jericho, is here glimpsed to the left through the luxuriant palms in the Botanical Gardens. A mile north-west stood the ancient "city of palm trees" (Deuteronomy xxxiv, 3) viewed by Moses from Nebo before its walls crashed encircled by Joshua's triumphant army. From the district the groves of date palms, which formerly flourished so abundantly, have vanished. Situated on the edge of the now treeless plain of Jordan, Jericho is more than 800 feet below Mediterranean level. Vegetation is scant except in gardens and by the river.

Photo, G.P.A.

Thus the Book of Deuteronomy taught men to worship Jehovah as the one true God of Israel, and to serve him in all singleness of heart. "And now, Israel, what doth the LORD thy God require of thee, but to fear the LORD thy God, to walk in all His ways and to love Him, and to serve the LORD thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul" (x, 12). No wonder Jesus Christ found the message of this great Book so well adapted to His need, and drew from its pages His first and great commandment, "Thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might" (Deuteronomy vi, 5 = Matthew xxii, 37).

(b) GOD IS LOVE. It is no one-sided covenant that Israel is asked to make with her God. God in His turn promises to requite their loyalty with a more than corresponding love and service. Like a golden thread throughout the Book runs the assurance of God's love for His people. He has chosen Israel out of all the peoples of the world to be His own peculiar people, and He chose them not for any merit of their own, but out of His infinite mercy and loving-kindness for the seed of Abraham. "Thou art an holy people unto the LORD thy God; the LORD thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth. The LORD did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people: but because the LORD loved you" (vii, 6-8).

The past history of Israel is full of signal instances of God's love and care for His people. "When we cried unto the LORD God of our fathers, the LORD heard our voice and looked on our affliction, and our labour, and our oppression . . . And he hath brought us into this place, and hath given us this land, even a land that floweth with milk and honey" (xxvi, 7, 9). They are warned in memorable words never to forget to Whom they owe their happiness and prosperity. "Thou shalt remember the LORD thy God: for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth, that he may establish his covenant" (viii, 18). As He has cared for them in the past, so will He in the future. The "Blessing of Moses" (xxxiii) is probably a later addition to the Book, but it well summarizes in poetical form the many practical ways in which God was to show His love for the Tribes of Jacob. "There is none like unto the God of Jeshurun, who rideth upon the heaven in thy help and in his excellency on the sky. The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms" (xxxiii, 26, 27).

SO Deuteronomy again and again stresses the loving-kindness of God for His chosen people, the unfailing mercy with which He forgives their many transgressions, and His unchanging faithfulness. God will never go back from His Covenant. Only let Israel in turn observe her side of the Covenant in loving the Lord her God,

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and in obedience to His will. The Book of Deuteronomy is nothing if not practical. While recognizing, in the true spirit of the Prophets, that love and obedience are of the heart and not the hand, and while searching more deeply than any other book of the Pentateuch into the inner motive behind the deed, it nevertheless insists strongly on what we may call the "sacramental" view of life, namely that the "inward and spiritual grace" should have its counterpart in an "outward and visible sign."

According to this point of view true religion will of necessity manifest itself in the due performance of certain rites and ceremonies. These will not only express the feelings of the devout worshipper, but also emphasize by uniformity of outward act the essential unity of the Brotherhood. From the Old Testament point of view, in fact, ceremonial is to religion what good deeds are to ethics.

Deuteronomy, therefore, sets out to provide the ordinary God-fearing Israelite with what we may call a book of religious etiquette. In such matters no man is to be a law unto himself, for the symbolism of ceremonial must be uniformly accepted if it is to fulfil its purpose. Thus the Book contains many regulations concerning the Feasts and Fasts of the Church, the layman's duty towards the priesthood, directions as to sacrifice, the distinction between "clean" and "unclean" meats, and the like, many of which are still followed by the Jews of the present day.

With this side of Judaism it is impossible for us to feel that we have much concern. The "Law of Ordinances" was intended for a certain season and for certain conditions which no longer obtain today. Yet to despise it would be a mistake, for, as St. Paul reminds us, "The Law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ" (Galatians iii, 24).

(c) Love, the Fulfilling of the Law. The laws and regulations that are given in Deuteronomy, however, are not all of a ceremonial type. The directions of this very practical Manual deal no less with the ethical than with the spiritual side of life. No book of the Pentateuch insists more constantly on the truth that a lively faith will show itself in good works, and love for God in love for one's neighbour. Of the Ten Commandments (v, 6-21) the first four concern one's duty to God; the last six, one's duty to Man. And the general spirit of Deuteronomy at its highest is precisely that of the Christian Gospel: "This commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also" (I John iv, 21).

Striking a New Note of Humanity

THE laws of Deuteronomy reveal a mild and humanitarian spirit wonderfully in advance of its time. Over and over again they strike an almost Christian note of sympathy and fellow-feeling, not only for one's kith and kin, but for the stranger that is within one's gate, for the fatherless, the widow, the poor, and the oppressed. "If there be among you a poor man of . . . thy brethren . . . thou shalt not harden thine heart, nor shut thine hand from thy poor brother . . . For the poor shall never cease out of the land: therefore I command thee, saying, Thou shalt open thine hand wide unto thy brother, to thy poor, and

"BEHIND THEM A DESOLATE WILDERNESS." The great chapter of Israel's wanderings is closed at the end of Deuteronomy, when Moses had brought his people through the Wilderness to the edge of Moab within sight of the Promised Land. In retrospect they saw the sterile Arabian desert; the miles of weary sand, without herbage or water, across which they had led their flocks and herds from camp to camp; seeking in the summer heat valleys where the pasturage was not all burnt up—those watered valleys for which they had had to fight the Amalekites and other warlike tribes.

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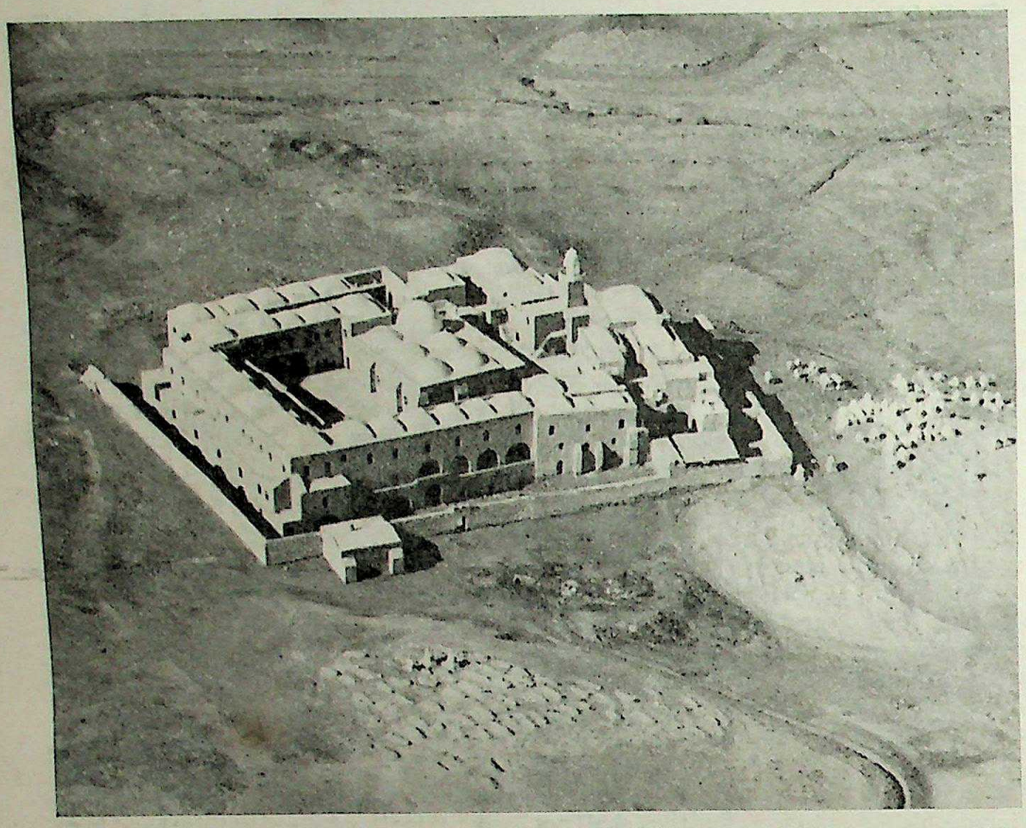

WHERE MOSLEMS BELIEVE MOSES TO BE BURIED. This aerial view shows Neby Musa—" Tomb of Moses "—near Jericho. A pilgrim's encampment can be seen on the right, and Moslem pilgrims have visited the shrine since it was built in the 13th century A.D. On the opposite side of Jordan from Mount Nebo in Moab—the deathplace of Moses, as recorded in Deuteronomy xxxiv, 1-6—it is said to have been established by the Arabs in rivalry to Jerusalem, crowded by Christian pilgrims at Easter.

Photo. G.P.A.

to thy needy, in thy land "(xv, 7, 11). Hebrew debtors are to be forgiven, and Hebrew slaves to be released every seven years. In no case may distraint for debt be made upon a poor man's millstone, bedding, or apparel. A brother Israelite may not be charged interest on his loan. Wages are to be promptly paid. At harvest time the gleanings must be left to be gathered by the stranger, the fatherless and the widow.

Kindness is not to be confined to one's fellow-countrymen. Already Deuteronomy dimly reaches towards the wider vision of the Gospels. " Love ye therefore the stranger " (x, 19). " Thou shalt not abhor an Edomite ; for he is thy brother : thou shalt not abhor an Egyptian ; because thou wast a stranger in his land " (xxiii, 7). In the day of battle, if the enemy surrenders, he is to be taken prisoner, not slain. If he fights and is defeated, then the lives of his women and children must be spared. In besieging an enemy city, care must be taken not to destroy the fruit trees around it—" for thou mayest eat of them, and thou shalt not cut them down (for the tree of the field is man's life) to employ them in the siege" (xx, 19).

The laws of Deuteronomy even include injunctions to be kind to animals. " Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out the corn " (xxv, 4). The passage about robbing birds' nests might well be posted up in every village school : " If a bird's nest chance to be before thee in the way in any tree, or on the ground, whether they be young ones or eggs, and the dam sitting upon the young, or upon the eggs, thou shalt not take the dam with the young ; but thou shalt in any wise let the dam go . . . . . that it may be well with thee " (xxii, 6, 7). And it may even be that some instinct of this kind prompted the injunction, " Thou shalt not seethe a kid in his mother's milk " (xiv, 21).

Justice and equity are particularly insisted upon. Men are not to take the law into their own hands. Even in the case of murder or manslaughter, the old desert custom of the blood-feud is to be discouraged, and the right of sanctuary for the offender to be respected. Only on the evidence of two witnesses is a man to be condemned. The judges are to be free from all suspicion of partiality or corruption. " Thou shalt not respect persons, neither take a gift : for a gift doth blind the eyes of the wise, and pervert the words of the righteous " (xvi, 19). In passing sentence the punishment must not be unduly severe—that is of course from the standpoint of the age. In the case of a flogging, for instance, the number of lashes must not exceed the " forty stripes save one " of which S. Paul speaks (II Corinthians xi, 24).

Particularly appropriate to the occasion on which King Josiah first published Deuteronomy to his people, must have seemed the wise words which the Book has to say about the obligations of a king to his country and his God. The whole passage (xvii, 14-20) is worth reading again.

Such, in briefest outline, is a sketch of the laws of Deuteronomy, laws which are gathered for the most part from preceding books of the Pentateuch, of which Moses was the inspiration, and which he is here represented as recalling to the minds of his people in this farewell speech.

The Last Watch from Pisgah's Height

THE sun is setting over the hills of Canaan, as the great leader brings his long discourse to a close. With a last lingering look at his children, he turns, and begins the steep ascent to the summit of Mount Pisgah, that he may now bid farewell to the Land of Promise, which he is to see but never reach. " And Moses went up from the plains of Moab unto the mountain of Nebo, to the top of Pisgah, that is over against Jericho. And the LORD shewed him all the land " (xxxiv, 1).

It is not difficult to find at any rate the approximate situation of this pathetic " Pisgah View," for the geographical directions given in Deuteronomy are both numerous and capable of identification. The River Jordan, of course, and the Mountains of Moab are the same as ever they were, while the exact site of Jericho has been fixed beyond the shadow of a doubt by Garstang's recent excavations at the mound Kom el Sultan, near the village of El Richa, which name is probably an Arabic corruption of Jericho itself.

The peak of Pisgah, therefore, is somewhere on the ridge of the Mountains of Moab (the Abarim Mountains, as

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ARAB PILGRIMS HOLDING FESTIVAL IN HONOUR OF MOSES

Part of the great concourse of Moslem pilgrims is here seen at their shrine of Neby Musa. They assemble annually on Good Friday, men, women and children, and remain for several days. The occasion is both a religious and a social festival. Many fanatical dervishes accompany the thousands of pilgrims, most of whom arrive on donkeys and bring sheep for sacrifices. Food and drink are supplied to the pilgrims by the charitable foundation funds of the memorial edifice which includes a mosque. The tomb was built regardless of the fact that Moses never crossed the Jordan (Deuteronomy xxxiv, 5, 6) and was buried "in a valley in the land of Moab."

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

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"BLESSED SHALL BE THY BASKET AND THY STORE"

This village beauty going to market at Siloam carries just such a basket for her purchases as that employed by the Israelites for presenting their offerings of firstfruits to the priest (Deuteronomy xxvi, 2). Several varieties of basket are denoted by different Hebrew words in the Old Testament. The commonest were woven of reeds, palm leaves or, like this one, of withes for strength; they were large for the convenient transport of produce from the fields and flat for easy carriage on the head, after the graceful custom of Eastern women, habitual burden-bearers.

Photo, Daily Mirror

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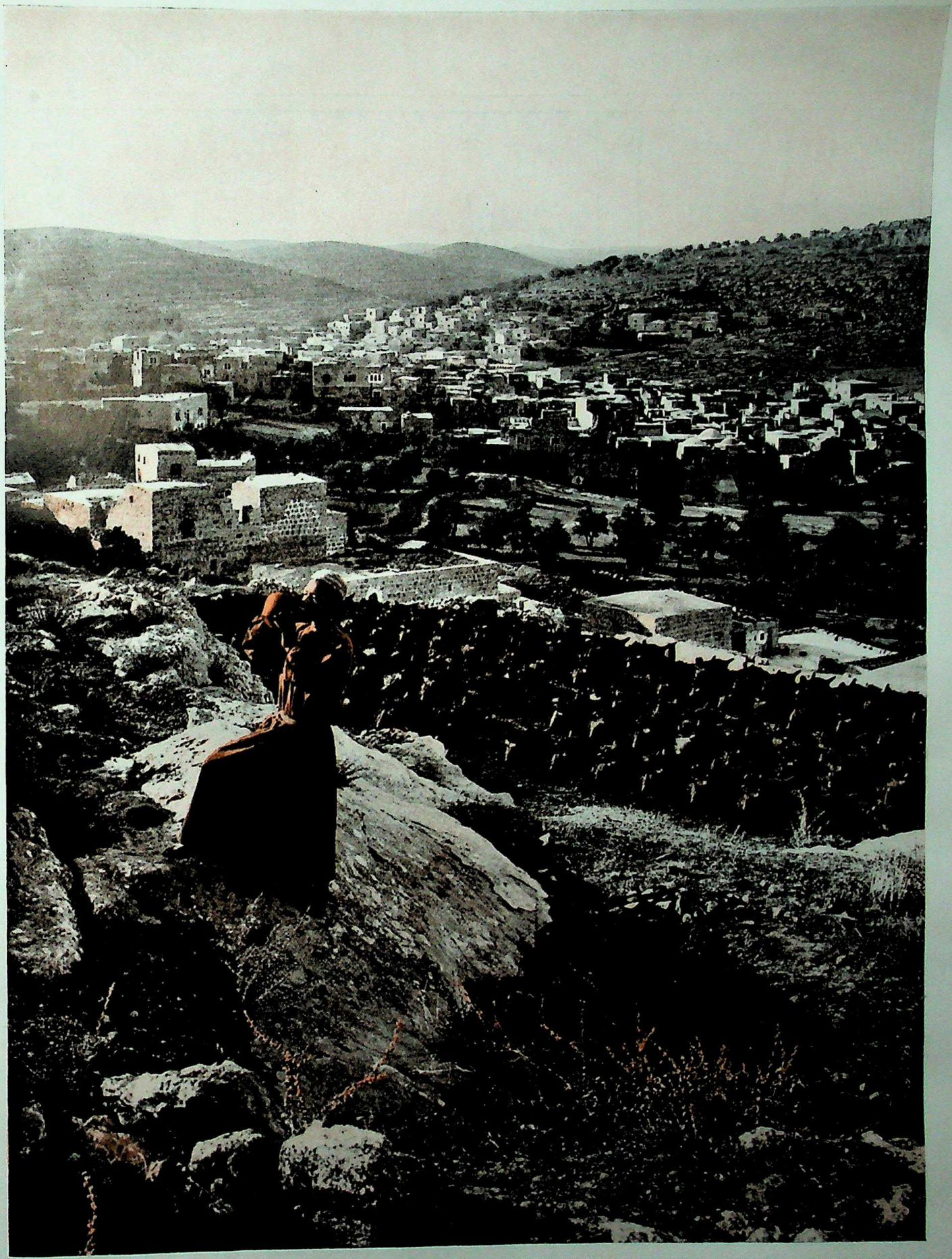

INDUSTRIAL HEBRON, ONCE SET APART AS A CITY OF REFUGE

Situated in a level valley between high ridges on the plateau of Judea, Hebron was given as an inheritance to Caleb (Joshua xv, 13 ; xx, 7) and later became one of the cities of refuge. The present population consists chiefly of Moslems, and the main industries of the town are glass-blowing and the preparation of water-skins—leathern bottles of the Bible. Rows of these are to be seen in front of a tannery in this photograph. Each is made of an entire skin, its seams thonged and pitched after partial tanning, filled with water and kept moist with tanning fluid, while exposed to the sun for some days. The root-bark of the evergreen oak is preferred for tanning.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

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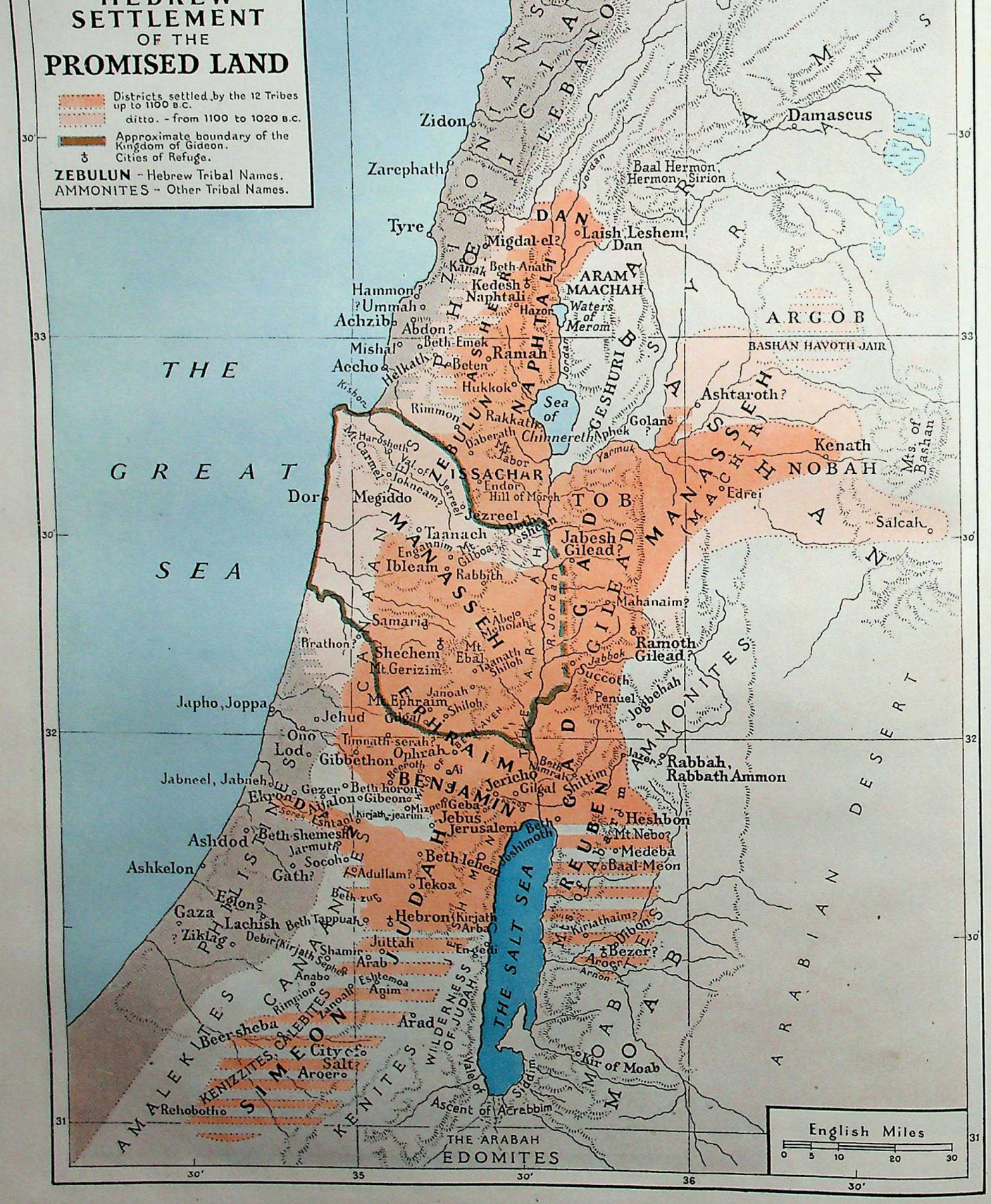

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they are called in the Old Testament) facing El Richa from the eastern side of the Jordan. Seen from the Jordan valley, these great hills rise abruptly, with many a precipice and deep crevasse, to a height of three or four thousand feet, their summit broken into towering pinnacles, one of which must be the Pisgah of the Bible story. The alternative name for this peak, Nebo, may signify some connexion between it and the worship of an Assyrian god so named, and it is possible that the site of it can be identified with the modern Ras Neba, a point on the ridge of mountains about twelve miles due east of the northernmost shores of the Dead Sea, and one where the ascent from the Plains of Moab may be most easily achieved.

More probably, however, we must locate Pisgah on the near-by headland of Ras Siaghah, which though lower than Ras Neba, stands free of the rest of the range. We cannot do better than quote G. A. Smith's authoritative "Historical Geography of the Holy Land": "The whole of the Jordan valley is now open from Engedi, beyond which the mists become impenetrable, to where, on the north, the hills of Gilead seem to meet those of Ephraim. The Jordan flows below; Jericho is visible beyond. Over Gilead, Hermon can be seen in clear weather, but the heat hid it from us. The view is almost that described as the last on which the eyes of Moses rested, the higher hills of Western Palestine shutting out possibility of a sight of the Mediterranean. It is certainly the position described: 'the head of Pisgah, which looketh down upon the face of Jeshimon'".

Jeshimon is the lower-lying declivity which runs along the shores of the Dead Sea, or the "Sea of the Plain," as it was then called. From its northernmost end to the valley of the River Jabbok in the north, runs a wide and fertile plain watered by many winding rivulets, bounded on the west by the Jordan Valley (also called the Arabah by the Hebrews and El Ghor by the Arabs), and on the east by the Abarim Mountains of Gilead. The temperature here is almost sub-tropical, the vegetation profuse. "It was probably the well-watered glen north of the Neba-Siaghah ridge, the Wady Ayun Musa, which Israel descended and camped in. It would depend on the season, whether the host stayed about its plentiful waters, now called the 'Wells of Moses' or at once went down to the warm plains of Shittim, the Meadow of Acacias, beside the Jordan."

Footprints Lost in the Sands of Time

THERE are, of course, no traces of their temporary occupation left. Archaeology and excavation are helpless when searching for the footprints of a nomadic tribe of tent-dwellers on a trackless plain. Not until the hosts of Israel have crossed the Jordan and broken down the walls of Jericho do they leave such a deep and clear incision upon the records of antiquity that it remains visible to this day. Some of the ancient cities of Moab, lying not far from the encampment, have been explored by the archaeologist, but they belong to a later date than the Wandering, and do not concern us here. The celebrated Moabite Stone, for instance, found at Diboń, a few miles south of Pisgah, is six centuries younger than Moses, and throws no light upon his times—unless it be to confirm the Mosaic tradition that the Moabites were blood-relations of the Hebrews, writing the same script and speaking the same tongue.

The brightest light shed by archaeological research upon the life and times of Moses, radiates not from the Holy Land, but from places far away. The Code of Hammurabi found in Persia, and the fragments of similar codes from Assyria and Cappadocia, illuminate the civil legislation of the Pentateuch in a remarkable way, while the Minaean inscriptions of Arabia and the Ras Shamra tablets of northern Syria throw a remarkable light upon the origins of Mosaic ceremonial.

That same evening, they found Moses on his lofty watch-tower stiff and cold, his face turned towards the Promised Land, the expression on his countenance serene as of one who knows that the work which God had given him to do, is finished. The great heart of Moses beats no more. "So Moses, the servant of the LORD died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the LORD. And he buried him in a valley in the land of Moab, over against Beth-peor: but no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day" (xxxiv, 5,6).

Where the Law-giver Was Laid to Rest

IT is useless to seek for the tomb of the great Lawgiver. He was laid to rest, not as kings were buried in carefully prepared sepulchres hewn out of the rock, in ornate coffins of wood or stone, but as the Beduin of the desert bury their dead, simply, quickly for fear of the heat, just a winding sheet and a trench in the ground. If the writer of Deuteronomy did not know where he lay, it is useless for us to guess.

Strangely enough in spite of this, the Arabs of the district have located his tomb on a height immediately facing Pisgah on the *opposite side* of the Dead Sea. Here they still point out a Neby-Musa, a "Tomb of the Prophet Moses," to the credulous tourist, and still more credulous Mahomedan pilgrims from Damascus to Mecca.

It is scarcely necessary to say that there can be neither authority nor reason for so unlikely an identification. The Bible is intentionally vague. Beth-Peor, like Pisgah, was one of the peaks of the hills of Abarim from which Balaam had surveyed the tents of Israel as they covered the plain below. But we do not know which peak is intended, and in any case the phrase "over against Beth-peor" is quite indefinite.

All we can say is, that Moses was buried somewhere within the southern border of the Plains of Moab. "Between the streams that in these valleys spring full born from the rocks, and the merry corn-fields on the plateau above, are some thousand feet of slopes and gullies, where no foot comes, the rock is crumbling, and silence reigns, save for the west wind moaning through the thistles. Here Moses was laid. Who would wish to know the exact spot? The whole region is a sepulchre!"

So the Book of Deuteronomy brings to an end the first act in the great drama of Hebrew history. It began with the creation of the universe; it ends with the climax of Pisgah. To the writer of the Book, Moses was the greatest Prophet that had ever lived. "There arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom the LORD knew face to face" (xxxiv, 10). Yet already God was revealing to men of vision that One greater than Moses would one day come to fulfil the Law and the Prophets, and so complete the work which His forerunners had begun.

"The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken" (xviii, 15). Such a prevision of the coming Saviour of the world must have gladdened the last moments of Moses even more than the vista of an earthly Promised Land.

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LITERARY BEAUTY OF THE BIBLE. VII

Citations From Joshua

CONQUEST and occupation of Canaan by the Israelites are the themes of the book of Joshua. Sweepingly it carries on the narrative of Deuteronomy. The religious intention of all the Old Testament authors being to point a moral—with their magnificent diction and descriptive touches they always adorn a tale—Joshua, national hero and commander-in-chief of the invading forces, is presented as a high example. We are given the picture of a military dictator firm in his convictions that his people, chosen of God, are the rightful owners of the land, and that good fortune accompanies obedience to the Covenant, bad fortune, disobedience. Inculcation of the ethical lesson informs the style and governs the selection of materials of the book, which include the well-known stories of Rahab, the siege of Jericho and the craftiness of the Gibeonites. The last-named is an instance of a tale with a fine touch of humour, rare in the Old Testament, comedy being as a rule incompatible with the didactic purpose of the Scriptures.

THE Book of Joshua contains one of the two quotations in the Bible from the ancient book of Jasher, the other being in II Samuel i, 17-27. This book, part of the "Lost Library" of Hebrew literature, was a collection of poems describing great national events. The fragment of song about the sun and moon is probably from an ode giving an account of Israel's victory at the battle of Beth-horon where Joshua routed Gibeon's enemies.

THE SCARLET CORD

ii, 3—6, 8, 9, 12—18, 21
vi, 25

AND the king of Jericho sent unto Rahab, saying, Bring forth the men that are come to thee, which are entered into thine house: for they be come to search out all the country And the woman took the two men, and hid them, and said thus, There came men unto me, but I wist not whence they were: And it came to pass about the time of shutting of the gate, when it was dark, that the men went out: whither the men went I wot not: pursue after them quickly; for ye shall overtake them. But she had brought them up to the roof of the house, and hid them with the stalks of flax, which she had laid in order upon the roof.

And before they were laid down, she came up unto them upon the roof: and she said unto the men, I know that the Lord hath given you the land, and that your terror is fallen upon us, and that all the inhabitants of the land faint because of you.

Now therefore, I pray you, swear unto me by the Lord, since I have shewed you kindness, that ye will also shew kindness unto my father's house, and give me a true token: And that ye will save alive my father, and my mother, and my brethren, and my sisters, and all that they have, and deliver our lives from death. And the men answered her, Our life for yours, if ye utter not this our business. And it shall be, when the Lord hath given us the land, that we will deal kindly and truly with thee.

Then she let them down by a cord through the window: for her house was upon the town wall, and she dwelt upon the wall. And she said unto them, Get you to the mountain, lest the pursuers meet you; and hide yourselves there three days, until the pursuers be returned: and afterward may ye go your way And the men said unto her, We will be blameless of this thine oath which thou hast made us swear Behold, when we come into the land, thou shalt bind this line of scarlet thread in the window which thou didst let us down by: and thou shalt bring thy father, and thy mother, and thy brethren, and all thy father's household, home unto thee.

And she said, According unto your words, so be it. And she sent them away, and they departed: and she bound the scarlet line in the window.

And Joshua saved Rahab the harlot alive, and her father's household, and all that she had, and she dwelleth in Israel even unto this day; because she hid the messengers, which Joshua sent to spy out Jericho.

CHILDREN OF GIBEON

ix, 3—13, 15, 16, 22, 23, 26

AND when the inhabitants of Gibeon heard what Joshua had done unto Jericho and to Ai, they did work wilily, and went and made as if they had been ambassadors, and took old sacks upon their asses, and wine bottles, old, and rent, and bound up; and old shoes and clouted upon their feet, and old garments upon them; and all the bread of their provision was dry and mouldy. And they went to Joshua unto the camp at Gilgal, and said unto him, and to the men of Israel, We be come from a far country; now therefore make ye a league with us.

And the men of Israel said unto the Hivites, Peradventure ye dwell among us; and how shall we make a league with you? And they said unto Joshua . . . From a very far country thy servants are come because of the name of the Lord thy God: for we have heard the fame of him, and all that he did in Egypt. And all that he did to the two kings of the Amorites, that were beyond Jordan, to Sihon king of Heshbon, and to Og king of Bashan, which was at Ashtaroth.

Wherefore our elders and all the inhabitants of our country spake to us, saying, Take victuals with you for the journey, and go to meet them, and say unto them, We are your servants: therefore now make ye a league with us. This our bread we took hot for our provision out of our houses on the day we came forth to go unto you; but now, behold, it is dry, and it is mouldy: and these bottles of wine, which we filled, were new; and, behold, they be rent: and these our garments and our shoes are become old by reason of the very long journey.

And Joshua made peace with them, and made a league with them, to let them live: and the princes of the congregation sware unto them. And it came to pass at the end of three days after they had made a league with them, that they heard that they were their neighbours, and that they dwelt among them.

And Joshua called for them, and he spake unto them, saying, Wherefore have ye beguiled us, saying, We are very far from you; when ye dwell among us? Now therefore ye are cursed, and there shall none of you be freed from being bondmen, and hewers of wood and drawers of water for the house of my God.

And so did he unto them, and delivered them out of the hand of the children of Israel, that they slew them not

ODE TO VICTORY

x, 12—15

THEN spake Joshua to the Lord in the day when the Lord delivered up the Amorites before the children of Israel, and he said in the sight of Israel,

Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon;
And thou, Moon, in the valley of Ajalon.
And the sun stood still, and the moon stayed,
Until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies.

Is not this written in the book of Jasher? So the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and hasted not to go down about a whole day. And there was no day like that before it or after it, that the Lord hearkened unto the voice of a man; for the Lord fought for Israel. And Joshua returned, and all Israel with him unto the camp to Gilgal.

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Joshua

I

The Book in Outline

Joshua's Career of Conquest in the Land of Canaan

by REV. F. E. ENGLAND, M.A., B.D., Ph.D.

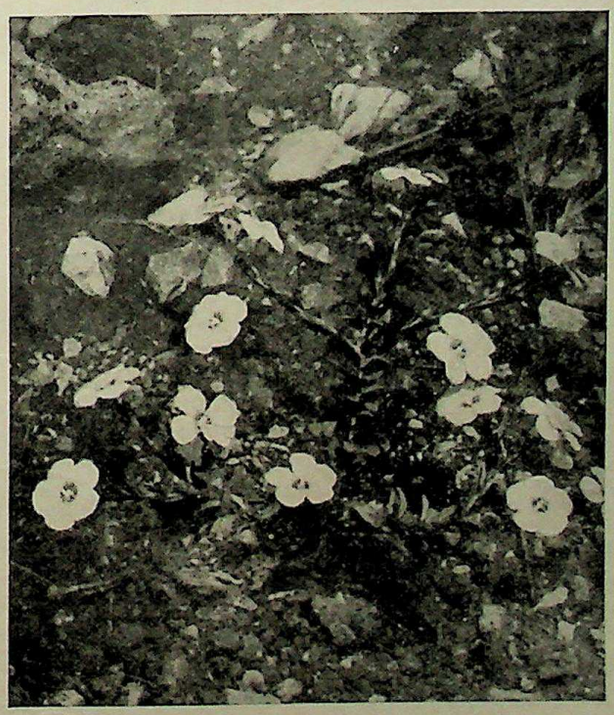
Minister of Bexhill Presbyterian Church.

AFTER the death of Moses, the divine summons came to Joshua, son of Nun and servant of Moses, to lead the Israelites over Jordan into the Promised Land. The limits of Israel's territory were to be the Edomite and Egyptian wilderness in the south, Anti-Lebanon in the east, the river Euphrates in the north, and the Mediterranean sea in the west, embracing all the land of the Hittites. And God said, "There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life: as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee. Be strong and of a good courage: for thou shalt cause this people to inherit the land which I sware unto their fathers to give them. Only be strong and very courageous, to observe to do according to all the law, which Moses my servant commanded thee: turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest have good success whithersoever thou goest . . . be not affrighted, neither be thou dismayed: for the LORD thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest" (Chapter i, 5-9, R.V.).

The command having been conveyed by the officers to the people, Joshua called up the men of the tribes of Reuben, Gad and Eastern Manasseh to lead their brethren into the Promised Land, returning to their own territory only after the final settlement. This they readily agreed to do.

Two spies, sent by Joshua to Jericho to view the land, were lodging in the house of Rahab, a harlot, when the king of Jericho ordered her to bring them before him. Having concealed the spies among the flax-stalks on the roof, Rahab told the king's messengers that she had admitted the men to her house not knowing their identity, but that they had departed under cover of darkness. While the officers went in pursuit toward Jordan, Rahab went up to the roof to parley with the spies. "I know," she said, "that your God has given you this land and that nothing can stand before you, for we have heard what happened to the Egyptians at the Red Sea and to Sihon and Og, kings of the Amorites, and we are in terror of you. Now, therefore, since I have dealt kindly with you, give me a token that you will deal kindly with my father's house and save the lives of my father, mother, brethren and sisters from death." The spies replied "We pledge you our own lives that when Jehovah gives us the land, we will deal kindly and truly with you." Thereupon Rahab let them down by a rope through the window of her house which stood upon the wall, bidding them to make for the opposite mountain and hide there for three days until their pursuers should have returned to the city. Reaffirming their pledge, the spies requested the woman to tie a scarlet thread to the window through which they made their escape, gather her father's household into the house, and preserve the utmost secrecy about the affair. They then took cover in the mountain until their pursuers had abandoned their quest, and after three days they returned to Joshua with news of the panic among the inhabitants of Jericho.

Early next morning Joshua moved the camp from Shittim to Jordan, and after a pause of three days the officers commanded the people to be ready to advance as soon as they saw the priests and Levites carrying the Ark of the Covenant. They were to keep a space of about two thousand cubits, or 1,100 yards, between them and the Ark, not coming near it, yet keeping it in view so that they might know the way, for, they said, Ye have not passed this way heretofore. Calling upon the people to sanctify themselves, Joshua gave the order to the priests, and they took up the Ark of the Covenant and went before the people. And the Lord said unto Joshua, "This day will I begin to magnify thee in the sight of all Israel, that they may know that as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee." Joshua then instructed the priests to stand at the brink of the rushing river, and turning to the people he said, "Hereby ye shall know that the living God is among you, and that he will without fail drive out from before you the Canaanites, and the



FLAX ON THE PLAIN OF MOAB. Long before the time when Rahab hid the two spies "with the stalks of flax, which she had laid in order upon the roof" (Joshua ii, 6) to dry, this stem fibre was spun, and woven into linen. It is still cultivated in Palestine, and pink flax, the variety shown above, which grows wild where the plough has not ousted it, is one of the beauties of Moab.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

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Hittites, and the Hivites, and the Perizzites, and the Girgashites, and the Amorites, and the Jebusites. Behold, the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord . . . passeth over before you into Jordan . . . And it shall come to pass, as soon as the soles of the feet of the priests that bear the ark of the LORD, the Lord of all the earth, shall rest in the waters of Jordan, that the waters of Jordan shall be cut off from the waters that come down from above; and they shall stand upon an heap." (Chapter iii, 10-13).

As the priests took up the Ark the people left their tents and followed, and when the feet of those that bore the Ark were dipped into the brink of the river, swollen as it was accustomed to be at the time of the harvest, the upper waters rose up in a heap a great distance away at Adam by Zarethan, and the lower waters that went down to Arabah to the Salt Sea were clean cut off. And while the priests stood firm in the midst of Jordan bearing the Ark of the Covenant, all Israel passed over on dry ground.

In accordance with the divine command, Joshua selected twelve men, one from every tribe, and said unto them, "Pass over before the ark of the Lord your God into the midst of Jordan, and take you up every man of you a stone upon his shoulder, according to the number of the tribes of the children of Israel, and ye shall carry them over with you, and leave them in the lodging place where ye shall lodge this night; that this may be a sign among you, that when your children ask you in time to come, saying, What mean ye by these stones? then ye shall answer them, The waters of Jordan were cut off before the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord when it passed over Jordan. And these stones shall be for a memorial unto the children of Israel for ever." And it was done as Joshua commanded, and Joshua set up twelve stones in the midst of Jordan in the place where the feet of the priests which bare the Ark of the Covenant stood.

So when the people were all passed over, about forty thousand, armed for war, and led by the tribes of Reuben, Gad and Eastern Manasseh, they feared Joshua as they had feared Moses, for the Lord had magnified Joshua in the sight of all Israel.

And Joshua commanded the priests to come up out of Jordan, and it came to pass that when the priests came up, and the soles of their feet were lifted up into dry ground, the waters of Jordan returned to their place and overflowed their banks as before. And it was the tenth day of the first month when the people encamped in Gilgal east of Jordan.

The twelve stones which were in Jordan Joshua set up in Gilgal, saying to the children of Israel, "When your children shall ask their fathers in time to come saying, What mean these stones? then ye shall let your children know saying, Israel came over this Jordan on dry land. For the Lord your God dried up the waters of Jordan from before you, until ye were passed over, as the Lord your God did to the Red Sea, which he dried up from before us, until we were passed over; that all the peoples of the earth may know the hand of the Lord, that it is mighty, that ye may fear the Lord your God for ever."

At the news of the miraculous crossing of Jordan, the kings of the Amorites and of the Canaanites were smitten with fear so that they were incapable of vigorous defence. And about this time Joshua, by command of God, had the Israelites circumcised with knives of flint at Gibeah-Haaraloth (the hill of the foreskins). The reason for the general circumcision was that the circumcised males who escaped from Egypt had died during the forty years in the wilderness, for the Lord sware that because of their disobedience they should not enter the land flowing with milk and honey promised to their fathers. Their children who were born in the wilderness had not been circumcised. When the circumcision was accomplished the people remained in the camp until they were healed. And the Lord said unto Joshua: "This day have I rolled away the reproach of Egypt from off you." It was on this account that the place of this first encampment was named Gilgal, that is, Rolling.

Being now circumcised, the children of Israel kept the passover on the plains of Jericho on the evening of the fourteenth day of the month. On the next day they ate of the old corn of the land, unleavened cakes and parched corn; and the manna ceased when they ate of the produce of the land of Canaan.

JOSHUA: A SYNOPSIS

Passing over Jordan

	Chapters
Joshua Appointed to Succeed Moses...	i, 1-9
Preparing to cross Jordan	i, 10-18
The Adventure of the Spies	ii
Crossing Jordan	iii—iv
Circumcising the Nation at Gilgal ...	v

The Conquest of Canaan

The Capture of Jericho	vi
The Sin of Achan and the Capture of Ai	vii—viii, 29
The Law-giving on Mount Ebal ...	viii, 30-35
The League with the Gibeonites ...	ix
Slaughter at Gibeon and Beth-horon and the Conquest of Southern Canaan	x
Battle of Merom, and the Conquest of Northern Canaan	xi—xii

The Division among the Tribes

Territories of Caleb and Judah ...	xiv—xv
Territories of Ephraim and Western Manasseh	xvi—xvii
Territory of Benjamin...	xviii, 11-28
Territories of Simeon, Zebulun, Issachar, Asher, Naphtali, Dan and Joshua	xix

Establishment of Special Cities

Cities of Refuge	xx
Levitical Cities	xxi

Final Acts of Joshua

The Return of the Tribes of Reuben, Gad and Eastern Manasseh ...	xxii, 1-10
The Dispute about the Altar	xxii, 11-34
Joshua's Farewell Speeches and the Establishment of the Covenant ...	xxiii—xxiv

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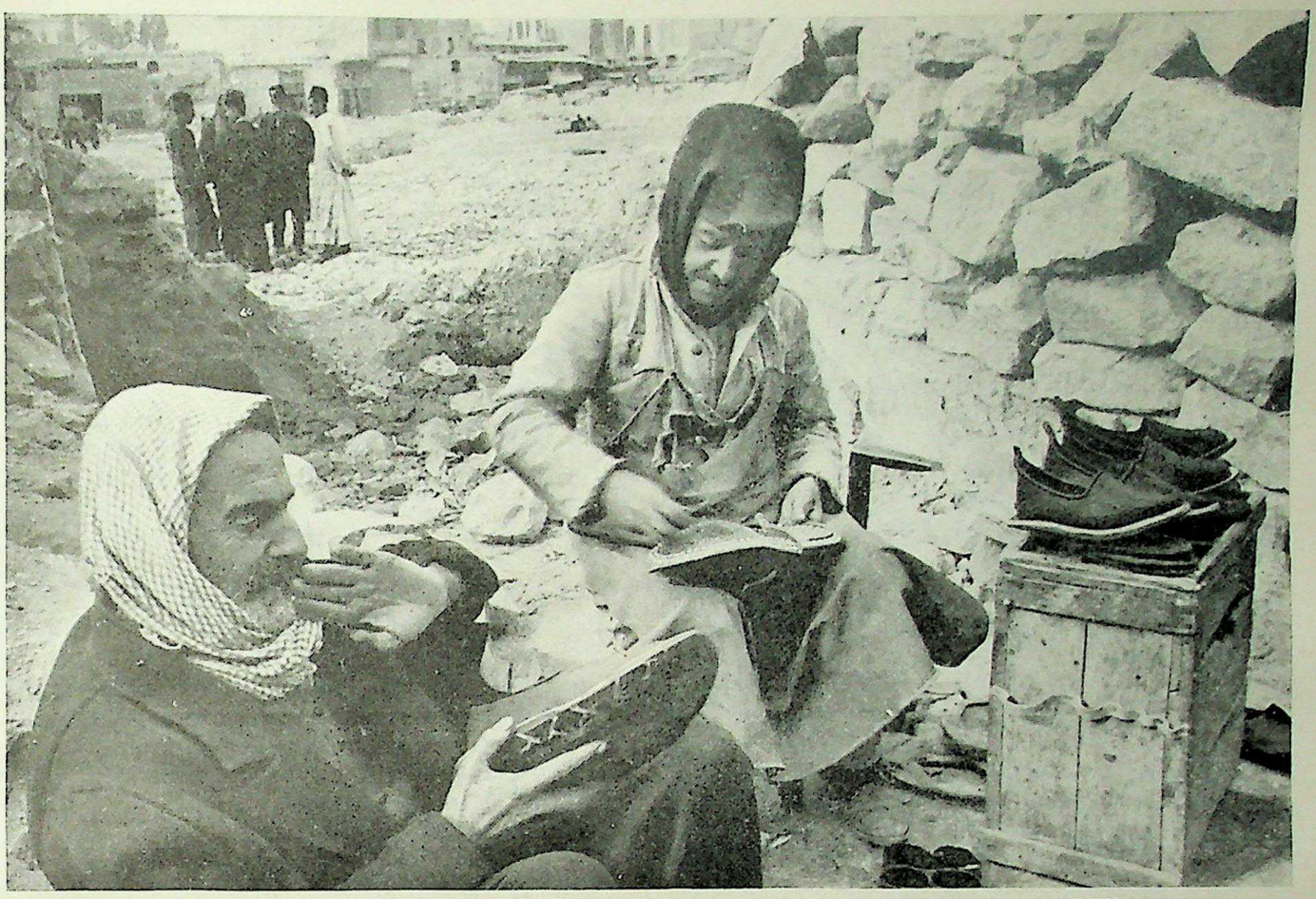

"OLD SHOES AND CLOUTED." This cobbler in his open-air workshop plentifully studs the sole of a boot with nails. Such clouting is in demand by walkers on the stony roads near his village in Hauran. Shoes were thus mended in Joshua's time. The wily Gibeonites put on "old shoes and clouted" (Joshua ix, 3-15) to appear as if they had been obliged to cobble them during a long journey.

Photo, "Daily Mirror"

While at Jericho, Joshua was confronted by a man having in his hand a drawn sword. "Art thou for us or for our adversaries?" he asked. "Nay," replied the other, "I am come as captain of the host of the Lord." Falling on his face in obeisance Joshua said: "What has my Lord to say to his servant?" And the visitor replied: "Put off thy shoe from off thy foot, for the place whereon thou standest is holy." And Joshua did so.

The Israelites Compass the Walls of Jericho

JERICHO now being in a state of siege, the Lord said to Joshua: "See, I have given into thy hand Jericho, and its king, and the mighty men of valour. Let all your warriors compass the city once daily for six days, seven priests bearing seven trumpets going before the Ark. On the seventh day ye shall compass the city seven times, and the priests shall make a long blast with the ram's horn, whereupon all the people shall shout with a great shout and the wall of the city shall fall flat and the people shall advance." So Joshua called the priests and the people and instructed them, and appointed armed men to precede and follow the Ark-bearers with their trumpets. And Joshua warned the people on no account to shout until the word of

"LOOSE THY SHOE FROM OFF THY FOOT." Shoes are still removed or covered by special slippers, in accordance with the ancient custom, when entering a Moslem shrine or sacred site. It is related in Joshua v, 15, that the angel of the host of the Lord appeared before the siege of Jericho and said, "Loose thy shoe from off thy foot; for the place whereon thou standest is holy. And Joshua did so."

Photo, Dorien Leigh

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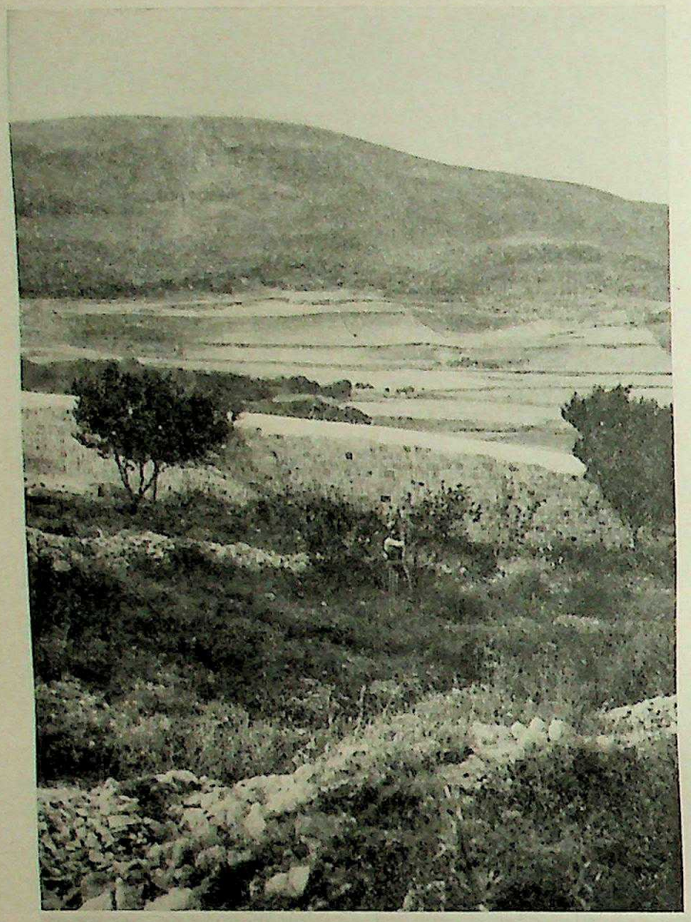
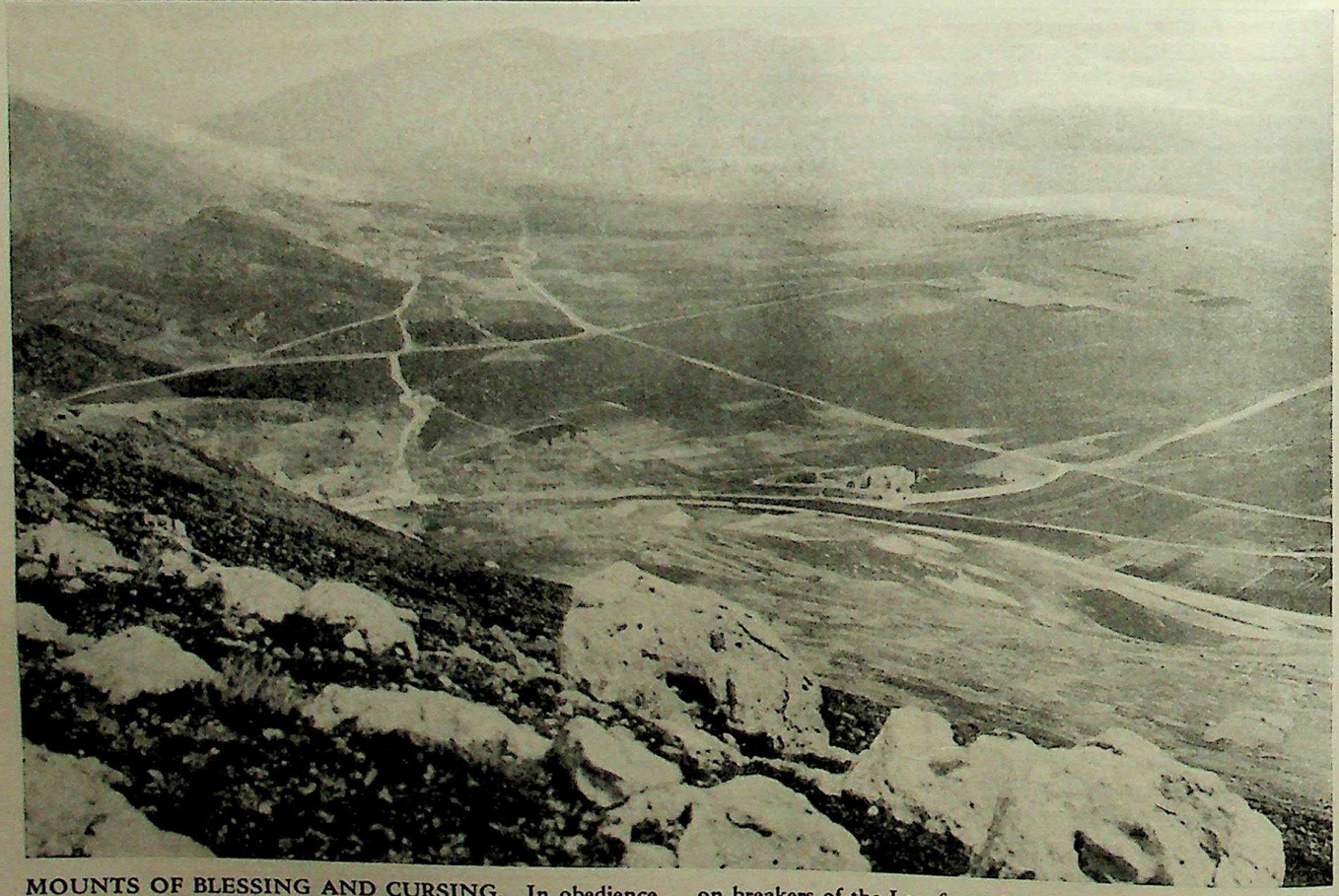


command was given. For six days the procession marched round the city, and on the seventh day they encompassed the city seven times, and on the seventh Joshua gave the order to shout, " for," said he, " the city and all that is in it shall be given up to the Lord. Only Rahab the harlot and all that are with her in the house shall live, because she hid our messengers." He further commanded them to refrain from looting lest harm come upon the camp ; " but," said he, " all the silver and gold and vessels of brass and of iron are holy unto the Lord, they shall come into the treasury of the Lord " (vi, 1-19).

So the people shouted, the priests blew their trumpets, the wall fell, and the city was taken and everything in it, men, women, and cattle, was destroyed with the edge of the sword, save that Rahab and her household and kindred were preserved. The city was burnt with fire, the gold and the silver and the vessels of brass and of iron having been removed to the treasury of the house of the Lord. And Joshua uttered an oath : " Cursed be he who attempts to build this city ; with the loss of his firstborn shall he lay the foundation, and with the loss of his youngest son shall he set up the gates." So the Lord was with Joshua, and his fame was in all the land.

Now because Achan of the tribe of Judah kept part of the spoil, the anger of the Lord was kindled against the children of Israel. And when Joshua sent three



MOUNTS OF BLESSING AND CURSING. In obedience to the command of Moses, after the Israelites had crossed Jordan Joshua divided them for a solemn ceremony. He placed " half of them over against mount Gerizim and half of them over against mount Ebal " (Joshua viii, 33) while the blessings on the people were pronounced from the former and the cursings on breakers of the Law from the latter. Each mountain has a natural amphitheatre on its side. The upper photograph shows Mount Ebal ; in the lower picture its foot is visible on the left and Mount Gerizim dominates the background. In the valley between them the outskirts of Nablus—Shechem—can be seen. There Joshua had his headquarters at the end of his career.

Upper photo, American Colony in Jerusalem; lower, Missionary Film Committee

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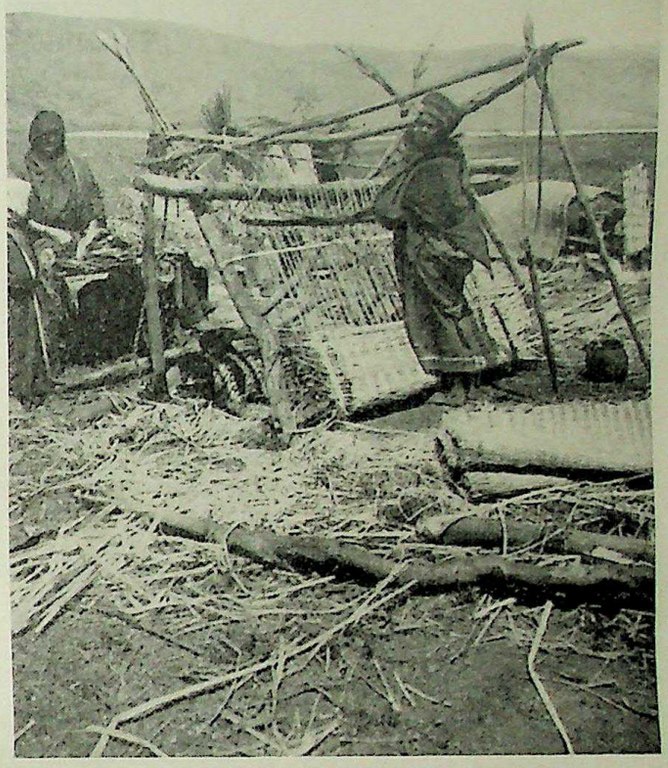
thousand men against Ai (which the spies reported as weak) and they were repulsed, the courage of the people departed. And Joshua and the elders prostrated themselves before the Lord, and Joshua said: "Alas, O Lord God, wherefore hast thou brought this people over Jordan to deliver us into the hands of the Amorites to cause us to perish? Would that we had been content and dwelt beyond Jordan. O Lord, what shall I say after Israel have turned their backs before their enemies? For the Canaanites and all the inhabitants of the land shall hear of it, and shall compass us round and shall cut off our name from the earth; and what wilt thou do for thy great name?" And God made known to Joshua that the discomfiture of Israel followed from their disobedience, "for," He said, "I will not be with you any more except ye destroy the accursed thing. Sanctify the people and let the tribes pass before the Lord, and the tribe which the Lord shall select shall divide into families, and the family into households and the household man by man. And it shall be that the guilty man with all that he has shall be burnt with fire because he has transgressed the covenant of the Lord and wrought folly in Israel."

So Joshua brought the tribes, and the tribe of Judah was selected, and out of Judah the family of the Zerahites, and out of the Zerahites the household of Zabdi, and out of Zabdi's household Achan was taken. And when Achan had confessed to having taken clothing and silver and gold from the spoil and hid it in his tent, Joshua brought the offender with the mantle, the silver, the gold and the sons and daughters of Achan with his oxen, asses, sheep and tent and all that he had, and stoned them with stones and burnt them with fire, raising a cairn of stones to mark the site. And he called the place Achor, which means Troubling.



WEAVING BY THE WATERS OF MEROM. Where the upper Jordan flows into the shallow basin of Lake Huleh, popularly identified with the Waters of Merom (Joshua xi, 5), are great jungles of papyrus reeds—the Biblical bulrushes. These supply material for a busy industry of mat-weaving. This is carried on by the Beduin women of the swampy and insect-infested district, while their menfolk's occupation is fishing. A concession has been granted for draining the area.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

Ai Captured by Joshua's Stratagem

THE divine favour thus restored, Joshua sent by night a company of men to lie in ambush west of Ai. Next morning, having posted five thousand between Beth-el and Ai, he moved the people to the north of the city while he himself went into the valley below. Unaware of the ambush, the people of Ai rushed upon Joshua and his men, who took flight toward the wilderness. Then Joshua signalled with a javelin and the ambush entered the deserted city and set it on fire. Seeing this, the main body of the Israelites turned upon their pursuers and slaughtered them. Their king was hanged upon a tree until eventide, when his body was cast out of the gateway of the city and the place marked with a cairn.

In accordance with the command of Moses, Joshua built an altar of unhewn stone on Mount Ebal, and after sacrificing burnt offerings and peace offerings, he wrote upon the stones in the presence of the people a copy of the law of Moses. Facing the priests and Levites who carried the Ark of the Covenant stood the entire nation, elders, officers, judges, women, children and strangers, one half on Mount Gerizim, and the other on Mount Ebal. And Joshua blessed them and read all the words of the law, the blessing and the curse (Chapter viii, 30-35).

The kings of Canaan now united to fight Joshua, but the Gibeonites secured an alliance with him by trickery. Taking with them old sacks, patched wine-skins, old shoes and garments and mouldy provisions, they represented themselves as having come from a distant land to make a covenant with the victorious Israel. Three days after the league had been formed by the princes of the congregation, the identity of the Gibeonites was discovered, and they confessed that it was from fear that they had acted treacherously. Since the covenant could not be broken, Joshua laid upon them a curse, and compelled them to serve as hewers of wood and drawers of water for the congregation and for the altar of the Lord wherever he might choose.

Hearing of the treachery of the Gibeonites, Adoni-zedec, king of Jerusalem, together with the kings of Hebron, Jarmuth, Lachish, and Eglon, made war with Gibeon. The Gibeonites thereupon appealed to Joshua, who, marching by night and day, came upon the united armies suddenly, inflicting great slaughter upon them at Gibeon and chasing them to the slopes of Beth-horon. And as they descended Beth-horon, the Lord cast down great stones from

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IN THE VALLEY OF AJALON WHERE JOSHUA DEFEATED THE AMORITES. On the northern border of the lowlands of the Shephelah, with its ranges of chalk and limestone hills, is situated the valley of Ajalon, scene of Joshua's epoch-making victory over the five kings of the Amorites, arrayed with their hosts against Israel's allies, the Gibeonites. Down the valley he drove the enemy as far as Makkedah, which lay on the open plain beyond. In the Biblical narrative is incorporated the fragment of a triumphal ode from the lost "Book of Jasher": "Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon; and thou, Moon, in the valley of Ajalon" (Joshua x, 12, 13), so that the day might not end "until the people had avenged themselves".

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

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heaven upon them even unto Azekah, and more were killed by the hailstones than by the swords of Israel.

In that day Joshua exclaimed :

> Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon ;
> And thou, Moon, in the valley of Ajalon.
> And the sun stood still, and the moon stayed,
> Until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies (x, 12-13).

And the sun stayed in the midst of heaven, and never was there a day like it, for the Lord fought for Israel.

As for the five kings, they were detected in the cave at Makkedah, and when the Israelites had finished pursuing their enemies Joshua brought the kings from the cave and called for his chiefs to place their feet on the necks of the kings, saying to the people : " Fear not, nor be dismayed, be strong and of good courage: for thus shall the LORD do to all your enemies against whom ye fight." The kings were then hanged upon five trees until the evening, when their bodies were cast into the cave where they had hidden.

And Joshua passed through the cities of Makkedah, Libnah, Lachish, Eglon, Hebron, and Debir, subduing their people, and he extended his conquest to Kadesh-barnea and Gaza and the country of Goshen and to Gibeon. And Israel returned to their camp at Gilgal.

In the north, Jabin, king of Hazor, rallied the kings of Madon, Shimron, Achshaph and the kings of the hill country, and Arabah, and the lowland, and the heights of Dor, and the Canaanites east and west, and the Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Jebusites and Hivites ; and they massed together at the waters of Merom to fight with Israel. Strengthened by the Lord, Joshua and his men fell upon them suddenly and chased them even to the valley of Mizpeh, destroying their horses and chariots. The kings were utterly destroyed, together with their cities, except those which stood on mounds, and the people took the spoil of the cities.

SO Joshua subjugated the hill country and all the south, and all Goshen and the lowland and Arabah from Mount Halak to Baal-gad, and no city made peace with Israel save only Gibeon. Joshua destroyed also the Anakim in the hill country, so that none remained except in Gaza, Gath and Ashdod. And when the whole of the land was taken the Israelites ceased from war.

THE word of the Lord came to Joshua, now old and stricken in years, to divide the unconquered territory, namely the Philistine country, the Phoenician-Canaanite coastline and the Lebanon district, among the nine and a half tribes. To Reuben, Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh territory had already been allotted east of Jordan, and to the tribe of Levi no portion was given.

Caleb having been promised the land upon which he set foot when he went out from Kadesh-barnea to spy out the land, Joshua gave him Hebron for an inheritance. And Caleb drove out the sons of Anak from the city of Arba and advanced to Debir, offering Achsah, his daughter, to the man who should take the city. Othniel, his younger brother, won her and she obtained from Caleb the upper and nether springs of water.

To Judah was given a territory bounded on the south by the southern end of the Dead Sea, Kadesh, the watercourse of Egypt and the Mediterranean ; and on the north by Beth-hoglah, the valley of the son of Hinnom, Jabneel and the Mediterranean, with all the towns and villages.

To Ephraim and Manasseh, children of Joseph, was given the centre of Palestine, bounded on the north by the Plain of Esdraelon and by the territories of Asher and Issachar, and on the south by the territories of Dan and Benjamin. Ephraim's border extended from the north-west border of Benjamin to Michmethah eastward to Taanath-Shiloh and Janohah and to the Jordan near Jericho. And the Canaanites were not driven out of Gezer but remained as slaves to the children of Ephraim.

Machir, the firstborn of Manasseh, had Gilead and Bashan, and to the rest of the half tribe of Manasseh was given the land from Asher to Michmethah and En-tappuah. And Manasseh had also Beth-shean, Ibleam, Dor, En-dor, Taanach, Megiddo

WHAT FAMOUS DIVINES HAVE SAID ABOUT THE BIBLE

Bishop Jewel (1522-1571). Cities fall, empires come to nothing, kingdoms fade away as smoke. Where is Numa, Minos, Lycurgus ? Where are their books ? and what has become of their laws ? But that this book (the Bible) no tyrant should have been able to consume, no tradition to choke, no heretic maliciously to corrupt ; that it should stand unto this day, amid the wreck of all that was human, without the alteration of one sentence so as to change the doctrine taught therein—surely there is a very singular providence, claiming our attention in a most remarkable manner.

Peter Heylin (1599-1662).

> If thou art merry, here are airs ;
> If melancholy, here are prayers ;
> If studious, here are those things writ
> Which may deserve thy ablest wit ;
> If hungry, here is food divine ;
> If thirsty, nectar, heavenly wine.

Matthew Henry (1662-1714). The Scriptures were written, not to make us astronomers, but to make us saints.

Dean Swift (1667-1745). The translators of the Bible were masters of an English style much fitter for that work than any we see in our present writings ; the which is owing to the simplicity that runs through the whole.

Isaac Watts (1674-1748). In Job and the Psalms we shall find more sublime ideas, more elevated language, than in any of the heathen versifiers of Greece or Rome.

William Ellery Channing (1780-1842). The incongruity of the Bible with the age of its birth ; its freedom from earthly mixtures ; its original, unborrowed, solitary greatness ; the suddenness with which it broke forth amidst the general gloom ; these, to me, are strong indications of its Divine descent ; I cannot reconcile them with a human origin.

John Keble (1792-1866).

> There is a Book, who runs may read,
> Which heavenly truth imparts,
> And all the lore its scholars need,
> Pure eyes and Christian hearts.

Dean Stanley (1815-1881). You never get to the end of Christ's words. There is something in them always behind. They pass into proverbs, into laws, into doctrines, into consolations ; but they never pass away, and after all the use that is made of them they are still not exhausted.

Charles Haddon Spurgeon (1834-1892). Nobody ever outgrows Scripture ; the book widens and deepens with our years.

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ONCE A STRONGHOLD DESTROYED BY JOSHUA. The site of Hazor, great fortified camp of the Canaanites, which, as related in the Book of Joshua (xi, 10-13), that renowned commander captured and burnt, was discovered at El Qedah in 1926 by Professor J. Garstang. Excavations have shown that this stronghold at the foot of the Galilean hills and about four miles west of Lake Huleh was large enough for 50,000 men. Its position was one of immense strategic importance since it dominated the northern roads to Sidon and Damascus and southward to Megiddo. Pottery deposits suggest its destruction about 1400 B.C.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

and their villages. The Canaanites who were not driven out remained as slaves.

And when Ephraim and Manasseh complained of their small inheritance, Joshua exhorted them to clear the forests of the hill country.

THERE remained seven tribes without inheritance, and Joshua called upon them to put away their slackness and appoint three men for each tribe to go through the land and survey it with a view to further division. The survey completed and "described in a book," Joshua cast lots in Shiloh and divided the land. The portion that fell to Benjamin was bounded by the Jordan north of Jericho, Bethel, Ataroth-Addar on the hill south of lower Beth-horon, and Kirjath-Jearim on the border of Judah (xviii, 12-15).

The territories that were assigned to the other tribes may be traced upon the map in page 222. To the tribe of Simeon were given Beer-sheba and the surrounding villages in the south. This district was originally assigned to Judah, whose portion was found to be too large. To Zebulun was given a portion bounded on the north by Dabbasheth and on the south by Daberath. The portion granted to Issachar lay immediately to the south-east of Zebulun, and was bounded on the south and west by the land of Manasseh, which in turn was bounded on the south and east by the tribe of Ephraim. Immediately north-west of Zebulun was the tribe of Asher, who were given the maritime country extending from Accho to Tyre. Inland from the Asher territory the tribe of Naphtali was allotted the eastern portion of Upper and Lower Galilee. The country north of them was given to the tribe of Dan, who also subdued the territory of Leshem and possessed it.

WHEN the land had been divided, the Israelites gave Joshua Timnath-serah, the city of his own choice in the hill country of Ephraim. And he dwelt there.

By command of God, Joshua called upon the people to set apart cities of refuge to which a man might flee who had slain any person unintentionally. Such a man standing at the gate and declaring his cause to the elders of the city should be taken in and given a place to dwell in. And if the avenger of blood pursued him, he should be protected because he smote his brother unawares and without malice aforethought. And he should be allowed to dwell in that city until he stood before the congregation for judgement and until the death of the high priest for the time being, when he should return to his own city. So they set apart Kedesh in Galilee, and Shechem in Ephraim, and Kirjath-arba (or Hebron) in Judah, and Bezer on the tableland belonging to Reuben, and Ramoth in Gilead of the tribe of Gad, and Golan in Bashan of the tribe of Manasseh—six cities in all.

Then came the heads of the fathers' houses of the Levites to Joshua and to the heads of the fathers'

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houses of the tribes of the Israelites in Shiloh, saying, "The Lord commanded by the hand of Moses to give us cities to dwell in, with the pasture lands thereof for our cattle." And the Israelites granted them cities from their inheritance according to the commandment of the Lord. Of the families of the Kohathites the children of Aaron the priest were given thirteen cities, namely, Kirjath-arba (or Hebron) in Judah with its suburbs (but the fields and villages of the city they gave to Caleb), Jattir, Eshtemoa, Holon, Debir, Ain, Juttah, and Beth-shemesh, with their suburbs, from the territories of Judah and Simeon; and Gibeon, Geba, Anathoth and Almon, with their suburbs, from the territory of Benjamin.

To the rest of the children of Kohath were given ten cities with their suburbs, namely, Shechem, Gezer, Kibzaim and Beth-horon from the territory of Ephraim; Eltekeh, Gibbethon, Aijalon and Gath-rimmon from the territory of Dan; and Tanach and Gath-rimmon from the territory of half the tribe of Manasseh.

The children of Gershon were given thirteen cities with their suburbs, namely Golan and Beesh-terah

"OF THE STOCK OF ABRAHAM." This Arab man and maid, descendants of Ishmael, picturesquely represent the most numerous race in Palestine. The Beduin camel-breeder from the south wears the characteristic roped scarf, which has been described as the most graceful headdress in the world. The girl belongs to the semi-Beduin clan living in papyrus-mat tents in the swamp country of Lake Huleh.

Photos, Keystone and American Colony in Jerusalem

from the territory of the half tribe of Manasseh; Kishon, Dabareh, Jarmuth and Engannim from the territory of Issachar; Mishal, Abdon, Helkath and Rehob from the territory of Asher; and Kedesh, Hammoth-dor and Kartan from the territory of Naphtali.

The families of the children of Merari were given twelve cities with their suburbs, namely Jokneam, Kartah, Dimnah and Nahalal from the territory of Zebulun; Bezer, Jahazah, Kedemoth and Mephaath from the territory of Reuben; Ramoth in Gilead, Mahanaim, Heshbon and Jazer from the territory of Gad.

So the Lord gave unto Israel the land which He sware to give unto their fathers, and they possessed it and had rest from their enemies. Of all the good things which the Lord had spoken to the house of Israel, not one failed to come to pass.

Joshua called the Reubenites and the Gadites and the half tribe of Manasseh, praised them for their

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faithful support of their brethren, blessed them, and bade them return to the territories assigned to them by Moses beyond Jordan. Only take diligent heed, he said, to do the commandment and the law which Moses the servant of the Lord commanded you, to love the Lord your God, and to walk in all His ways, and to keep His commandments, and to cleave unto Him, and to serve Him with all your heart and with all your soul.

And as they departed to their inheritance, Joshua said, "Return with much wealth in your tents, and with very much cattle, with silver, gold, brass, iron, and very much raiment; divide the spoil of your enemies with your brethren." So the tribes returned from Shiloh, and when they came to the region of Jordan, they built a great altar.

Altar of Witness Raised beyond Jordan

WHEN the children of Israel heard that the two and a half tribes had built an altar confronting the land of Canaan and on the side of Jordan that belonged to the western tribes, the whole congregation of Israel assembled at Shiloh to war against Reuben, Gad and Eastern Manasseh. And the Israelites sent Phinehas, son of Eleazar the priest, and ten princes representing the ten tribes, to Reuben, Gad and Eastern Manasseh saying, "What trespass is this that ye have committed against the God of Israel, to turn away this day from following the Lord, in that ye have builded you an altar to rebel this day against the Lord? Is the iniquity of Peor too little for us, from which we have not cleansed ourselves unto this day, although there came a plague upon the congregation of the Lord? And it will be, seeing ye rebel today against the Lord, that tomorrow He will be wroth with the whole congregation of Israel. If the land of your possession be unclean, then pass ye over unto the land of the possession of the Lord, wherein the Lord's tabernacle dwelleth, and take possession among us; but rebel not against the Lord, nor rebel against us, in building an altar besides the altar of the Lord our God. Did not Achan commit a trespass concerning the devoted spoil? And he perished not alone in his iniquity."

The children of Reuben, Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh called upon God to witness that not in rebellion or trespass had they built an altar, but to offer thereon burnt offering, meat offering and peace offerings, so that in time to come their children might not say, What have we to do with the Lord, the God of Israel, for he hath made Jordan a border between us and the rest of the Israelites? We have no portion in the Lord. And they said, "Behold the pattern of the altar of the Lord which our fathers made; it shall be a witness between us and you."

And Phinehas and the princes were well pleased and said to the children of Reuben, Gad and Manasseh, "This day we know that the Lord is in the midst of us, because ye have not committed this trespass against the Lord; now have ye delivered the children of Israel out of the hand of the Lord." And Phinehas and the princes brought word to the children of Israel and they were satisfied. And the altar was called Ed, which is, being interpreted, Witness (Chapter xxii, 11-34).

Now that the Israelites were at rest from their enemies, Joshua summoned all Israel, their elders, heads, judges and officers and said, "I am old and well stricken in years; and ye have seen all that the Lord your God hath done unto all these nations because of you for the Lord your God hath fought for you. Behold, I have allotted to you these nations that remain from all the nations that I have cut off, from Jordan westward to the great sea. The Lord will thrust them out from before you, and ye shall possess their land as he promised. Therefore be ye very courageous to keep and to do all that is written in the book of the law of Moses. Turn not aside therefrom to the right hand or to the left. Come not among these nations that remain and have nothing to do with their gods, but cleave unto the Lord your God as ye have done unto this day . . . . . for if ye shall in any wise go back and cleave unto these nations that remain among you, and make marriages with them, know ye for a certainty that the Lord your God will no more drive these nations from out of your sight, but they shall be a snare and a trap unto you, and a scourge in your sides, and thorns in your eyes . . . .

"Behold, this day I am going the way of all the earth. Ye know in your hearts that God hath not failed you. And it shall be that as all the good things he promised have come to you, so if ye transgress the covenant of the Lord your God and go and serve other gods and bow down to them, he will bring upon you all the evil things, and ye shall perish quickly from off the good land that he hath given unto you."

God's Promise to the Invaders

AND Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel with their elders, heads, judges and officers to Shechem and they presented themselves before God. And Joshua said unto them, "Thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel, Your fathers dwelt of old time beyond the Euphrates and served other gods. And I brought Abraham from beyond the River to Canaan, and gave him Isaac, and to Isaac I gave Jacob and Esau. I gave Mount Seir to Esau, and Jacob went down into Egypt. And I sent Moses and Aaron and I plagued Egypt, and I brought your fathers out of Egypt; and the Egyptians who pursued with chariots and horsemen were drowned in the Red Sea, and ye dwelt many days in the wilderness. And I brought you to the land of the Amorites and destroyed them before you. Balak, King of Moab, sent Balaam to curse you, but I made him bless you. The men of Jericho fought against you, but I delivered them into your hand. And I sent the hornet before you which drove out the kings of the Amorites. And I gave you a land whereon thou hadst not laboured, and cities which ye built not, and vineyards and oliveyards which ye planted not.

"Now therefore fear the Lord and serve him in sincerity and in truth, putting away the gods your

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LINGERING BY THE WELL AS IN DEBORAH'S DAY

A peaceful terraced garden on the foothills of Judea is seen behind this village well, where the women gather to fill their pitchers in the evening. The well is still a meeting-place for the discussion of daily affairs, a civic centre, as in the time of Deborah (Judges v, 11) when " the righteous acts of the Lord " towards the inhabitants of His villages in Israel were talked of " in the places of drawing water." A rolling, bouldered plateau of moorland is a chief characteristic of much of Judea with but patchy evidence of the fertility attributed to the district in the Old Testament.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

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Gustave Doré, 1833-1883

"SUN, STAND THOU STILL . . ."

In this powerfully-imagined illustration, by Gustave Dore, Joshua is seen on the height above the Valley of Ajalon commanding the sun to stand still while the battle rages between the Israelites and the hosts of the five Canaanite kings (Joshua x, 12-15) " So the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and hasted not to go down about a whole day."

Though Dore won sensational success as a painter, exhibiting in the Paris Salon and at a gallery named after him in London, it was as an illustrator that he excelled. His designs for the " Bible," completed in 1866, are among his finest works.

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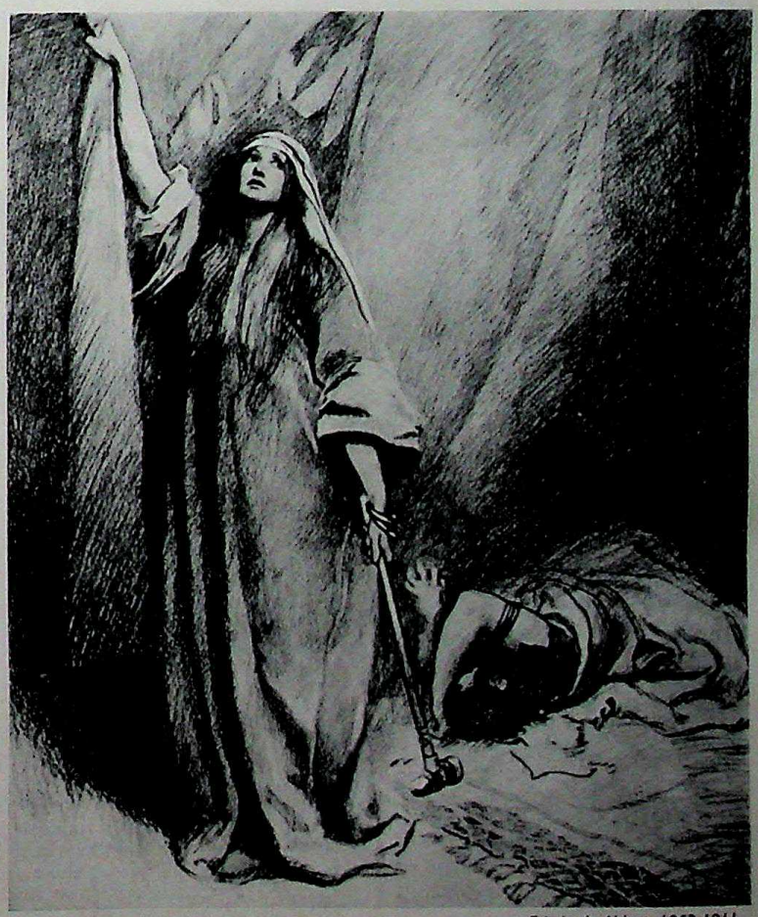
Sir John Everett Millais, 1829-1896

"LAMENT THE DAUGHTER OF JEPHTHAH"

Sentiment inspired Millais in the choice of his pictorial subjects, and no story in the world provides greater possibility of evoking sentiment in representation than that of Jephthah's Daughter (Judges xi, 30-40). In his painting, dated 1867, he has depicted the moment when Jephthah, captain of the Gileadites, tells his only child of his vow to sacrifice her as the first that came forth to meet him on his return from victory over Ammon.

Edwin Abbey, American painter who resided in England and achieved a considerable reputation as an illustrator of Biblical and poetical works, made this effective drawing of Jael, the Kenite woman, coming out of her tent (Judges iv, 22) after she had slain Israel's chief enemy, Sisera, head of the kings of Canaan. She smote him dead with her tent-hammer, the heavy wooden mallet she used when pitching camp.



Edwin A. Abbey, 1853-1911

"BEHOLD, SISERA LAY DEAD"

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"AND THE BONES OF JOSEPH . . . BURIED THEY IN SHECHEM"

When the Children of Israel left Egypt they brought with them the bones of Joseph, so that they might inter them in Shechem, where his father Jacob had bought "a parcel of ground" from the sons of Hamor "for an hundred pieces of silver" (Joshua xxiv, 32). Christians, Jews and Moslems have agreed that the place where the edifice, seen above, now stands in the shelter of Ebal and Gerizim is the probable site of the grave. All recognize Joseph's fine qualities and magnanimity, and venerate his memory. The monument has the usual form of a Moslem tomb-building and was restored in 1868, but the shrine dates back to the 4th century.

Photo. American Colony in Jerusalem

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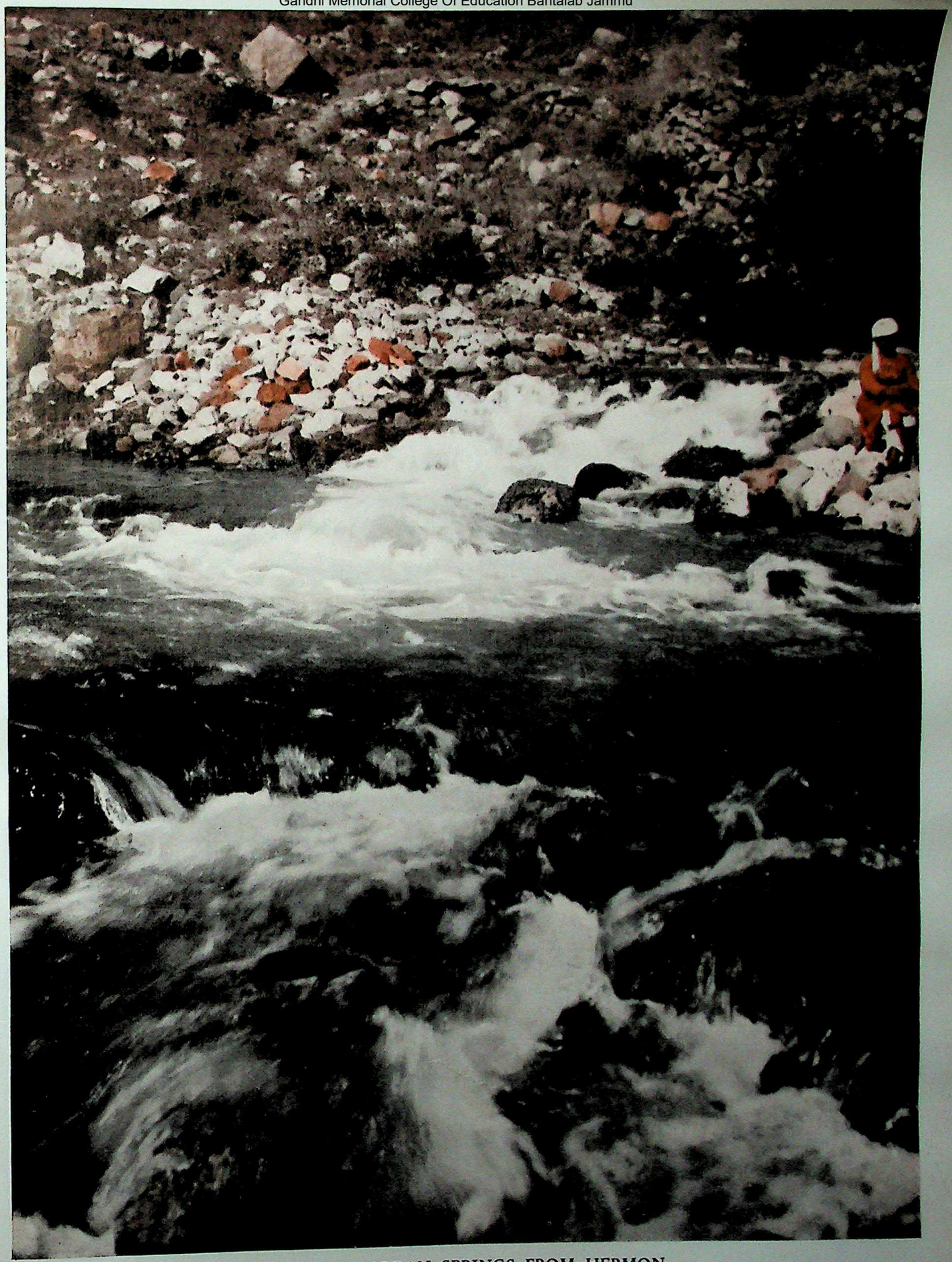

WHERE JORDAN SPRINGS FROM HERMON

One of the main sources of the Jordan—the crossing of which was the prelude to Joshua's campaigns—issues near the town of Banias which is situated in a nook between the infant river and triple-peaked Hermon. Out of the cavern, seen on the right of the photograph, bursts forth a copious flow from the very roots of that mountain which seems to watch over the whole course of Jordan. This source is a place of sacred associations. Perhaps the Psalmist had it in mind when he sang (Psalms xlii, 6, 7, R.V.) "Therefore do I remember thee from the land of Jordan, And the Hermons . . . Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of thy waterspouts."

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

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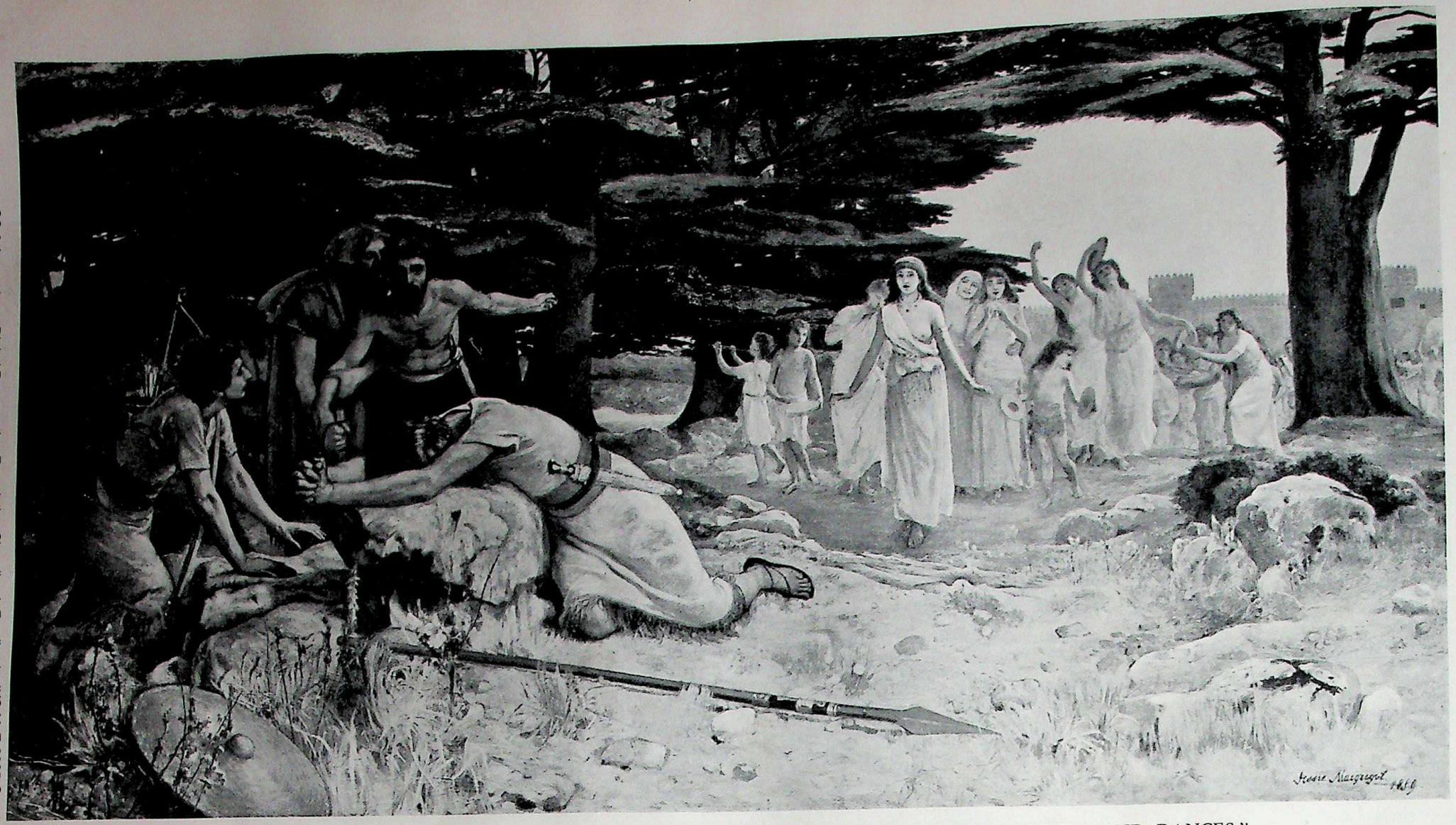

Jessie Macgregor

"HIS DAUGHTER CAME OUT TO MEET HIM WITH TIMBRELS AND DANCES"

In the crudely-formative era of Israel's history described in the Book of Judges, an era of rough justice, tribal wars and appalling acts of vengeance, men vowed valuable possessions as sacrifices to Jehovah, thinking thus to obtain the gift of victory. This painting of Jephthah the Gileadite (Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool), by Jessie Macgregor, sympathetically represents a meeting unsurpassed in tragedy. In accordance with custom the maidens, called by a triumphant messenger, came out to meet the returning warriors with music and dancing, led by their commander's only child. Jephthah, in anguish at her doom, cries out (Judges xi, 35), "Alas, my daughter! thou hast brought me very low . . . for I have opened my mouth unto the Lord, and I cannot go back."

Photo, Mansell

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Jean Paul Laurens, 1838-1921

"THE ANGEL OF THE LORD ASCENDED IN THE FLAME OF THE ALTAR"

To a childless couple of the tribe of Dan, dwelling in Zorah, an angel appeared to predict that they should have a son, who was to be a Nazarite dedicated to the service of God. Then the man took a kid and offered it upon a rock, in thanksgiving to Jehovah. As the sacrifice burnt the angel ascended "and Manoah and his wife looked on it, and fell on their faces to the ground" (Judges xiii, 19, 20). Jean Paul Laurens, the French painter of religious subjects, well-known for his frescoes of two incidents from the life of St. Genevieve in the Panthéon, Paris, has finely imagined the scene foretelling the birth of Samson, opponent of the Philistines.

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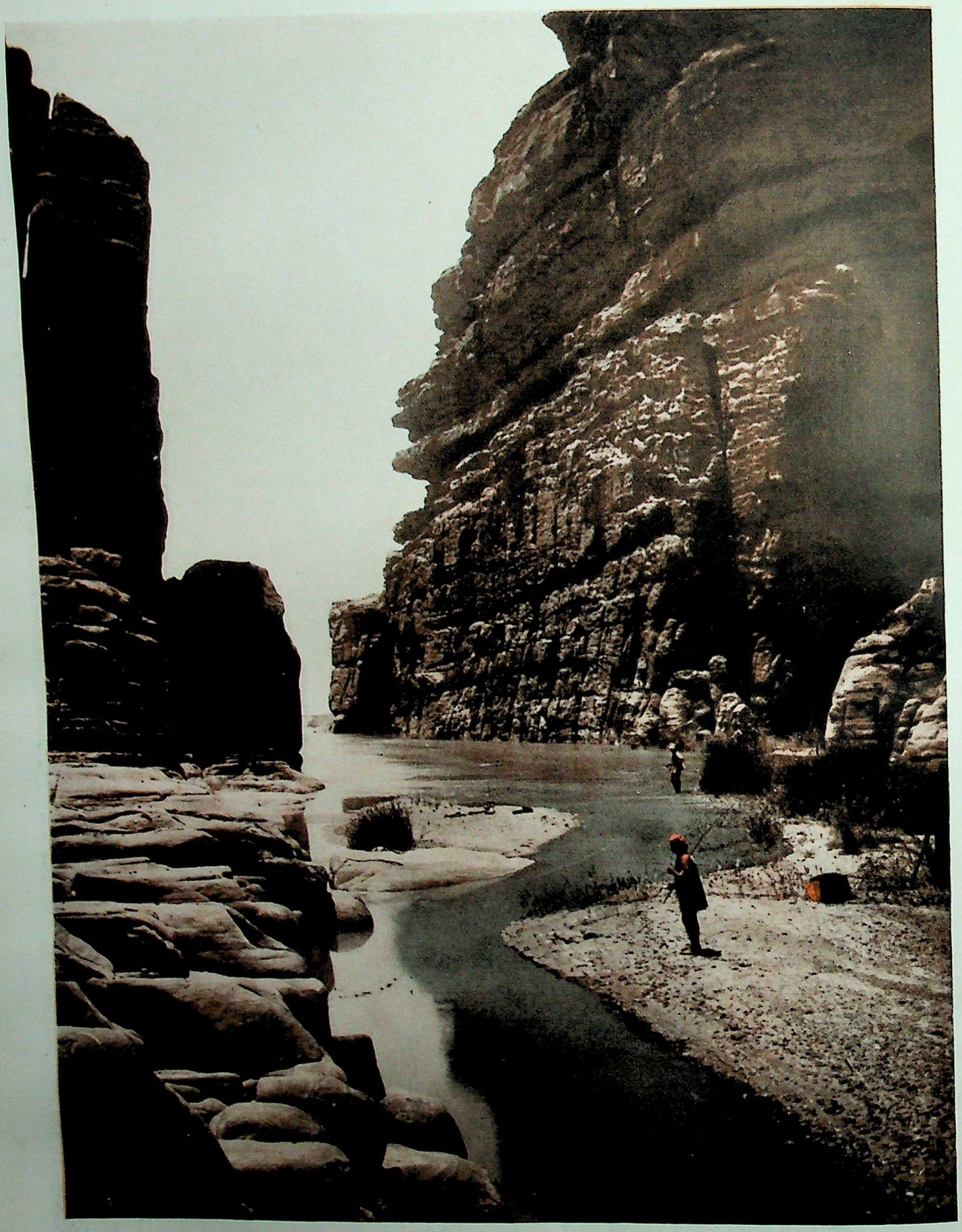

"STREAM OF THE BROOKS . . . UPON THE BORDER OF MOAB"

Here we see the mouth of the River Arnon, on the eastern side of the Dead Sea, and gain a good idea of the way its deep gorge cuts the tableland of Moab. At the time of the Israelites' invasion it was this country's northern boundary, separating it from the kingdom of the Amorites. On its westward flow the river gathers many tributaries from the little glens on the plateau and was thus known as "the stream of the brooks" (Numbers xxi, 15). When viewed from the opposite shore of the Dead Sea the Arnon's mouth seems the only cleft in Moab's long range of yellow and black limestone, chalk-crowned cliffs which form a blank wall to the tableland.

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fathers served beyond the River. And if it seem evil to you to serve the Lord, choose ye this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods your fathers served beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."

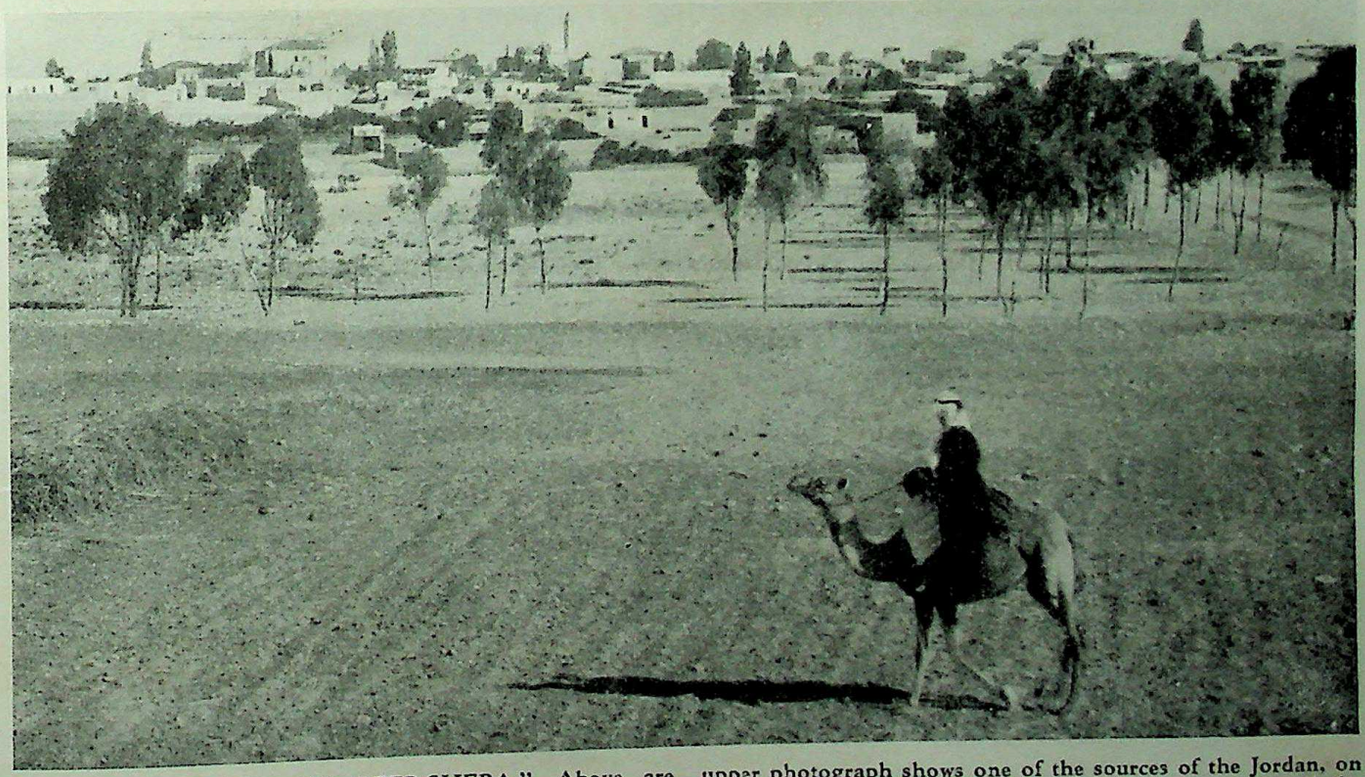
And the people answered, "God forbid that we should forsake the Lord to serve other gods, for it is the Lord our God who hath brought us and our fathers out of the house of bondage and preserved us and scattered our enemies before us. Therefore we also will serve the Lord; for he is our God."

And Joshua said, "The Lord is a holy God and a jealous God. If ye forsake the Lord and serve strange gods, he will turn and do you evil and consume you, after he hath done you good." And the people said, "Nay, but we will serve the Lord."

And Joshua said, "Ye are witnesses among yourselves that ye have chosen the Lord to serve him." They said, "We are witnesses." "Then," said he, "put away the strange gods which are among you and incline your heart unto the Lord, the God of Israel." And the people cried, "The Lord our God will we serve, and unto his voice will we hearken."

So Joshua made a covenant with the people that day and set them a statute and an ordinance in Shechem, and he wrote the words in the book of the law of God. And taking a great stone, he set it up there under an oak by the sanctuary of the Lord, and said to the people, "This stone shall be a witness unto us, for it hath heard all the words of the Lord which he spake unto us. It shall therefore be a witness unto you, lest ye deny your God."

After these things Joshua died at the age of one hundred and ten years, and they buried him in the border of his inheritance at Timnath-serah, in the hill country of Ephraim. And Israel served the Lord all the days of Joshua and of the elders who outlived him. And the bones of Joseph which the Israelites brought from Egypt were buried in Shechem, and they became the inheritance of the children of Joseph.



"FROM DAN EVEN TO BEER-SHEBA." Above are views of the places mentioned in the proverbial phrase which expresses the length of Israel's conquest of Canaan (Judges xx, 1, etc.) from the northern frontier of Dan, below Hermon, to Beer-sheba on the plain of the Negeb in the south. The upper photograph shows one of the sources of the Jordan, on the west side of the hill of Tell-el-Kadi, where once stood the city of Dan—and the even more ancient Laish of the Sidonians. Below is a general impression of Bir-es-Seba, Arabian name for Beer-sheba, a sanctuary associated with the patriarchs.

Photos, American Colony in Jerusalem

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Chronological Table from Moses to Solomon

In the Table below the history of the Israelites, from the Exodus to the disruption of the Hebrew Kingdom after Solomon, is synchronized with that of the reigning dynasties of neighbouring peoples and with contemporary outstanding events. The dates given are those adopted in the "Universal History of the World," edited by Sir J. A. Hammerton, and, for the late view of the Exodus, in Rev. Stephen L. Caiger's "Bible and Spade."

Date B.C.	*Hebrew History*		*Contemporary History in Egypt and the West*	*Contemporary History in Mesopotamia and Asia Minor*
	Early Date View	*Late Date View*		
1448	Israelites suffering under the Oppression	Israel in Egypt	Death of Thothmes III and accession of Amenhotep II	Kassite dynasty in power in Babylon; the Mitanni in upper Mesopotamia
c. 1447 (or 1445)	The Exodus. Amenhotep II, the "Pharaoh who hardened his heart." The Plagues of Egypt	Israel still in Egypt		
c. 1447–1407	Wanderings in the Wilderness. Palestine held by vassal kings under control of Egypt		Reigns of Amenhotep II (1448–1420), Thothmes IV (1420–1411) and Amenhotep III (1411–1375)	
c. 1407	Hebrew invasion of Canaan. Joshua takes Jericho	Israel still in Egypt		
1377	Death of Joshua			
c. 1380–1360	Israelites struggle to consolidate their settlement in Canaan, waging war against the Hittites and other Canaanite tribes	The Habiru of the Tell el-Amarna Letters stated to refer not to the Hebrews but to the Sagaz, bands of marauding invaders accompanying the Hittites	Period of Tell el-Amarna Letters addressed to Pharaoh by governors in Syria and Palestine; description of the invasion of Palestine by Habiru. Reign of Akhenaten	Subbiluliuma founds Hittite dynasty in 1395 at Hattusas; reigns 45 years contemporary with Amenhotep III—Tutankhamen
			Development of diplomatic relations between Egypt, Babylon, Mitanni, Hittites, Assyria	
1360–1319	Othniel, the first Judge, secures 40 years' rest during Egyptian revival (Judges iii, 11)	The "late date" view takes no account of the biblical dates in Joshua and Judges	Reigns of Sakere, Tutankhamen, Ay and Horemheb (Harmhab)	Kassite dynasty in power; Assyria making headway
1321			Rameses I	
			Egyptian and Hittite engagements in Syria	
1320–1300	Asher=a settled Joshua tribe. Aperiu=Hebrews. Judge Ehud delivers Israel from Moabites (c. 1314)	Asher=a tribe who had never gone to Egypt. The Aperiu not=Hebrews	Reign of Seti I. Inscriptions mention conquered tribes of Asuru (Asher) and Aperiu in Canaan; there is no evidence that he occupied Central or Southern Palestine	Adad-nirari I, having defeated Kassites, establishes new Assyrian dynasty in 1305
1300–1225	Period of 80 years' rest in Canaan (Judges iii, 30)	Rameses II the Pharaoh of the Oppression	Reign of Rameses II, beginning 80 years' revival in Egypt	
1295	Aperiu (? Hebrew mercenaries or prisoners) mentioned in Egyptian MSS. as living in Egypt	Aperiu=Hebrews of the Oppression	Rameses engages Hittites under Mutallis (Muwatalli) at Battle of Kadesh (1296, but Garstang c. 1287). Hattusil succeeds to Hittite throne	
1280			Treaty of non-aggression between Rameses and Hattusil	
1276	Period of rest		Rameses II engaged in colossal building activities	Accession of Shalmaneser I to Assyrian throne; conquests in Asia Minor; makes Nineveh his capital
1256	Period of rest			Tukulti-Ninurta succeeds; under him Assyria loses control over Babylon. Wages war with Hittites
1225	Victories of Pharaoh in Canaan over Israel (Joshua's Hebrews) recorded on stele of Merneptah	1224—The Exodus. Merneptah the "Pharaoh who hardened his heart." Israel, on the stele of Merneptah=a tribe who had never left Canaan	Accession of Merneptah (1225–1215)	Reign in Assyria of Ashur-nadin-apli (1232–1213)
1221–1201	Oppression of Israelites by Jabin and Sisera			
1200	Deborah and Barak free Israel from Canaanites under Sisera. Beginning of period of 40 years' rest	Joshua conquers Canaan	Accession of Setnekt after short period of anarchy; Egyptian empire in Canaan set in order	Reigns of Ashur-nirari III (1213–1207) and Enlil-kudur-usur (1207–1202)

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Five Hundred Years of Hebrew History

Date B.C.	Hebrew History		Contemporary History in Egypt and the West	Contemporary History in Mesopotamia and Asia Minor
	Early Date View	Late Date View		
1198	Approach of the Philistines. From 1190 they are allowed by Egypt (who had largely employed them as mercenaries) to settle on the maritime plain of Canaan	Israelites in Canaan	Accession of Rameses III. He does battle with the hordes migrating into the Delta	Great migrations of northern peoples; Philistine invasion and settlement; extinction of Hittite power. Reign in Assyria of Ninurta-apal-Ekur I (1202–1175)
1190			Fall of Troy	
1175	Continuation of period of rest begun after Deborah			Ashur-dan I (1175–1140) of Assyria breaks Kassite power
1169–1039				Isin dynasty of Babylon
1167	Mention of Aperiu (? Hebrew prisoners of war) in Egypt	Period of the Judges begins	Accession of Rameses IV	Marduk-shapik-zeri, king of Babylon, 1169–1152
1161	Midianite oppression		Accession of Rameses V	
1157–1150			Reigns of Rameses VI, Rameses VII and Rameses VIII	
1154–1114	Gideon; delivers Israel from the Midianites. Period of 40 years' rest		Reigns of Rameses IX and Rameses X	Reigns of Ninurta-tukulti-Ashur and of Mutakkil-Nusku in Assyria; and of Ninurta-nadin-shum and Nebuchadrezzar I in Babylon
1114	Abimelech, son of Gideon, makes himself king of Shechem		Reign of Rameses XI 1124–1094	Reign of Ashur-resh-ishi in Assyria, 1127–1115; and of Enlil-nadin-apli in Babylon, 1122–1116
1111	Jephthah; wins victory over Ammonites who had begun oppressing Israel in Trans-Jordania 18 years before crossing to the west		Power of Egypt in Canaan steadily declining	Reign of Tiglath-Pileser I in Assyria, 1115–1102; he breaks the power of the Hittites. Marduk-nadin-akhe on throne of Babylon, 1116–1100; he raids Assyria. Obscure period follows
1104	Beginning of Philistine supremacy over Canaan	Agreement henceforth with "Early Date" view		
1094			Disruption of Egyptian Empire	
1085	Samson; relieves Israel from pressure of Philistines			
1065	Eli; judge for 40 years			On death of Tiglath-Pileser, Assyria relapses under pressure from Aramean tribes, Babylonia from Chaldeans
1045	Samuel; secures defeat of Philistines			
c. 1025	Saul, first of Hebrew kings, wins great victory over Philistines at Michmash, but is defeated and killed at Gilboa		Line of Priest-Kings in power at Thebes, with a rival dynasty at Tanis in the Delta	
c. 1010	David. Hebrew kingdom definitely established from Egyptian frontier to Lebanon range			
c. 970	Solomon; pursues material wealth rather than imperial expansion		Daughter of unidentified Pharaoh married to Solomon. This Pharaoh was king of Lower Egypt only	
947			Shishak (Shashank) founds 22nd dynasty and reunites Egypt	
945	Disruption of Hebrew Kingdom			To end of Assyrian dominance Babylonia continues to be ruled by a succession of powerless dynasties, Elamite or Chaldean usurpers, Assyrian kings or Assyrian nominees

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THE RUINED WALLS OF JERICHO. Excavations in the city that Joshua's warriors destroyed with all its inhabitants—except Rahab and her family—by fire and sword, have borne out much of the Biblical story of Jericho's fall. Its defences at the time were two walls of brick, the outer one 6 feet and the inner about 12 feet in width, with 4 or 5 yards' space between them. Part of the inner wall was necessarily founded on the debris of a more ancient one; both walls were poorly constructed and could not have withstood earth tremors. It is certain that when they fell, they fell outwards so that the Israelites were able to climb over the ruins. The highest part preserved is seen to the left of the photograph. Behind is Jebel Kuruntal, the mountain where the spies hid when they escaped from Jericho, until their pursuers returned to the city.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

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Joshua

II

The Story of the Book

An Epic of Conquest Recorded by Bard and Scribe

by REV. C. SHEPHERD GIBBS, M.A., B.D.

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NO intelligent person who begins to read a history written in an age and a country very different from his own will be surprised to find that its most marked characteristics are not those of a modern work of the same class. The accurate writing of history is still a task of considerable difficulty; but he who attempts it today has a store of accumulated knowledge, a training in method, and a wide background of scientific tradition which were not in existence when the historical books of the Old Testament were first compiled. This does not mean that they are therefore less valuable. As we shall shortly see, the very defects of the ancient historian's method often make his work all the more useful to a modern student.

Nor are these primitive writings less readable because of their obvious shortcomings. Innumerable histories of the Jewish race have been written; but it is still to the Book of Joshua, and its companions, that we turn when we wish to feel the authentic thrill awakened by the clash of arms, the siege and fall of cities, the many bloody and heroic deeds by dint of which a gallant little people began to write such a story upon the pages of time as has never been equalled. Robert Bridges in the second book of his "Testament of Beauty" has a delightful passage, in which he tells how "my little chorister, who never miss'd a note," in sermon-time used to devour the stories of the Books of Judges and Kings.

> Lured by those braggart annals, while he conn'd the page
> The parson's mild discourse pass'd o'er his head unheard.

And others, beside choirboys, have felt their stormy splendour.

It is, however, a great addition to our appreciation of these fierce old warrior-tales to be able to piece together the facts behind them into an orderly sequence. As the narrative stands there are obvious gaps and equally obvious inconsistencies. To read Joshua with no extraneous assistance is like wandering over an ancient battlefield without a guide. The general configuration of the ground is clear, and the impact of the deeds done there upon the course of human history is a matter of common knowledge. But how much clearer our knowledge, and how immeasurably more interesting our study of the place, if we can learn how and why the changing tide of battle ebbed and flowed, see the very spot on which the standard stood, and traverse the long slope down which thundered the last victorious charge. Can we obtain some such knowledge for our better understanding of Joshua, that book of many battles? Let us see.

How the Old-time Editor Went to Work

WE shall expect, first of all, that Joshua was written, like every other historical work at that time, by piecing together portions of still older documents, according to what has been not inaptly called the "scissors and paste" method. That is to say, while a modern historian finds it convenient to set down his own opinions and conclusions in the text of his book, and to give references to his authorities in the footnotes—for us an extraordinarily useful and handy practice—to the ancient author footnotes were unknown, and if they had been known, the clumsiness of the writing materials available to him would have made them impossible. What he did was to embody his authorities word for word in the text, without sign or acknowledgment.

The devout reader who loves and reverences his Bible sometimes feels uneasy at learning that many books which he has previously regarded as indivisible unities have been built up in this way. Perhaps he even feels that he is being asked to regard them as "forgeries." He may set his mind at rest.

Contemporary Records in the Narrative

A LITTLE reflection will show that what he has before him are the exact reverse of forgeries, since they are the actual documents which lay before the eyes of the Hebrew scribe who copied them long ago. It is true that they are frequently divided and subdivided, interwoven with fragments from other documents and with editorial comments, in such a way that to disentangle them is a task demanding consummate scholarship and the most conscientious and painstaking skill. But the work has been done, and the results lie ready to our hand.

In the case of Joshua, for instance, although the final edition of the book, as we have it, may not have been completed until as late as about 200 B.C., the two main documents on which it is based were written in the ninth and eighth centuries before Christ respectively. That is to say, the last edition of the book was dealing with matter much of which was written considerably longer before, say, Chaucer's own time than Chaucer's works are before ours. Moreover, these early documents themselves contain matter, much of it doubtless based on oral tradition, but some also derived from written sources more primitive still. Between the date of the earliest of these sources and the lifetime of the latest scribe to make his own insertions and additions to the narrative, there may well have been an interval of over a thousand years. We may surely be grateful for methods of authorship which, however crude they may seem to us, have preserved word for word many invaluable passages of ancient literature, in some cases at any rate contemporary or nearly contemporary with the events which they record.

Now these two main documents on which Joshua is based, and which are incorporated *verbatim* in the narrative, are already familiar to the reader who has consulted the chapters dealing with the origins of the earlier Books, for they are none other than the two sources which form the groundwork of the most primitive parts of the Pentateuch. That is why scholars prefer to speak of a "Hexateuch" rather than of a Pentateuch. Joshua is the sequel and completion of the books which precede it, and if its origin is to be understood it must be grouped with them.

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The earlier of these two main sources can most conveniently be distinguished by its preference of the name for God generally translated "Jehovah" in our English version, but it has many other characteristics almost equally marked. Its usual term for the aboriginal inhabitants of Palestine is "Canaanite"; its name for the sacred mountain is "Sinai"; and it shows a preference for certain Hebrew idioms and turns of phrase not always easy to indicate in translation. Its theology is elementary and childlike; tales of the marvellous and the supernatural are common; it regards the Deity as a person who not infrequently appears in human form; and the general religious attitude is that of a credulous and primitive people. It appears to represent the traditions current in Judah and to date from the time of the early monarchy, about 850 B.C. It may be convenient for reference to remember that its author's life in the Southern Kingdom would then be contemporary with the career of Elijah, or of his successor, in the north.

The other of these early documents is generally thought to have been written in the Northern Kingdom about a century later. In this case its author would be contemporary with Amos, the earliest of the prophets whose writings have been preserved in book form. It will be remembered that the Northern Kingdom was finally crushed by Assyria in 722 B.C., and that for many years previously the shadow of the coming inevitable end lies dark upon the pages of Hosea and of Isaiah. They foresaw, as every year made it more possible for men of sagacity and observation to foresee, the swift approach of doom. But of this shadow there is no sign in the writing now before us; and we are therefore justified in concluding that it can scarcely have been completed much later than about the year 750. It also has certain marked characteristics of style and vocabulary. It prefers the word "Elohim" for God. It often uses the term "Amorite" for the early inhabitants of Palestine. The name for the sacred mountain is usually "Horeb." The style is less easy and flowing than that of its companion document; and its attitude towards the Deity has less of the credulous familiarity of its predecessor, and more of the reverent awe of a later age.

Two Narratives in a Single Whole

THESE two independent narratives, one from the Southern and one from the Northern Kingdom, seem to have been combined into a single connected whole, with occasional brief additions and explanations, some time during the seventh century. This piece of work may reasonably be dated somewhere within the wide limits set by the long and evil reign of Manasseh (696-641 B.C.). It was a dark age, in some ways the darkest in all the varied annals of the Jewish people—an age when abuses which had seemed long dead raised their ugly heads again, and necromancy, religious fornication, and even human sacrifice were practised. We may if we like imagine that some pious scribe endeavoured to console himself for the sorrows of his time by working over the former history of his people.

But under the young king Josiah came a great and healthy reaction, in which both priest and people had a share, and one of the most important results of which was the publication of the book which we know as Deuteronomy. The reader who has made some study of the origin of Genesis or Exodus will already be aware that the priestly-prophetic school which produced Deuteronomy also made very considerable additions to the historical records already in existence. This applies as much to Joshua as to the first two books of the Hexateuch.

In the nature of the case most of these additions have little claim to exact accuracy. They represent what, in the opinion of a group of intelligent and spiritually-minded Jews of the late seventh or early sixth century, must have been or ought to have been the case. As such they are of great value for the picture which they present of the minds of their writers. But it will readily be admitted that their value, as a record of events which took place some eight hundred years before, is slight.

Revision at the Hands of the 'Priestly School'

OF necessity, the same criticism applies to the other great block of amplifications and additions which originally emanated from what is usually known as the "Priestly School." One of the most important results of the religious revival which began during the Exile, and which later found its leaders in Ezra and Nehemiah, was an increased interest in the history of the nation and in the literature which recorded it. Not satisfied with the records as they found them, the scribes of the period edited them thoroughly with considerable additions of their own, some in the form of brief insertions which supplement the already existing narrative, others as long continuous paragraphs of entirely new matter. The process appears to have been a gradual one, spread over many years, the work of many hands; but the greater part of it probably took place within the century which followed the stimulating patriotic leadership of Ezra and Nehemiah.

The work of the priestly school is of a well-marked type usually not difficult to detect. In style it is comparatively formal and rigid; in contents often little more than a mass of statistical details with frequently recurring formulae. Far from being impartial, it is written with a strong bias towards the exaltation of the ceremonial law, and the glorification of the national history.

The remark which has already been made on the work of the editors of the Deuteronomic school applies with equal force to this second school of editors. We must not look to them for accurate history. We cannot expect them to have had any very exact knowledge of events which took place many centuries before. The warning is the more necessary since the lengthy lists of persons and places and the elaborate chronology dear to the heart of the priestly school—very different from the unaffected delight in skirmishes and ambushes, sieges and battles, of the two early documents—convey a specious appearance of exactitude. A little investigation will often show the artificial plan on which these lists are built up.

We need not, of course, suppose any deliberate intention to defraud. What these later editors did was what every schoolboy does until he learns a better way—what indeed to some extent we all do still, and must inevitably do, in spite of precautions, as the reader may see for himself if he cares to peruse critically any historical novel, however carefully written. They carried back into the age *of* which they were writing the ideas, customs, and facts of the age *in* which they were writing.

It was largely an unconscious process, and in spite of the considerable advance in historical science, it would be a mistake to imagine that the modern writer on religion or on religious history can altogether escape the prejudices of his own environment and heritage, any more than they. His best plan is frankly to acknowledge them, and to leave it to his readers to make the necessary allowances.

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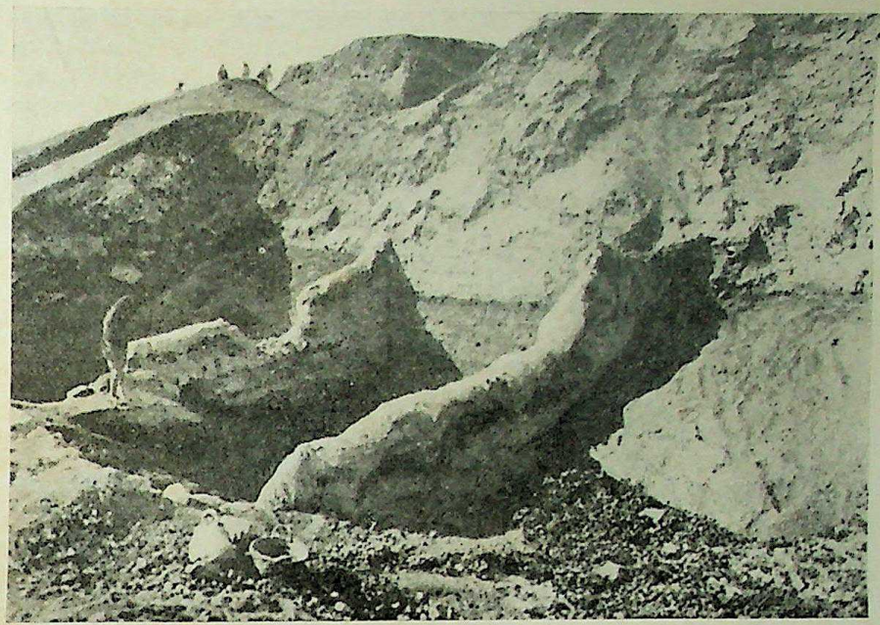
A history written without prejudices —that is to say, without convictions —would be dull indeed; and we are not to deplore the strong religious principles of the scribes of the priestly school, or of their predecessors of the Deuteronomic school some two centuries or more before. It was the very strength of their convictions which gave their comments and additions to the existing narrative so strong a flavour, so vivid a colour. Without these principles they would have lacked the impulse and the energy to write at all. Because of them, we have a valuable reflection, as in a mirror—the more admirable because unconscious—of the state of mind of their writers, and so of their circumstances and surroundings, their hopes, beliefs, and fears.



"AND THEY BURNT THE CITY WITH FIRE." These brick walls, showing the line of fire and damaged upper part, belonged to a house in Jericho, the home of citizens who were among those massacred "with the edge of the sword" when the Israelites took the stronghold (Joshua vi, 21). Signs of wholesale burning are plentifully to be found on the mass of excavated ruins—scorched implements, ashes, half-burnt timbers, and reddened brickwork.

The book of Joshua, then, has been built up, like many other books in the Old Testament, by a process analogous to that which the geologist calls "stratification." We have a ninth century stratum or layer (itself containing many components considerably older); superimposed upon it and now very closely mixed with it an eighth century layer can be descried; and then two strongly marked and very characteristic strata of editorial comments and additions. It is a common but serious error to suppose that this sort of critical analysis "undermines the historicity" (as the phrase goes) of a book our forefathers knew and loved. As historical evidence Joshua is still valuable, and not less but more valuable for our fairly drastic examination of it, representing as it does within its brief and narrow limits, from the earliest source of the earliest document to the last editorial comment or insertion, a literary activity of some thousand years.

How Critical Analysis Furthers Understanding

LET us now turn again to the book itself, and see how our knowledge of its origins helps us to appreciate its significance. We see at once that it falls into three main sections. The first twelve chapters present a picture, much of it painted with arresting boldness and vigour, of the conquest of Palestine by the Israelites under Joshua. The next ten chapters, written in a drier and more formal style, describe in detail the division of the land among the tribes. To this is added a short appendix of two chapters containing two farewell speeches from Joshua. This concludes the book. Let us look at each of these three sections in turn.

Scholars are now agreed that the first of these main sections is derived for the most part from the two primitive documents with some additional modifications and insertions. We should expect, therefore, that it would prove to be of considerable historical value, and recent archaeological research has provided interesting confirmation of the main outlines and some of the details of the account in Joshua. The chief defects are that it represents an invasion which took many generations to accomplish as having been completed in one or two smashing campaigns, that it minimizes defeats and exaggerates victories, that it sometimes ascribes to military prowess what was actually effected by peaceful and gradual penetration, and that it attributes to a single great leader much that was actually done by other if lesser men.

It is right to say that the settlement of the Israelites in Canaan was a much more protracted and in some ways a rather different series of events from that described in Joshua. But it is also right to say that the sort of airy scepticism which could regard even early and persistent traditions as mere meaningless romance no longer holds the field. It is today as obsolete as the antimacassar and the aspidistra. As a brilliant Old Testament scholar wrote some years ago, "The traditions themselves are facts. To the scientific mind every fact requires an explanation, and the simplest and most obvious explanation of a tradition is an event" (Robinson and Oesterley, "History of Israel," Vol. i, page x).

Since the year 1918 the new opportunities for excavation in Palestine and elsewhere have been taken advantage of with some interesting results. For a fuller account of these results the reader must be referred to articles elsewhere in this work, and also in particular to Professor John Garstang's scholarly and readable account of the results of his work in his volume "Joshua Judges." But one or two points which bear on the present discussion may be briefly noted.

THE apparently miraculous crossing of the Jordan seems to have been due to a landslide, the result of one of the earthquakes still common in Palestine, especially in this region. The Jordan has many fords, and it is unlikely that the story is an invention which would have little purpose. Such a landslide, followed by the damming of the river, is known to have occurred in the year 1267 Another took place in 1906; and yet another quite recently during the severe earthquakes of 1927, on which occasion several persons crossed the river-bed on foot.

Again, recent researches have shown that the western wall of Jericho was probably destroyed by earthquake shock about the year 1400 B.C. This admirably suits the Bible account. We can imagine the deep impression which such an event would produce on those who witnessed

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it ; and, as has just been pointed out, seismic disturbances are not uncommon in this locality. In the shocks of 1927 people were killed in Jericho itself.

Such coincidences, of course, must not be pressed beyond what they will bear. To read one's Bible in a spirit of slavish literalism is neither reasonable nor genuinely reverent. But what it is important to remember in reading the narratives of this period is that these stories were never invented as a modern novelist invents a plot, out of his mere imagination

Ancient Stories that Tomorrow May Explain

AS has been said in words quoted in the previous page, the simplest and most obvious explanation of a tradition is an event. Such stories as the taking of Ai or the compact with the Gibeonites have some fact behind them. The nature of the fact can sometimes be plainly seen in the story itself, or gathered from the independent testimony of the archaeologist or the historian of Egypt or Mesopotamia. In other cases the connexion is completely lost, and we must wait for further knowledge before forming an opinion.

Before we leave this section of Joshua, it is interesting to note that the first invaders met with little success against walled cities—Jericho is an outstanding exception. Siege warfare at this time was in a very elementary stage, and the walled city, especially against nomad tribes, could normally be considered impregnable. A second limitation can be seen in the Israelites' lack of success as soon as they entered the plains. The reason for this is given us later in a passage which is indubitably from an early source (Joshua xvii, 16). The Israelites had no chariots, and it was only in the hill country that this serious disadvantage was annulled.

The second section, which consists of chapters thirteen to twenty-two, is different both in contents and in style. It purports for the most part to describe the partition of Palestine among the tribes There can be little doubt that the main body of this section is the work of the later or " priestly " editors It is therefore of small value for our knowledge of the age of the conquest, though there are scattered here and there, like erratic boulders, pieces of much older matter.

It is interesting to trace the working of the minds of the editors, and to contrast their ideas of the past with the actual state of things at the time of which they wrote.

The twentieth chapter gives an account of the establishment of " cities of refuge," in which those guilty of accidental homicide might find safety. But before the time of Josiah the Jewish practice was similar to that of Christian lands in the Middle Ages : every local altar, of which there were many, afforded sanctuary. Only when the local altars were abolished by Deuteronomic legislation did the provision of these cities become necessary. The editor reads back into an earlier age a condition of affairs already familiar to him. Similarly the ideas of the priesthood are much more elaborate than those current in the time of Joshua.

Yet another example, not so evident but of unusual interest, is the way in which the Israelites' failure to capture Jerusalem is ignored. In an extract from the primitive document (Joshua xv, 63 ; cf. Judges i, 21), there is a hint of the truth. But even a careful student might read Joshua through without realizing that Jerusalem, in its craggy fastness, always a difficult city to take, held out against the invader for four centuries. Indeed, in the first chapter of the following book in a passage by the same editors (Judges i, 8), this is expressly denied. But if we turn to Samuel (II Samuel v, 6-10) we shall find a graphic little description of how the military genius of David and the devotion of his followers first subdued and occupied this important stronghold, henceforth a centre of loyalty for the Jewish race. It is not surprising that by the time of Ezra, when Jerusalem represented all that was most dear and sacred to the Jewish heart, this had been forgotten. Every nation has a longer memory for its victories than for its defeats.

The third and concluding section of the Book contains two chapters each of which gives a farewell speech of Joshua. The first of these chapters is by the Deuteronomists. A common practice among early historians was to invent speeches for the persons of whom they wrote. It is a favourite artifice even of Thucydides, the first of the scientific historians ; and the device helps to give movement and life to the picture. The second chapter, however, though in part also by the Deuteronomic writers, is chiefly derived from the primitive eighth-century document which, as we have seen, emanated from the Northern Kingdom, and contains matter of considerable importance. On a conservative estimate we have here a very early account of the Exodus and the events which followed it.

The reference to the " hornet " (in verse 12) which drove the inhabitants of the land before the invader, at first mysterious, becomes especially illuminating in the light of Garstang's suggestion that this refers to the Egyptian suzerainty of Palestine. The hornet seems especially to be used in the hieroglyphs as signifying Pharaoh's rule ; and the Canaanite cities had been weakened for many years by the Egyptian policy of oppression and extortion. It seems plain that here we have a guarded reference to the way in which, as the Israelites believed, even the ferocity of a malignant foe had been used of God to assist the entry of the chosen people into their Promised Land.

Rough and incomplete though it is, the outline sketched above of the origin and composition of Joshua may serve to give some idea of the extent of its value to the historian. But Joshua is not only a history. It is an implicit philosophy of history. Some emphasis has been laid on the differences between the authors whose various contributions, spread over so lengthy a period, have been combined to make our present book. But their agreements are as remarkable as their differences.

Revealing a Purpose in Human History

THEY are agreed first of all in finding a purpose in human history, and primarily and especially in the history of their own nation. From the time of his first appearance upon the world's stage the Jew was unique among his fellows in his sense of a Divine Intention working through the experiences of men and overruling them for good. He was always marching towards a Promised Land. He believed in Tomorrow, and in that faith endured hardships and resisted enemies by whom otherwise he must speedily have been crushed.

This sense of vocation, of a far-off event which gives meaning and direction to every passing act, was one source of a vitality at which we cannot but wonder. Look at the list of his foes. Egyptian, Philistine, Moabite, Edomite, Hittite, and the rest—where are they now ? But the Hebrew not only produced an imperishable literature and an immortal Faith—a Faith which, though he disowns it, is still his child—but through the vicissitudes

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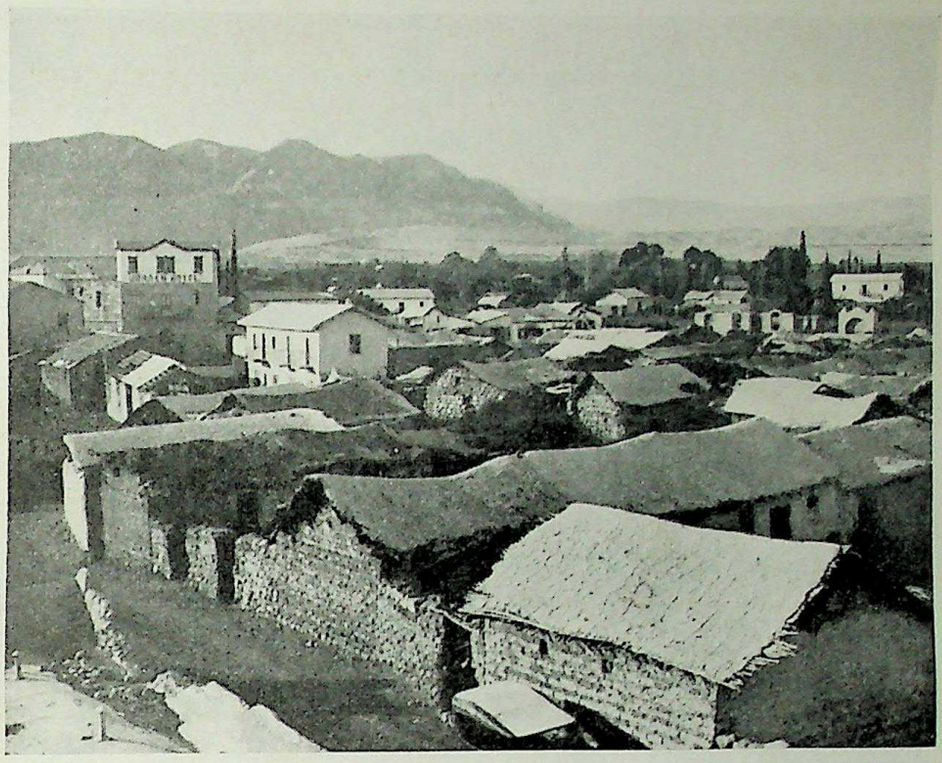
of ten thousand generations, while languages and empires were born, grew, waxed strong, declined and perished, has yet preserved his national identity, his traditions and his religion. And that although, for the greater part of his existence, he has been without a home. As Dr. Inge has said: "The Jew has stood by the grave of all his enemies." Why? He who would solve this riddle, let him begin by reading Joshua.

And further, side by side with the Hebrew's belief in the purpose of God stood his belief in the love of God for His people. Here again we have a faith which, like many elements in religious experience, often apparently feeble and ineffective, proved to be in effect a reservoir of inexhaustible vigour. It is true that the love of God for the individual as such, His care for the very sparrow which falls to the ground, was not yet plain to the Israelite; still less His care for all Mankind.



JERICHO AS IT APPEARS TODAY. The little town of modern Jericho, El Richa, is an Arab settlement of sun-baked clay houses and reed-thatched hovels centred by a government building and hotels for tourists. It is situated somewhat to the south-east of the city of Joshua's time and to the south of the Jericho of the Roman period, visited by Our Lord. In the background of the photograph is seen Jebel Kuruntal, hiding-place of Joshua's spies and the traditional "high mountain" of the temptation of Jesus in the wilderness.

Photo American Colony in Jerusalem

It is a long, long journey from the story of Joshua's pitiless extermination of conquered enemies to the parable of the Good Samaritan. But of the love of God for the people which He had chosen to do His work and glorify His name the Hebrew, at least in his best moments, had no doubt at all. This was the cordial which revived his drooping spirit, the watchword which thunders like some deep organ-note beneath the singing voices of the Psalmists, and peals like a trumpet, sudden and strong, in the triumphant battle-cries of the early invaders.

Some there are who maintain that Joshua has no devotional value. And it must be granted that from the vindictive and ferocious elements in these old stories we turn with a shudder. Warfare is not a gentle art, and Semitic warfare was no exception. Moreover, this people was fighting for its life. But the stories are not all of savagery. There is courage here, and faith, and hope; and behind and beneath all that deep, mysterious fellowship with the Unseen God which has forged the name of a wandering Asiatic tribe in letters of iron upon the gates of the Universal Church.

IN a word, the history of the Jewish nation at this time is a classic example of the unifying and invigorating power of a great religion. It used commonly to be held that religious beliefs have little effect upon national character, or for that matter upon the individual character either. We are still often enough promised, as Socrates promised twenty-three centuries ago, that the human race will find a way out of all its difficulties if only it will learn to *think* aright. Mr. H. G. Wells' "blue prints for a world revolution" are a familiar example.

But in actual practice we find that man is more than a thinking animal. He is a mystic and a poet; and until the mystic element in him is touched he will not move far, if he moves at all. "Logic makes no martyrs;" no, nor heroes, either; and all our pretty plans fall to pieces while Man, the irrational, illogical, exasperating, amazing creature that he is, confounds our expectations by dying for a dream or enduring hardships unspeakable for the sake of a vision of far-away beauty which no blue print can capture.

Religion and Ethics of the Conquerors

IT was because his God gave him that vision that the Hebrew was invincible, unconquerable in soul, if not always in body. Though not yet in the strict sense a monotheist, since he could not bring himself altogether to deny the existence of the gods of the heathen, he was well on the way towards monotheism. His God was One, and He was Holy. Because He was One, the varied tribes which worshipped Him were bound together into a unity otherwise unattainable. Because He was Holy, they felt the call to holiness. And since between morals and morale there is a connexion which is not merely etymological, their ethical superiority over their neighbours gave the Hebrews an *élan* in war, and a health in peace, which others had not.

Though superficially an anachronism, there is also a deep and genuine truth in the words which the late seventh-century writer records as having been addressed by Jehovah to His servant: "There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life: as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee . . . Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do all the law . . . Turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest."

De te fabula. That truth, stern, inexorable, eternal, was not for Joshua's time only, or for Josiah's, but for all time. Happy the people that hears it still

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"THE VALLEY OF JEZREEL." From the height in the foreground this Arab views the fine panorama of Esdraelon's hill-girt plain, Biblical Valley of Jezreel. The Hebrew word used for valley in this connexion signifies a plain between heights, not a narrow gorge. The importance of Esdraelon, great historical battlefield and place of encampment during and after the Israelites' invasion, was that it affords a passage from Jordan to the coast. Many roads cross Esdraelon, set in the main range of Palestine; and of the passes held as its gateways, that of Megiddo, on the south, also gave its name to the plain.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

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Joshua

III

The Land of the Book

The Promised Land as It Was in the Days of Joshua

by REV. JAMES STEWART, M.A., B.D.

Minister of Congregational Upper Chapel, Heckmondwike; External Examiner of Scottish Congregational College, Edinburgh.

THE Book of Joshua is the story of an invasion. It tells how the children of Israel, their long wandering over at last, enter into the land of their inheritance.

When the curtain is drawn back, we see the pilgrim people in their tents. They have camped for the last time outside the Promised Land. In a sense they have already crossed its threshold, since two tribes and a half-tribe have chosen portions for themselves in territory lately conquered. But in a very real sense it can be said that the Land still lies ahead.

From their camp at Abel-Shittim, in the plains of Moab, the Israelites look down on a broad, undulating stretch of country. A line of vivid green cuts this plain, marking the winding course of the swift River Jordan; beyond it is a range of brown hills, climbing up by rocky slopes and rugged gorges to high ridges and rounded, lofty summits. It is there, across the river, that the heart and soul of the Promised Land are to be found. It is there that the essential destiny of Israel is to be worked out.

It was a country of which they knew little. No doubt travellers' tales had reached them even in the desert. And of course they had, at an earlier date and from another point, sent spies into the land. But travellers' tales are always unsatisfactory, and the spies' reports had been strangely conflicting. There was therefore little known with certainty of the land which lay ahead.

As the Israelites Looked across Jordan

AS they gazed across the Jordan, the Israelites would find questions thronging into their minds. For the most part they would be simple questions. What was the land like? Would it supply good pasture for flocks and herds? Was it well watered, with rain and springs that fail not? Would it be "fat" enough to allow them, if they so desired, to practise agriculture and settle down in permanent homes?

There would be questions, too, about the inhabitants of the land. Would they suffer the invaders, if there was room for them, to settle down in their midst? If they resented the arrival of these newcomers, were they skilled enough in arms to resist successfully? Were they weak and likely to yield, and, if they were, what sort of booty would their settlements provide?

Some among the Israelites, men of insight beyond the ordinary, may have asked deeper questions. Hitherto the desert had been their teacher. Its lessons had been of God and His law, which is a stern simplicity and a high morality, and with these things had come a sense of the worth of liberty. What would this new country teach?

Would it, by its nature and its character, continue the lessons of the desert, or would it cast a spell and entice Israel to forgetfulness? And what of the dwellers in the land? They would have customs, culture, and gods of their own; what were these, and would they bring enrichment or impoverishment to Israel?

It is not easy for us to see the land into which the children of Israel came. It is less easy to bring to life again the people who dwelt there. Yet we must do so, if we are to follow the campaigns which came after the crossing of the Jordan. And we must do so if we are to follow that pilgrimage of Israel which did not end with the settlement in the land but came to an end only after many years of spiritual conflict.

Past History Revealed by the Spade

HAPPILY, there are many resources at our command. There is the Bible itself, which is naturally a chief source of information. But it is not the only one. There is the land itself. No doubt the labours and neglect of men have wrought many changes on its face; yet its climate and physical features, with their influence on the lives and minds of men, have not altered. And of late years the very soil itself has been induced to speak secrets it kept in silence for many centuries.

There is a romantic story to be told of the work done by archaeologists. Much of their time is spent at places whose names contain the word *Tell*. The explanation is that *Tell* means *Hill*, and that it is from hills or mounds that so much valuable information is procured.

These mounds are scattered throughout the country. They are of a peculiar shape, being straight-sided and flat-topped to a degree that stamps them as artificial formations. They are, indeed, the graves of ancient cities, keeping in safety what time and spoliation have left to them. From them, as systematic excavation proceeds, comes much precious information.

Other countries, too, offer help in the restoration of the land which Israel sought to possess. Once upon a time there stood a Pharaoh's palace at Tell-el-Amarna in Egypt. In its sand-covered ruins lay, for thirty-three centuries, a collection of letters belonging to its royal owners. In 1887 the modern world began to find them. Many were written in the Holy Land, being reports made by Egyptian officials to the Pharaoh Akhenaten or Amenhotep IV. Some are appeals for help against a people, probably the children of Israel themselves, who are invading the country and threatening the cities. These letters tell us much of the religion, politics, and commerce of the period.

Syria offers help in many ways, a recent contribution being the Ras Shamra tablets, which date from the 15th century B.C. From a site near Angora have come the archives, now being deciphered, of the great empire of the Hittites. Many sites have given monuments telling of military expeditions into the Holy Land from Mesopotamia and Egypt. The figures they supply are not always to be accepted without caution—it is an old courtly and military tradition which forbids the under-estimation of victories gained and prisoners taken—yet both the writing and the pictures on such monuments are of priceless value.

There will always be gaps in our knowledge. No age can ever enter fully into the beliefs of the dead past. It is equally certain that more will yet be known, for the spade is still at work. But this is true, that scholars and archaeologists have already given us a fuller knowledge of the land and its people as Joshua knew them than any age has enjoyed since time passed an obliterating hand over the scene and its actors.

Geographical Aspect of Canaan

AT its far eastern extremity, the Mediterranean is bounded by a coast-line which runs roughly north and south. The northern stretch of this sea-board belongs to Syria; the southern section is the western boundary of the territory which the children of Israel claimed as their own.

It was not a large land. Stretching eastward to the Syrian desert, its vaguely defined eastern border could never have been more than a hundred miles from the sea, while the average distance would be very much less. North to south, the land lay, according to ancient reckoning, between Dan and Beer-sheba. Modern usage places the limits at the River Litany and the Wady el-Arish. The two measurements agree to give a length, from north to south, of under 150 miles. It was therefore no large country which Israel claimed.

But small as it was, a name fitting in every respect is hard to find. The Babylonians, approaching from the east, spoke of the land of the Amurru,

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or Amorites. The Egyptians, coming from the south, used a name Haru or Retenu, which may mean the Land of the Horites. From within the country itself rose the name Canaan. But none of these names is satisfying, for none was applied to the whole of the region claimed by Israel or to that region alone.

The modern name is Palestine, the latest of several forms which trace a Philistine ancestry, Philistia being a relation of an earlier period. Genealogically speaking, Palestine cannot put forward a sounder claim than any of its ancient rivals. But it has enjoyed the continued support of the one supreme power: it is by time itself that Palestine's claim to the land has been established. This name has the further merit of convenience. Sometimes Palestine is used in a narrow sense as applying only to the territory west of the Jordan, the country east of the river being kept distinct under the name Transjordan. But the name may also be given to the two regions considered as one whole. In this sense it covers the territory which Israel, as in the Book of Joshua, claimed as the Promised Land and divided among the tribes.

'A Land of Hills and Valleys'

THE Israelites "went up" into Palestine. The expression is a usual one. It is the natural one to employ, for the country is a land of hills. Two great ranges of tableland run in parallel lines through the country from north to south. But between the mountain-blocks, and between the western range and the sea, the ground falls quickly to a low level. In addition, the western range is divided by a low plain, fifteen miles wide in one place, which appears to have been scooped out of the mountains.

This outline indicates the significant features in the geography of Palestine. Ground level varies greatly from place to place: the produce of the land, in plant and animal life, is bound to vary accordingly. The many wide valleys and plains, at both high and low levels, make travel and communication easier than might have been expected in a mountainous region. But at the same time these plains and valleys make it easier for the districts they separate to maintain independence, especially when there is no power, either native or foreign, strong enough to compel unity. There is therefore a natural tendency towards separation, which in some parts is turned into isolation by such things as impassable ravines, steep, rocky slopes and barrenness to which both poverty of soil and scarcity of water make their contribution.

We must remember these characteristics of the land as we make a rapid survey of its regions.

The Book of Joshua opens to reveal the children of Israel in camp at Abel-Shittim. They are on a low plain, their eyes turned towards the west. Behind them rises the steep wall, cut by many gorges, of a high and long tableland which runs from north to south. On its heights is the eastern boundary of Palestine.

Bashan occupies the northern section. It is an extensive plateau, rising about 2,000 feet above the sea and reaching to further heights in a line of extinct volcanoes. Its red volcanic soil, well-watered, is now a huge granary and promises to be one of the great grain-producing areas of the east. Once Bashan was famous for its oaks and cattle: it is famous still for the ancient city of Edrei with its underground streets, complete with shops, houses and market-place, all in vast caves.

The River Yarmuk, falling down the western slope of the range into the Jordan, forms the southern border of Bashan. To the south is Gilead, stretching down, though boundaries are elusive and hard to fix, to the River Arnon. The northern half of Gilead rises higher than Bashan, but it also is fruitful, able to produce vines and timber and to support large flocks and herds.

The River Jabbok divides Gilead. South of the Jabbok the hills become downland, smooth and peaceful except where deep ravines intrude their wild, picturesque beauty. In Gilead was grown the tree from which came the "balm," a resin valued for its medicinal powers and so an important export. Among the towns were Mahanaim, Succoth, Jazer, Jabesh-Gilead, Ramoth-Gilead and Heshbon.

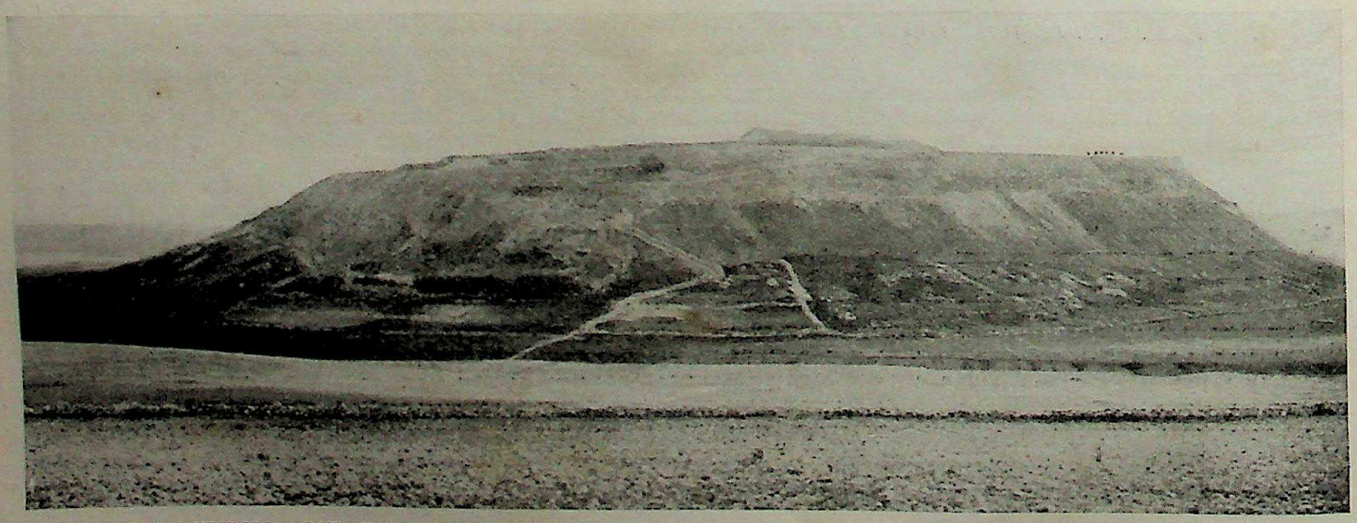
Where the Jordan Runs Its Course

THE western wall of the Transjordan range falls steeply, draining its waters into the river Jordan. Tradition derives the name of the river from a Hebrew root and gives it the meaning of *Descender*.

The Jordan Valley is a rift, a fault. Ages ago the rocks of Palestine lifted in huge folds. Some parts underwent immeasurable pressure as a result. The pressure became too great to be withstood, and the crust of the earth cracked and opened, leaving the broken sides raw and twisted. Down the fissure so formed now runs the Jordan.

The crack is deeper at the southern end than at the north. Beginning beyond Palestine, it sinks as it comes south until, reaching its lowest point just beyond the southern limit of the country, it begins quickly to rise again. Its deepest hole is filled by the Dead Sea, the surface of whose waters is no less than 1,292 feet below the level of the Mediterranean, while its bottom is at one point some 1,200 feet lower still. It has no outlet.

The Jordan rises outside Palestine, at the foot of snowy Mount Hermon. Several streams converge to form it. One of these bursts out of a limestone cliff, not as a small spring, but as a



SITE OF LACHISH, CITADEL OF CANAAN. The mound of Tell Duweir was identified as the grave of Biblical Lachish by the archaeologists of the Wellcome Expedition, 1933-5. Previously this "fenced city" was located at Tell el Hesy, a smaller mound, now thought possibly to have been Eglon, another of the cities of the southern confederacy of Canaanite kings, organized to resist the invasion of Israel (Joshua x, 3-5), which were captured by Joshua and destroyed. Tell Duweir, viewed above from the north-east, is one of the many mounds in Palestine in which cities have lain buried.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

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A WATER-SELLER ON THE DUSTY ROAD TO HEBRON

This hawker of water has filled his goat-skin " bottle " at one of the limestone fountains, or natural wells, of Palestine, to be found outside most of the villages. Many of the hot and thirsty wayfarers that he meets on the road gladly pay him for a draught of cold spring water. He is representative of a characteristic class of street-hawker in the East, where water supplies are meagre ; essentially welcome though humble as in the days when the term " drawer of water " was used generally by Moses and Joshua (Deuteronomy xxix, 11 ; Joshua ix, 21) to denote a menial labourer.

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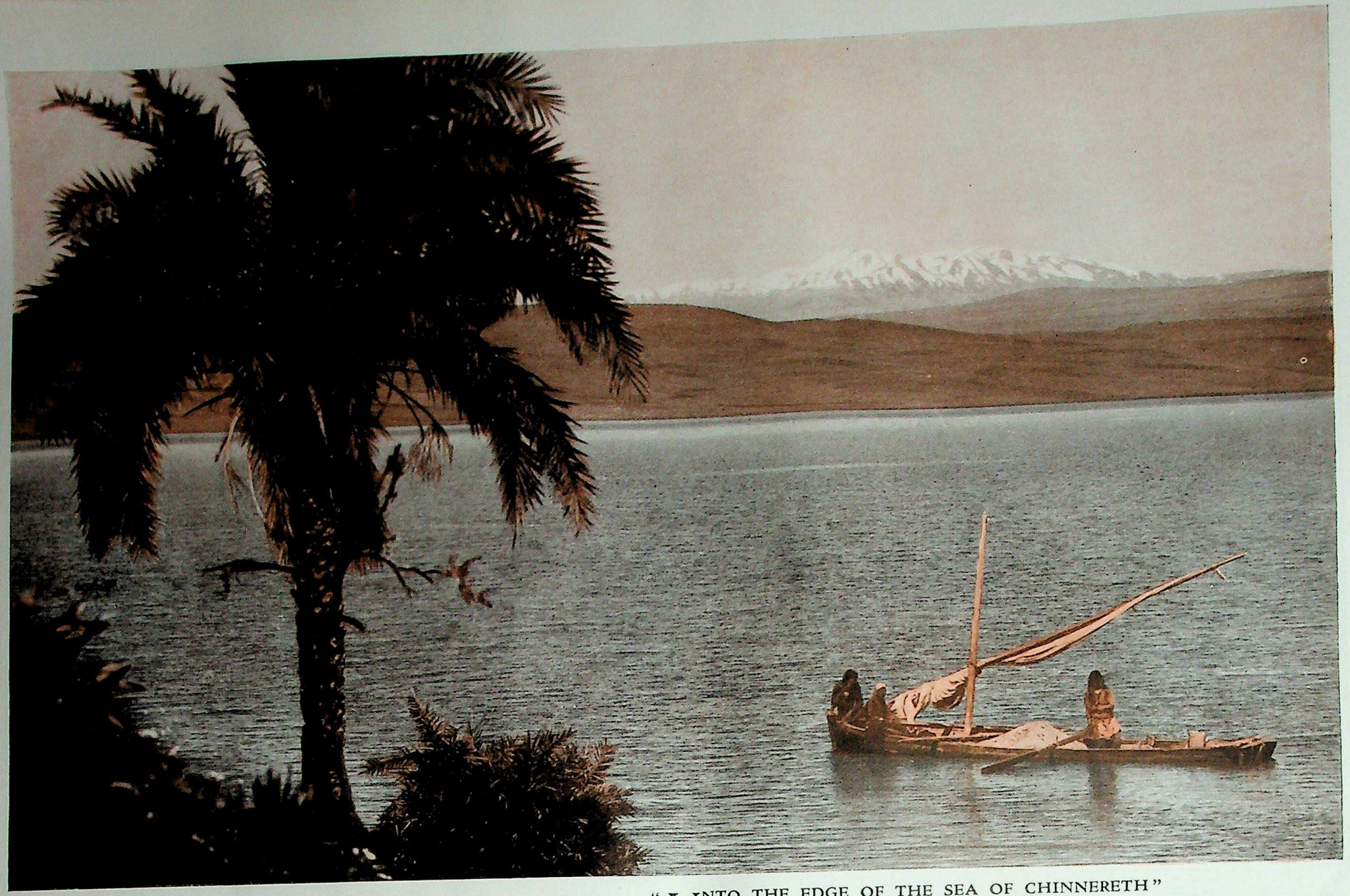

"UNTO THE EDGE OF THE SEA OF CHINNERETH"

At the time of Joshua's campaigns and during the settlement of Israel in Canaan, the Lake of Tiberias—Sea of Galilee, or Gennesaret, so sacredly associated with the life of Our Lord—was known by its earliest name of Chinnereth (Joshua xiii, 27). The northern end of the Lake is pictured above. To the west and north it is bounded by a terraced upland, beyond the heights of which the radiant snows of Mount Hermon are visible. Across the southern part of this wild country Sisera, escaping from Barak, fled towards Kedesh (Judges iv, 11, 17) till he found in the tent of Jael food—and death.

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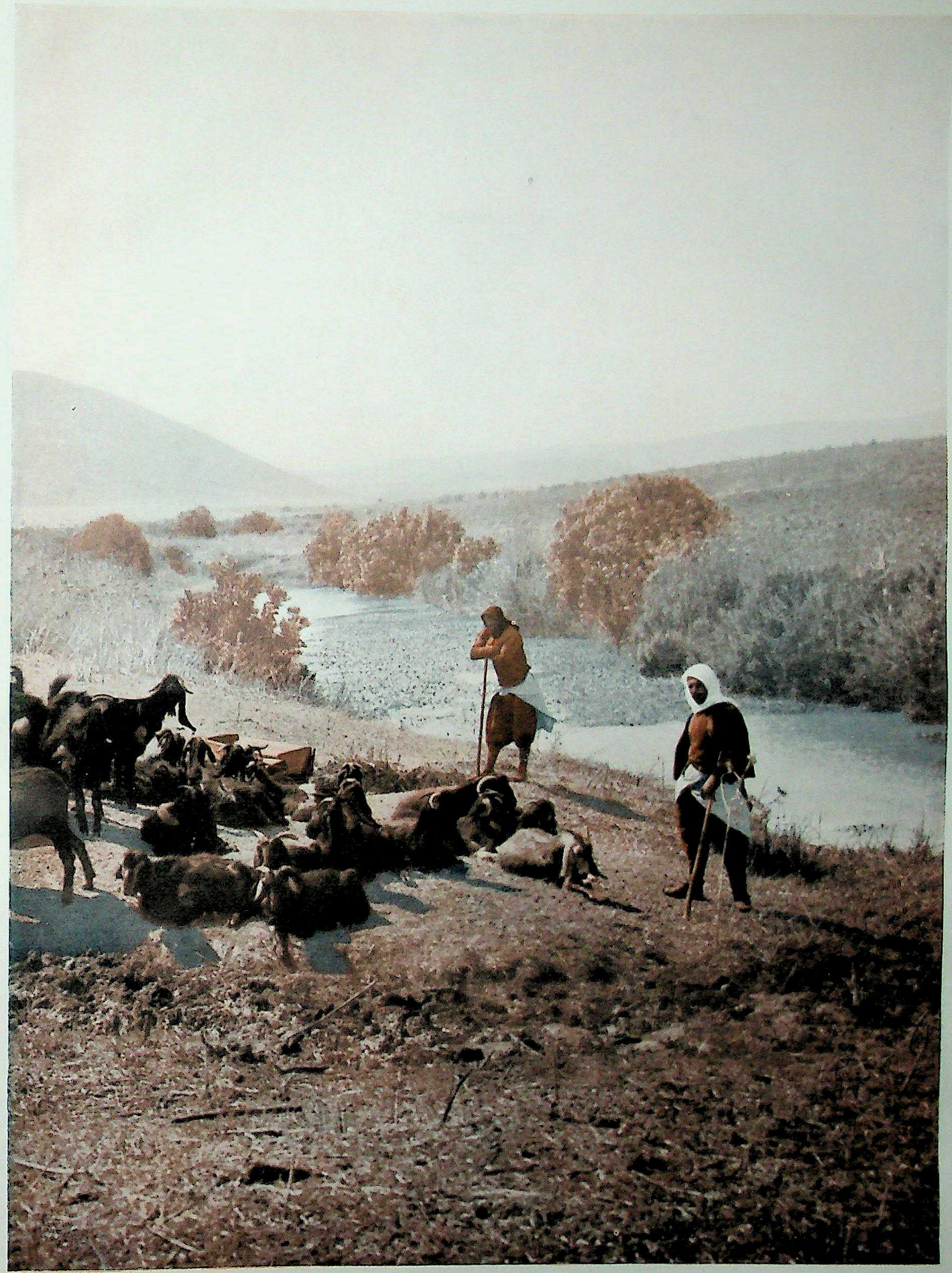

"THAT ANCIENT RIVER, THE RIVER KISHON"

Immortalized in the Song of Deborah, prophetess-judge of Israel, the Kishon meanders through the plain of Esdraelon to the Mediterranean at Haifa. Pastoral scenes are common by this apparently peaceful stream, shallow even in flood time. Yet Sisera's charioteers, routed by the forces of Barak, fled until finally "the river of Kishon swept them away" (Judges v, 21). This catastrophe may have occurred towards Mount Carmel, seen on the left of the photograph, where waters meet and there is a ford. Passable across the rocky bed in the dry season, the river here suddenly becomes a dangerous rapid when the torrential rains descend.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

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WEAVING ON A LOOM LIKE DELILAH'S IN SOREK

Still used by Beduin women for the weaving of curtain strips, this horizontal type of loom was the one with which Canaanites were familiar at the time of Samson in the 11th century B.C. Seated by such a loom, Delilah, with her sleeping husband's head in her lap, could easily knit his long hair into the warp with her fingers and beat it up tightly with the batten, when making her second attempt to deliver him bound to the Philistines (Judges xvi, 13, 14). He, however, waking, pulled up the loom, fastened to the ground with weighted pegs, and walked away with frame and web.

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well-filled and broad river. This source, beautiful and mysterious, has always cast its spell over the imaginations of men. Here the native people may have thought their god dwelt, for this place may have been Baal-Gad. Certainly a later religion found the place holy, for it dedicated the awe-inspiring waters to Pan and so gave the river the name, Banias, by which it is known to this day.

The Jordan flows through two lakes and finds its end in a third. The first is Lake Huleh, a reed-bordered expanse covering about 14 square miles. Tradition identified it with the Waters of Merom, where Joshua encountered and defeated the allied northern kings.

Ten miles further south, after a rapid course which takes it 700 feet below sea-level, the Jordan reaches its second lake. From Huleh the valley has been narrow; now the hills open out, to close again some thirteen miles further south. In the hollow they make lies the Sea of Chinnereth or Galilee. It is a picture of serenity. "Although God has created seven seas," ran the Rabbinical saying, "yet He has chosen this one as His special delight."

Jordan's End in the Dead Sea

SIXTY miles lie between the Sea of Galilee and the Dead Sea, the great salt lake which receives the waters of the Jordan. In that distance the Jordan's twisting course is something like two hundred miles long. For the greater part of its journey it runs through a fairly narrow valley, though at one place the hills recede to leave a plain eight miles wide. Again, as the Dead Sea comes near, the valley opens out on either side to form the broad level stretch in which stand Abel-Shittim and Jericho.

Here the ground-level is very low. Depth and latitude combine to make the valley oppressively hot. Jungle growth, cane, tamarisk, willow and acacia, covers the river banks and gives —or gave—cover for the lurking lion and leopard. It is said that the stock of the human beings who live here grows weak and sickly by reason of the deadly heat. Even at Jericho, built under the shade of the western hills, the warmth is excessive. That city, fortified though it was, never stood a siege. Its men, it is presumed, had suffered too much from the enervating climate to make efficient soldiers.

The Jordan comes to an end in the Dead Sea, that strange Sea of Salt which gives out its waters only to the heat of the sun. Saturated with salts, some brought down from the hills, some coming direct from bottom-springs, the sea will support only the lowest forms of life. Its waters are sparkling and blue, but few wildfowl fly over them, and the shores around the 400 square miles of surface are waste, sulphurous and dead.

It is the surroundings which do most to give the Dead Sea its air of desolation. They make the scene a fitting one for the lost cities on which God rained brimstone and fire. The shores are lifeless and discoloured, and from them the mountains rise in cliffs of twisted, grotesque appearance. To the west the hills rise up "bare, unbroken, menacing," an impenetrable barrier. The ancient name for this wall and the desert of hot limestone rock which meets it was Jeshimon, which means Desolation. There is one oasis, the green and pleasant En-gedi; elsewhere the fiery, hateful desolation is complete and overwhelming.

The Jordan is not useful as a waterway. It twists too much and rapids are too common. Nor is it an effective barrier between east and west. The mountain walls which flank it are more efficient defences, and where they yield, as it were, and send down a traversable valley to the river, the Jordan is usually fordable. Towns such as Dan or Laish, Bethshan, Adam and Jericho either protect fords or guard the roads down to them.

The plains into which the Valley swells are by no means infertile. In later centuries man's neglect brought them largely to waste, but in the time of Joshua they were most probably cultivated. Jericho's name, the City of Palm Trees, is very old, and excavations have revealed proof of her former wealth. In the storerooms of her palace have been found almost

WHERE THE JABBOK FLOWS ON THE BORDER OF AMMON. **On its whole course from Ammon to Jordan, the Jabbok, draining the mountains of Gilead, flows through a deep, flower-patched gorge. This river was the northern frontier of the tribe of Ammon in the time of Moses (Joshua xii, 2). On its south bank Esau met Jacob; there also Jacob wrestled all night with the Angel and received the name of Israel. The stream is now known as Nahr ez-Zerka, Blue River, on account of its milky blue colour when seen from a distance.**

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

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innumerable jars for holding grain, oil, and wine; even the remains of these foodstuffs have been found. Jericho, standing in her walls beside her precious spring, must have been the stronghold of a wealthy district.

The west wall of the Jordan Valley is provided by two mountain blocks which stand end to end with a wide plain between them. These ranges occupy roughly the middle of Palestine and form the watershed of the country west of Jordan.

The northern mass comes into Palestine as a continuation of the loftier Lebanon range. Towards the north it is a series of high plateaux rising here and there into peaks 3,000 feet high, in the south it falls away into lower hills with gentle slopes and ample valleys.

This is Galilee, the Garden of the Lord, a smiling land of wooded slopes, vineyards and valleys filled with waving corn at harvest-time. It is well-watered the seasonal rains are plentiful, springs abound, and in addition there is the famous "dew of Hermon" to provide moisture. In summer, hot wet winds blow up from the sea: as they cross the land they meet the cold atmosphere in which Mount Hermon wraps itself and are forced to surrender their moisture. The result is the heavy dew which "drips from the housetops" in the north and even in Lower Galilee gives welcome refreshment at the time when water is most scarce.

Galilee is an open country, offering little obstruction to invaders except the strength and bravery for which its inhabitants have always been noted. The town of Hazor, situated between Lake Huleh and the Sea of Galilee, held a key position in the days of early Israel. Tracks radiated from it to north and west, and through it passed the great thoroughfare of Palestine, the road which brought Egypt and the Mediterranean face to face with Babylon. There were other towns in Galilee, such as Beth-anath, Hannathon and Kadesh-Naphtali, but none so important strategically as Hazor. Its power was something with which the children of Israel had to reckon.

Esdraelon's Plain of Many Battles

SOUTH of Galilee lies the plain of Esdraelon or Megiddo. It is three-sided. The hills of Galilee bound it on the north; in the east it runs down to the Jordan; while its third side is bounded by the southern block of mountains and by a spur which that block sends out north-west towards the sea. At the end of this spur stands Mount Carmel.

Apart from its fruitfulness, Esdraelon is of supreme importance. Through it pass roads to everywhere and from everywhere. And these roads, when the times are insecure, must be guarded.

Passes lead up into the heart of the hill-country in the south; in the days of Joshua they were guarded by the towns of Ibleam and Taanach. The great highway connecting Egypt and the east had to cross the ridge which joined Carmel to the southern mountain block; Megiddo was set there to watch. Further north were Harosheth and Jokneam, on the pass through which the chief river of Esdraelon, the Kishon, forces its way past Carmel to the sea.

On its eastern side the mountains of Tabor, Little Hermon and Gilboa interrupt the open front of the plain Between Little Hermon and Gilboa lies the wide valley of Jezreel, which gives Esdraelon access to the Jordan basin. At the eastern end of the valley lies the town of Bethshan, now Beisan.

In giving Esdraelon its position and its nature, fate made the plain for a battlefield and a place of garrisons Egypt and Babylon met here in conflict before Joshua crossed the Jordan. At a later battle a king of Israel was slain, and the people made a proverb about "the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the Plain of Megiddo." Here the Romans came to establish a garrison and name the place Legion, and here in 1799 Napoleon marched his army. There was reason why the writer of the Revelation, who saw the kings of the world gathered "to the battle of that great day of God Almighty," should discover the meeting place to be Har-Magedon (Armageddon), which is Hill of Megiddo. And as it was at other times, so the Israelites were to find it when they essayed the conquest of the land.

South of Esdraelon the mountains rise again. They continue, at varying levels and in changing formations, to the southern boundary of Palestine. The northern section is the hill-country of Ephraim or Samaria. Here the soft

"BEAUTIFUL FOR SITUATION" IN LEBANON. With the towering mountains of Lebanon as a background, this village nestles in a valley of enchanting views, seemingly far removed from the economic distress in Syria and the political unrest which ferments in this land of past glories and memorials of Biblical ages. Lebanon is mentioned some sixty times in the Old Testament—mainly with reference to its fertility and its cedars. Joshua included part of the great hollow between the Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon ranges in his conquests (Joshua xi, 17) "even unto Baal-gad, in the valley of Lebanon, under Mount Hermon," towering high above the sources of Jordan.

Photo, Emmerson

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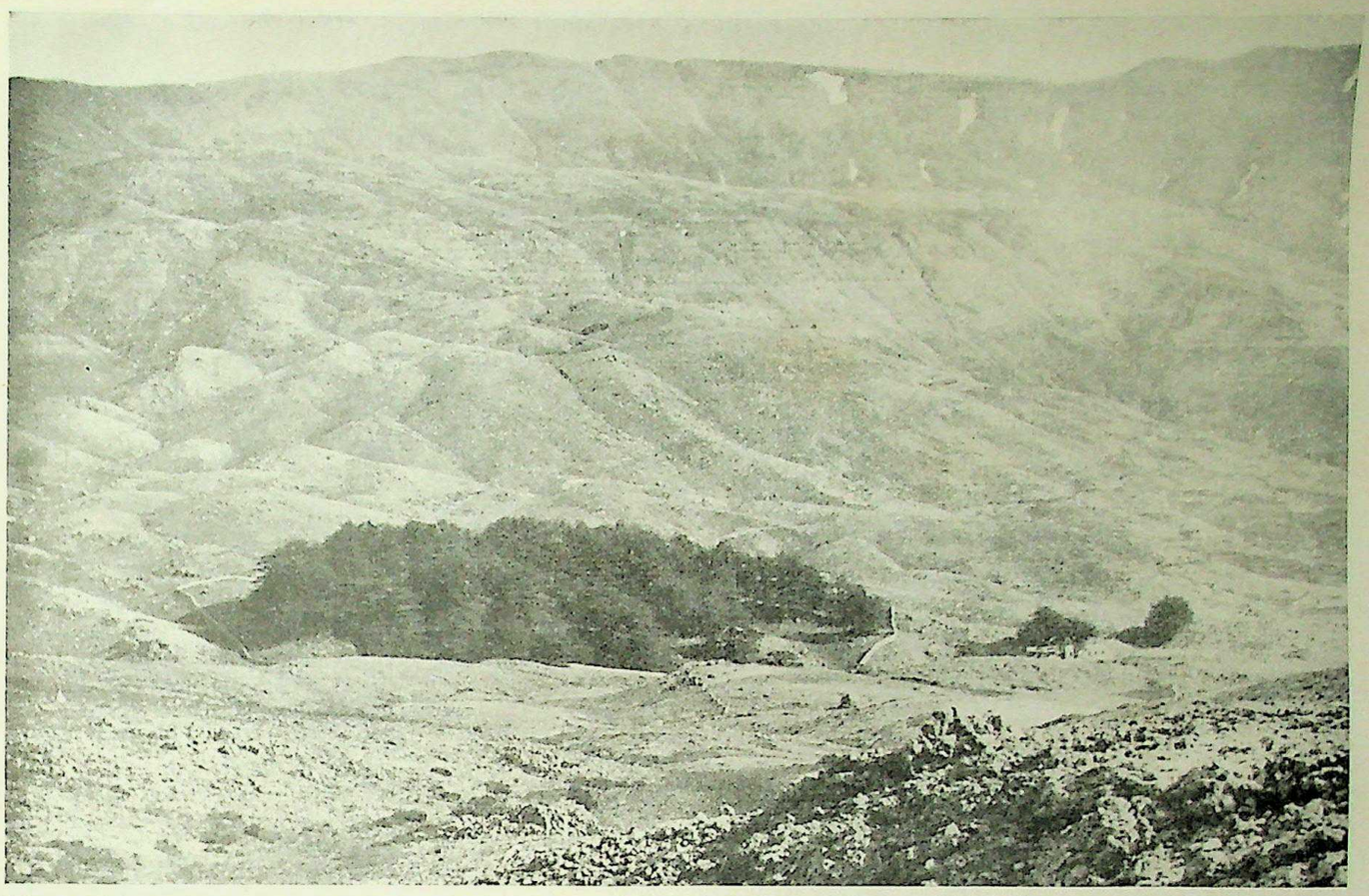

DIMINISHED "GLORY OF LEBANON." Once cedars covered the greater part of the Lebanon range, but now they have disappeared except those enclosed at the foot of Jebel Makhmal. In the main grove are about 400 trees, varying from 1000 to 200 years old. The most ancient cedars stand on two hillocks, seen to the right of the photograph, seven on one and five on the other. By these can be discerned the chapel of the Maronites, centre of the Lebanon Christian community.

BEAUTY OF "THE GOODLY CEDARS." Among the veterans of Lebanon the greatest girth of trunk is 40 feet at the base. These trees are the most majestic in Syria, though far less lofty than the Himalayan cedars to which they are allied. The wood was the best building-timber available to the Israelites. Jotham's fable of the trees (Judges ix, 8-15) reaches the height of irony, when the bramble—fit only for fuel—threatens, if chosen king, to "devour the cedars of Lebanon" with its fire.

Photos, American Colony in Jerusalem

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HOW THE EARLY CANAANITES SECURED WATER. Many hundreds of years before the time of Joshua, the hill-country of Canaan was inhabited by cave-dwellers. The most interesting series of their caves is at Gezer, where these predecessors of the Amorites not only excavated homes, but also tunnelled deeply in search of water. The photograph shows the famous water-passage of Gezer, a great rock-cut stairway, 219 feet long and 94½ feet below the rock surface. It terminates in a powerful spring. Archaeologists think that the site of the earliest palace-fortress of the Amorites (2500-1800 B.C.) may have been chosen above the tunnel to secure it and the spring as a water supply. The entrance is in the court.

Photo Palestine Exploration Fund

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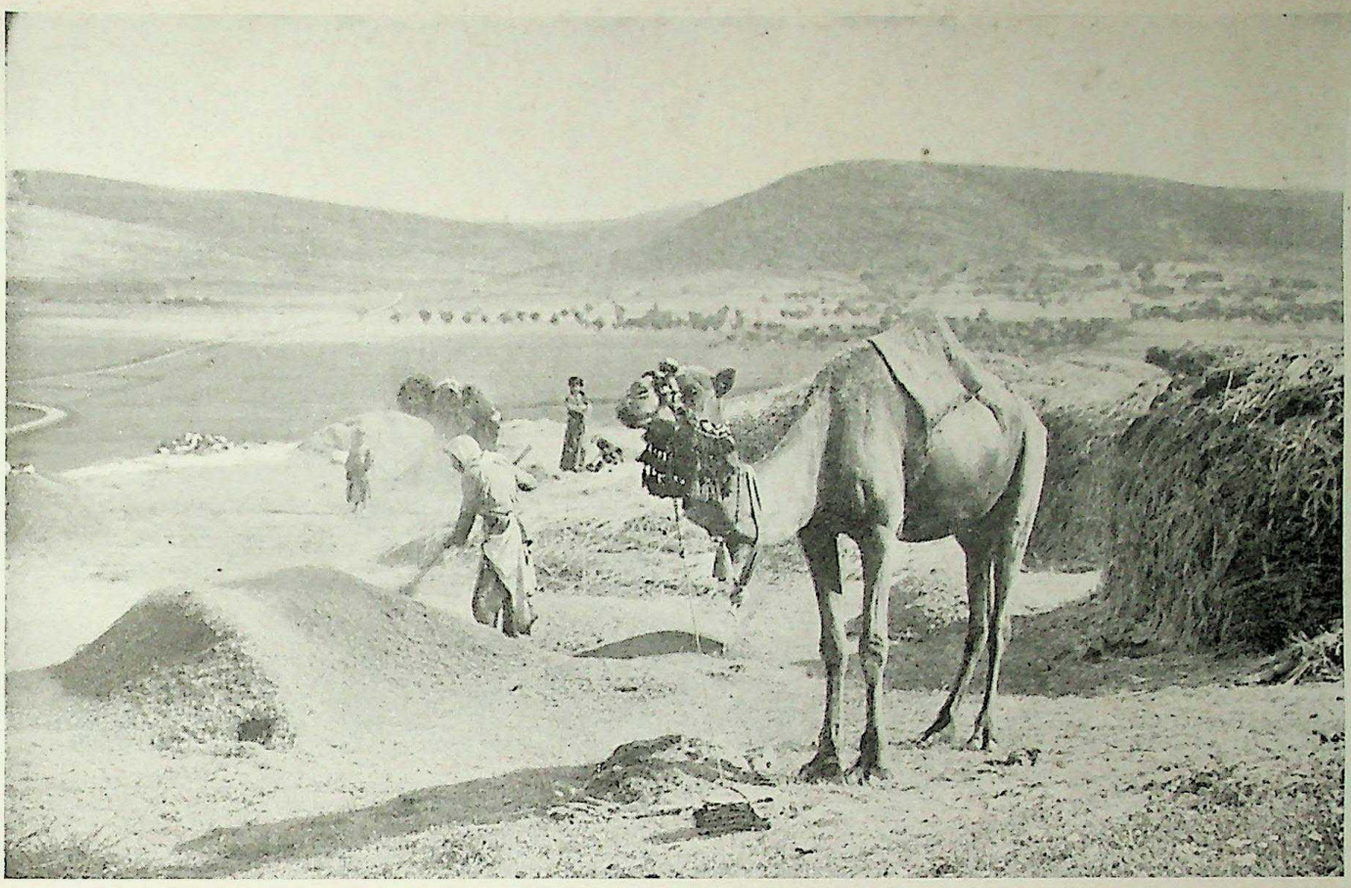

"WINNOWED WITH THE SHOVEL." On the fruitful slopes and in the level valleys of "Mount Ephraim"—name given to the whole range of Samaria's hills in the Old Testament (Joshua xvii, 15, etc.)—are many cornfields. Here we view a harvesting scene in this district of "fulness of bread and prosperous ease". On the sun-baked surface of the threshing-floor the wheat lies heaped for winnowing. Straw is mingled with corn until the worker has tossed it with a wooden shovel, letting the wind carry away the chaff-motes and crushed straw, while the heavier grain falls to the ground.

Photo, Donald McLeish

chalk mountains are worn into downland, with rounded summits, easy slopes and broad, fruitful valleys. It was easily entered in the days of Israel. Ascending past Ibleam, the guardian town in the north, a road came along the ridge of the range; it went through Shechem, the central town of the region, passed Shiloh and continued towards the south. Through Shechem, which lay between the peaks of Ebal and Gerizim, another road passed; it went east and west, linking Transjordan to the country west of Samaria.

The mountains rise as we move south of Shechem. Of dolomitic limestone, they grow rugged and impressively grand. Samaria passes into Judea, and for some distance there is a fall in the level of the range until, some miles beyond Jerusalem, the wild mountains of Hebron rise to a height of over 3,000 feet. The range then sinks to the Negeb, the dry south region, and at last falls away into the desert of Sinai.

Judea has its fertile glens and plains. Near Hebron is Eshcol, suggesting by its name its clusters of grapes. Other hillsides are able to grow their vines, olives and figs, and elsewhere the ground can produce good pasture. But there are many sterile stretches. Stony, boulder-covered moors are everywhere to be met. Only thorns, dwarf-oaks, and other scrub can flourish on them, and even the hardiest herbage is absent in places where the limestone rocks thrust themselves up to the surface.

These natural conditions kept the cities of Judea apart, unlikely to combine unless a dreadful danger drove them, or some strong external power insisted on binding them together. And they shared a larger isolation, for as they stood lonely in Judea, so did Judea stand apart from her neighbours.

Only her north border was open. On the east the wall of the Jordan Valley and the devastation called Jeshimoth stood as barriers. The south was guarded by the dry Negeb, where only nomads could live, the Negeb itself being strengthened as a defence by the desert beyond it. On the west the mountains fell away in steep, repelling walls, while beyond them the Shephelah, a debatable land of foothills, helped further to isolate Judea.

Ways of Communication through the Hills

OF course there are passes up into the heart of the country. The open north was watched in the days of Israel by the fortified cities of Bethel, Ai, Geba, Ramah and Gibeon. Jericho stood on a road which was the union of routes from Transjordan and the upper Jordan Valley. The ridge road from Esdraelon and Samaria continued through Bethel, Beeroth, Jerusalem, and Hebron on its way to Beer-sheba in the extreme south. Passes also led from the rich plains near the west coast. The most northerly, and most important, was the valley of Aijalon, which made possible a road from Lod, on the great Palestinian thoroughfare, to Gibeon, Jerusalem and the Jordan. In this valley stood Upper and Lower Beth-horon.

Other such passes were the valley of Sorek, with Beth-shemesh and Kirjath-Jearim to guard it, and the valley of Elam, held by the town of Socoh. Further south, advancing more into the Shephelah, stood the fortress of Lachish. These and other towns, such as Debir or Kirjath-Sepher, commanded the various ways out of, or into, the wealthier plains which lay to the west of Judea.

There are only two points where the mountains of Palestine come down to the sea. One is in Galilee, where an arm shoots out coastwards. This arm and the main block enclose the small, narrow plain of Tyre, where stood the famous cities of the Phoenicians, Tyre and its neighbours.

The other point is near the western apex of Esdraelon, where Mount Carmel brings its hard limestone mass and its beauty to the edge of a narrow beach. Between Carmel and the plain of Tyre is the plain of Acre, watered by the Kishon, from Esdraelon, and the Belus. Its chief town is Acre, formerly Accho or Acco, a city once familiar to the Crusaders, standing on a lovely, curving bay to which it gives its own name.

Below Carmel, running down by the side of the hill country of Ephraim, is

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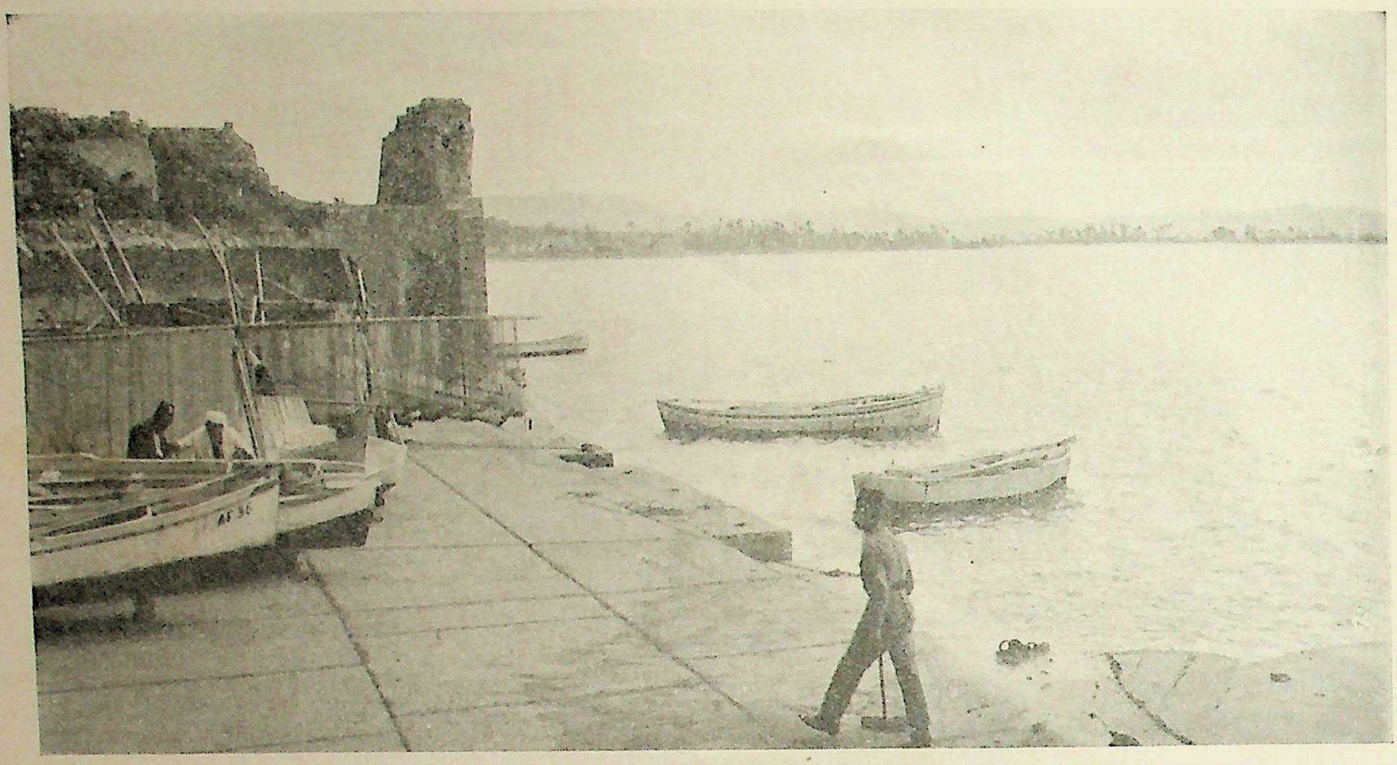

ACRE AND THE COAST THEREOF. Only once mentioned in the Old Testament, Acre or Accho, port of Galilee and Damascus, was allotted to the tribe of Asher, with the adjacent sea-board. In Judges i, 31, 32, it is recorded that Asher did not "drive out the inhabitants of Accho . . . but the Asherites dwelt among the Canaanites." The Canaanites remained in possession until Acre was captured by Sennacherib in the 7th century B.C. It is no longer a great seaport; the inner harbour is sanded up. The ramparts (left) date from the crusades, when Acre was capital of the kingdom of Jerusalem.

Photo, Emmerson

the level plain of Sharon, well wooded and fertile in the past. It widens quickly as it comes south, and somewhere about Jaffa, the ancient Joppa, it passes into the undulating plain of Philistia, which lies alongside Judea. The soil here is excellent; Israel knew the dwellers in the plain as agriculturists producing wheat, olives and the fruit of the vine.

The coast has always been unfriendly. Even in the days when sea-going vessels drew little water it offered poor harbourage, and most of the great towns were inland. The five chief towns of the Philistines were Ashdod, Askelon, Gaza, Gath and Ekron. Of these, in the time of Joshua, Gaza and Askelon were near the sea, other ports on the Sharon-Philistia coast being Joppa and Dor. Gaza and Ashdod stood on the main Egypt-Babylon road, as did also the town of Lod. Other cities of Philistia and the debatable Shephelah were Makkedah, Eglon, Libnah and Gezer, the last being famous for its caves, where people once lived in what was almost an "underground village."

These are the regions, with some of their towns, into which nature has divided the land which Israel claimed. Parts were not to be occupied until after many years of stern war or peaceful penetration. Others were not to become Hebrew at all. In the northwest, among the Phoenicians, there was to be continued weeping for Tammuz and the worship of Jehovah was to be unknown. There, too, men were to think of the Belus as a river in which Hercules was healed of a wound. But such regions cannot be omitted; they belong to the land apportioned out among the children of Israel.

An account of regions is a dull catalogue of common things. It explains campaigns: it does not set forth the colour of a country. The soul of a land is the influence it has on the minds and souls of men. How then is Palestine to be described?

There were two Palestines. There was the land where bread was to be eaten "without scarceness," where water was abundant, the "land of wheat, and barley, and vines, and fig trees and pomegranates; a land of oil olive and honey." The kindly eyes of a Hebrew so described it, but his laudatory picture is not untrue. Less than a century before the time of Joshua the Pharaoh Thothmes received from Canaan, as tribute, "103 horses, 5 chariots wrought with electrum, 749 bulls, 5,703 cattle, flat dishes of gold and silver . . . 823 jars of incense, 1,718 jars of honeyed wine . . . in addition to a chief's daughter with her ornaments of gold and lapis lazuli." And the Annals of the same king record that "the soldiers of His Majesty were drunk and rubbed with oil every day, which only happens in Egypt on feast-days." (Lods, "Israel," page 60).

Nature's Gifts to Canaan

THIS was the Palestine of the plains and valleys. There the rains, falling between October and March, bless the fertile soil with full and speedy harvests. It was the land of such glories as the "excellency of Carmel," described by Sir George Adam Smith, with its trees and its colourful undergrowth of "purple thistles, mallows with blossoms like pelargoniums, golden broom, honeysuckle and convolvulus." It was the land where the rains, sweeping down the dry valleys, lined their banks with pink masses of oleanders; and where the springs, gushing freely from the limestone rock, coloured the ground a perpetual green. It was the land of anemones and red poppies, of bees and doves, of flowers and the singing of birds.

There were unpleasant features and a certain poverty even in this Palestine. There was flint in plenty, but no iron nor any precious metal. Thunderstorms were not uncommon and earthquakes not unknown. Locusts abounded, a constant threat of destruction, while snakes, lions, bears, leopards and other wild beasts were to be encountered in their haunts. In summer the heat was oppressive to human beings, and little herbage survived the burning rays of the sun and the fierceness of the sirocco, the dreaded wind from the south-eastern desert. But even these things must have served to emphasize the wonder of the spring and the miracle of life that was yearly renewed. This Palestine was indeed a rich one.

But there was another one. There was the land that "eateth up its inhabitants," the brown, monotonous land of high, stony plains and barren mountains where the wilderness came very near to the sown, and the scant herbage, quick to spring up, was quicker still to die. In this Palestine were the isolations and the hardships that make life stern and simple.

It was into these two lands that the children of Israel flung themselves. What was likely to be their influence on the soul of the pilgrim nation from the desert?

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Palestine was not unused to men when the children of Israel sought to enter. It had been populated since before the dawn of history.

Parts of the country are honeycombed with caves. Many of these were once the homes of a primitive race. Of these cave-dwellers, little can ever be known. Crude, childish pictures, drawn on the walls of a cave at Gezer, indicate that they lived by hunting and farming. Everywhere on the rocks there are cup-hollows; some of these may have been used as wine and olive presses, while into others the cave-dwellers poured the blood of the animals they sacrificed to their gods. Their caves, too, endure, still yielding traces of pottery and burial-remains.

But the people themselves had vanished many centuries before the coming of Israel. Other races came and either exterminated or absorbed them. And even these later peoples were to see many changes take place before they achieved the civilization, such as it was, into which the Hebrews thrust themselves.

That civilization has also gone. It too had to yield to another. But it is not altogether lost. In recent years the spade of the excavator has become of great value by reason of work in uncovering the mounds which mark the sites of ancient settlements.

The work is by no means simple. A *tell* may not be only the site of a town: it may be the site of several towns. Towns not side by side, but in layers, in strata, one upon another!

Perils and Dangers of Palestinian Life

LIFE was always insecure in ancient Palestine. Cities were always liable to be captured, looted and "devoted," that is, destroyed by fire or other means. Storms, too, and even earthquakes might destroy flimsy-walled buildings whose foundations were not over-strong. At Taanach, for example, the skeleton of a woman was discovered in the ruins of a house, surrounded by the remains of five children. She was not killed during the sack of the town—soldiers bent on booty would not have left the ornaments which were found beside her bones. It must have been some natural catastrophe that brought about this pitiable tragedy. And such disasters may not have been uncommon.

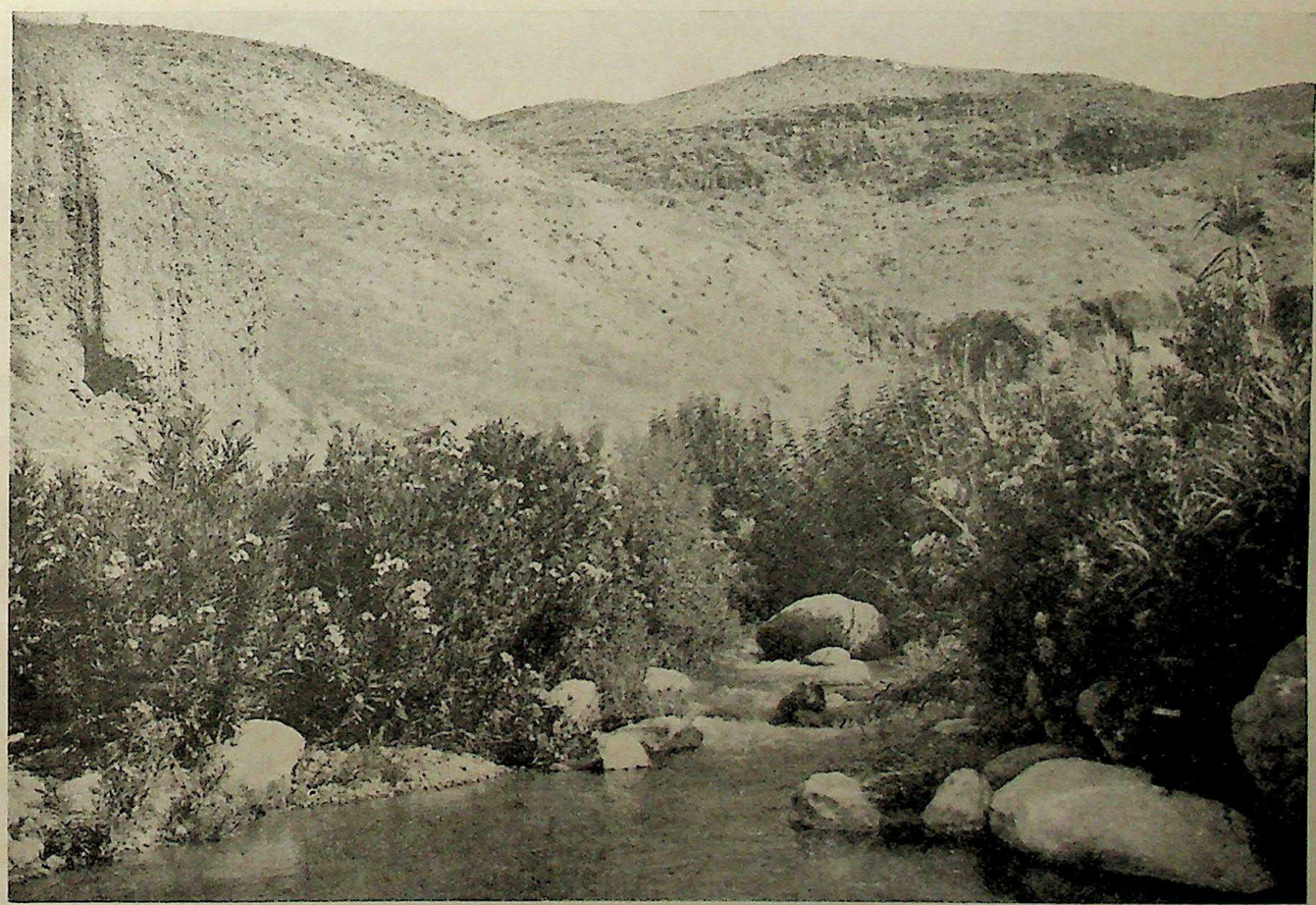
At other times houses would be abandoned simply because time had made them unsafe. But the sites always remained, and the need for dwellings, and so in course of time new buildings arose. Little clearing was done, and the remains of the former structures were often left, little disturbed, beneath the slight foundations of the new. Thus towns came into being in layers, one upon another, until at last the site was abandoned and a cover of green grew over the mound, to keep its secrets until the spoiler or the scientific spade should come to reveal them.

It may not be out of place to tell briefly the story of how excavators have dealt with such a mound.

Tell el-Sultan stands in the Jordan Valley, on the way from the river to Jerusalem, beside the spring known as Elisha's Fountain. It is the site of the ancient city of Jericho. Warren, in 1868, was the first to explore it; the next workers on the *tell* were Sellin and Watzinger, who began in 1907. They uncovered the remains of three systems of wall-defences, one massive wall being eighteen feet thick. They also made a detailed examination of houses which they found.

At the beginning of the present decade another expedition went out under the direction of Professor Garstang of Liverpool University. It has made discoveries and passed judgements of great importance.

The known walls were examined, as well as two others which were discovered. A tower on the east side was uncovered, along with vaults which



"WILLOWS OF THE BROOK." Across Jordan by way of the Allenby Bridge, and some miles east of the river, the road of ascent to the heights of Gilead winds through the Wady Sha'ib. In this valley masses of oleanders, the Biblical "willows of the brook," flower in spring by the tumbling stream, their rose-pink a delight against the grey limestone of cliff and boulder. On the right of the photograph can be seen a tufted head of the tall "reed shaken with the wind".

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

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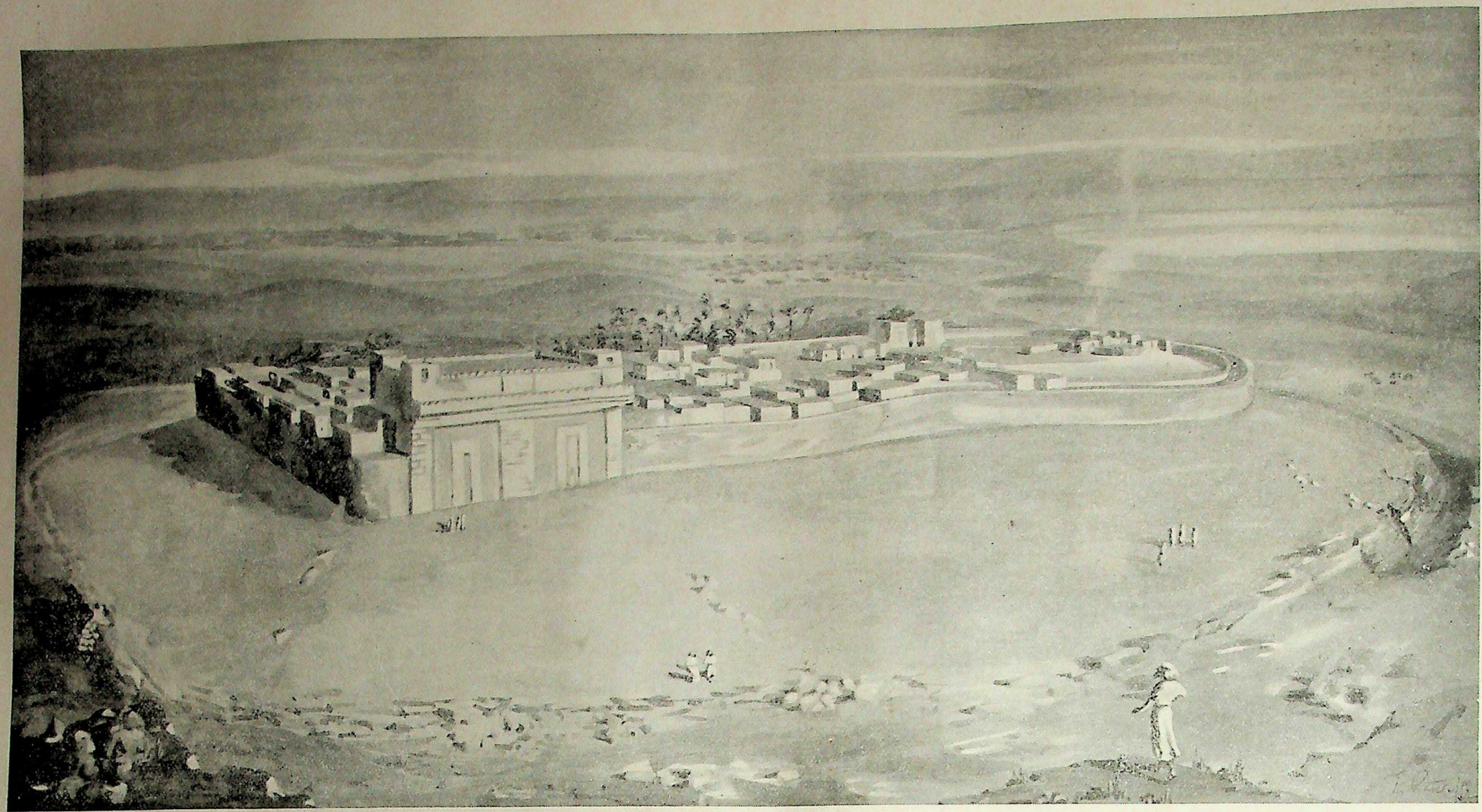

"NOW JERICHO WAS STRAITLY SHUT UP." This drawing made by Miss M. Ratcliffe, under the supervision of Professor Garstang, shows how the walled citadel of Jericho, erected before 1400 B.C., probably appeared when Joshua first beheld it. Already, though the ritual of the siege had not begun, it "was straitly shut up because of the children of Israel: none went out, and none came in" (Joshua vi, 1). To the left is seen the great tower. On the double brick walls, laid with cross timbers, are houses—such as the one inhabited by Rahab. These city walls in collapsing fell outwards on the mound, at the edge of which may be seen the ruins of ramparts belonging to the larger Jericho destroyed about 200 years previously.

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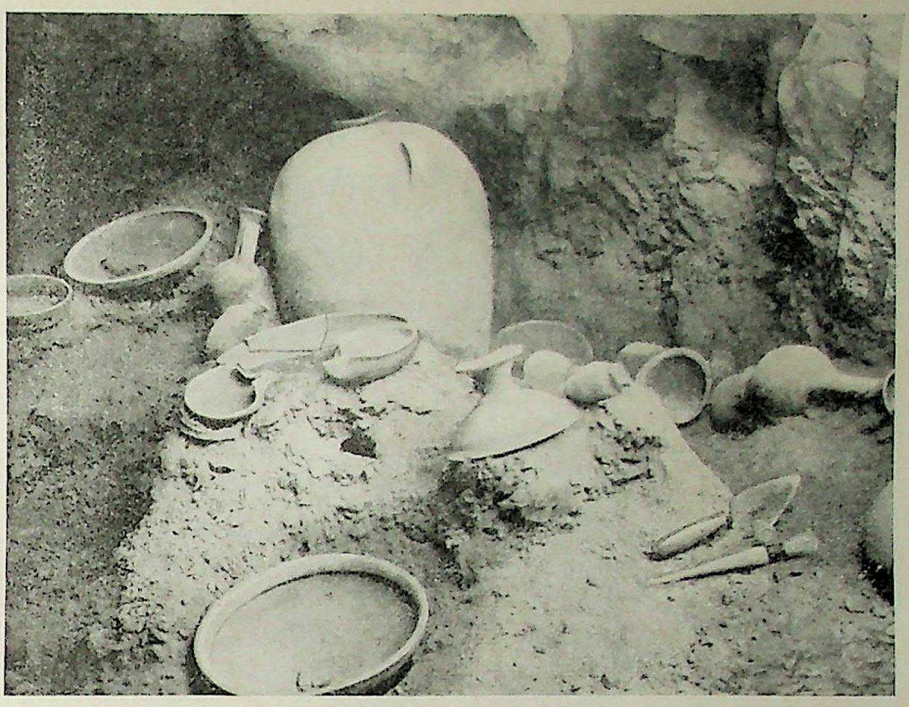
went down to its foundations. This tower was one of the oldest features of the city to which it belonged.

In the valley adjoining the mound, an ancient necropolis was uncovered. Observations from the air were used to determine the sites and probable number of the tombs. Subsequent excavations brought to light many valuable pieces of pottery vessels, beads, amulets, seals and ornaments. Among the scarabs found was one depicting Pharaoh as an archer; another showed a Canaanite dressed in robe and cap. A third shows a person who may be a god: he is standing on the back of an animal that is probably a bull, and on his shoulders he carries a yoke.

Work was carried out on the remains of a "palace" which digging revealed. Somewhere about 1400 B.C. it had been destroyed by a terrific fire which left a layer of charcoal two feet deep in places. This was removed, and an earlier building revealed. A great system of store-rooms was found, and many unique pieces obtained. Among these was a drinking-cup shaped like a deer's head. More ordinary, and yet more affecting in their appeal, were the remains of grain, lentils, oil, wine and barley-beer found in the store-jars.

One room yielded a libation bowl, from which drink-offerings were poured, and a chalice with a snake moulded on the handle. This room may have been a shrine.

Work has gone on. The layers of civilization have one by one been taken off. Even the earliest period of known history has been passed and the still darker ages reached. Now it is known that in this place men lived eight or nine thousand years ago. Dr. Garstang claims that it is the site of the oldest civilized settlement in the world.



FUNERAL POTTERY THAT TELLS OF JERICHO'S FALL. This photograph shows the interior, at commencement of excavation, of the latest tomb in Jericho's old necropolis. Among funeral deposits were found two scarabs of Amenhotep III, whose reign began about 1411 B.C. In other graves pottery and scarabs date back through the centuries in which Canaan paid tribute to Egypt. But with the reign of this Pharaoh deposits end in necropolis and in city, evidence that life and normal burial ceased in Jericho soon after the above date.

Photo, by courtesy of Professor Garstang

Scientific Digging and the Bible Story

THIS Jericho expedition has achieved results of supreme importance. It has established that, (according to the words of Dr. Garstang) after the conflagration which burned the city about 1400 B.C., "except for partial and temporary reconstruction, the site was deserted and left to itself." Thus excavation has confirmed the Bible story and helped to fix its dates.

Many other sites have been opened. Several nations share the search, but the object is one. It is to recover for us the life and beliefs and accomplishments of men and women who laboured and died long ago.

It is not easy to give one name to the people who occupied the country. It never has been easy, for Palestine is a land on whose borders nomads have always moved restlessly, to penetrate as occasion offers or necessity drives. In the time of early Israel "the Amalekites dwelt in the south"; possibly they were nomads of this sort.

At times great racial movements have flung whole peoples into the country. One such wave carried in the Amorites, another the Canaanites, while a third brought the Phoenicians. These last occupied the north-west coast; it is not so easy to say how the others were distributed. Probably the Amorites seized the hill-country; possibly they were forced thither by the Canaanites, who dwelt in the plains.

The Hittites supplied another element. Tradition gave them a part in the founding of Jerusalem, the city of the Jebusites, and for a time they controlled the country; but their precise share in the populating of the country is uncertain. Other inhabitants were the Hivites, or Horites, from Mesopotamia, who held the allied cities of Gibeon, Beeroth, Chephirah and Kirjath-Jearim.

The Perizzites occupied the wooded hill-country of Mount Ephraim between Shechem and Bethshan. They are another people of uncertain origin. Their name may mean "dwellers in unwalled villages," and they may have earned it by their inability to capture and occupy the larger, walled towns. It has been suggested, however, that the Perizzites were so called because of their skill in working iron.

Another people with whom the Israelites were to come into conflict came into the coastal plains of the south. They were the Philistines.

Many peoples occupied the land. Yet there was an unexpected unity among them. For this, a racial affinity was largely responsible. Most of the peoples were Semites, and shared a common origin in language, culture, and religion.

But there was another cause. That was the control which the eastern empire of Babylonia exercised. It was not merely a political domination she established. Her influence extended to all the corners of life and belief and was so deep that it lasted for centuries, even when her political power had disappeared.

Yet there was a kind of unity which Babylonia failed to bring about. She did not so unite Palestine politically that the unity would survive her departure from power. Nor did Egypt accomplish this, when after the fall of Babylonia she added Palestine to her empire. This double failure (if it can be so called when the accomplishment was probably not desired!) was to be of great value to the Israelites.

About the time of the Hebrew invasion, the hold of Egypt over Palestine had relaxed, and as a result the country was slipping into separations and divisions. Egypt was not able to organize more than a slight concerted resistance to the invaders; nor was there any town within the country able, by reason of size, situation, or wealth, to band the people together in opposition.

There was therefore unity and disunity in the land when the Israelites arrived. On the one hand, the people were largely one in customs, culture, and religion. But, on the other hand, the land was slipping back from the unity imposed by a foreign yoke into a state of separations. Its cities were tending to become city-states.

The towns of ancient Palestine were not large, if judged by modern standards. Indeed, twentieth-century notions of size should be ignored when studying the magnitudes of the past.

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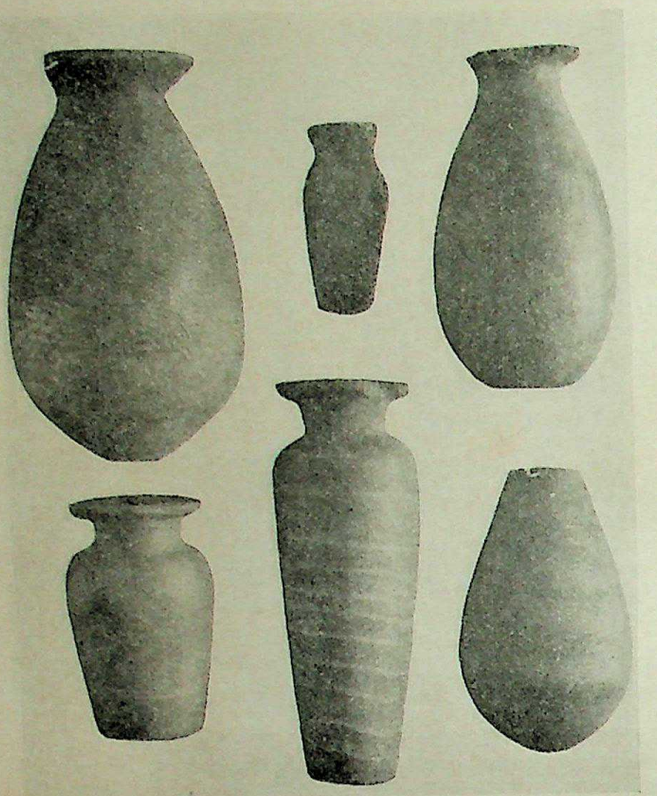

POTTERY ANTIQUE EVEN IN JOSHUA'S TIME. **Long before the era of Israel's conquest native workers in Canaan produced vessels of delicate beauty. These alabaster vases—belonging in elegant simplicity not to an age but to all time—dated to about 1700 B.C., were found at Tell-Beit-Mirsim, identified with Debir or Kirjath-sepher, the stronghold captured by Othniel (Joshua xv, 15-17), brother of Caleb.**

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

Israel was defeated at the battle of Ai—and lost about thirty-six men. The Tell el-Amarna letters contain many appeals for help from Palestinian cities owing fealty to Egypt. One chieftain asks for fifty men to defend himself and his city. Another will feel content and secure if fifteen are sent him. A third appeals for "six bows, three daggers and three swords."

Such figures prepare us for smallish estimates of the sizes and populations of the towns. According to Dr. Garstang, most cities occupied an area of less than ten acres. Some exceeded that figure. Jerusalem, Shechem and Megiddo covered a little over ten, while Gezer and Hazor, with fifteen and sixteen respectively, were larger still; but most were below that figure, and the average lay between six and ten acres.

Of population, Dr. Garstang makes the following reckonings; they are, in his opinion, "outside estimates." Allowing ten acres to a city, 250 inhabitants to an acre and 100 cities to the country, there would be a population of not more than 250,000 in the country at the time of Joshua. A large town of 3,000, he reckons further, would possess a fighting strength of 400 to 500 men.

The situations of towns were naturally chosen with an eye to their defensive possibilities. Some were established on bluffs, like Megiddo and Gezer, or on isolated heights, like Jericho, Lachish and Taanach.

Walls surrounded the towns. Towards the time of Joshua these were built of stone, large blocks being used. At Jericho, where the wall rose out of a dry ditch, and the rocks taken from this fosse were used for the rampart, some of these blocks were more than a ton in weight.

The walls were high and thick. That discovered at Tell el-Nasbeh, perhaps the ancient Mizpah, had a thickness of 17 feet and a height of 28 feet. The wall of Megiddo, an elaborate structure of brick topped with stone, was about 34 feet high and 24 feet thick. The wall of Jericho, built of stone to a height of 21 feet, was surmounted by an additional brick parapet rising six feet higher.

Towers were set at intervals along the walls, which were also fitted with niches and ledges on the inner side. From these the defence of the cities was conducted. The task of the attackers was made additionally difficult by the *glacis* of small stones and mud and mortar with which some walls were provided, by small and infrequent gates, and by the extra height given to the walls by the steep, rocky hillsides on which they generally stood. There was excellent reason why the Israelites, unaccustomed to cities of any sort, should look at these fortresses of Canaan and cry, in bewilderment and dismay, that these towns were "walled up to Heaven."

Within such cities, life was necessarily cramped. The uncovered streets of Jericho are narrow and twisting. Possibly some Canaanitish streets were of the nature of covered bazaars; the walls of a Bethshan street, drawing inwards at the top, suggest that the street was covered with an arch.

Vital Importance of Water Supply

A GOOD water-supply was a necessity. When, long after the days of Joshua, the army of Sennacherib was besieging Jerusalem, his Rabshakeh tried to entice the inhabitants into surrender by promising that each should have his own water-cistern. It was a bribe of no mean power he was offering; possibly none more powerful could have been offered to any generation of the city's inhabitants. Scarcity of water was a danger never far distant.

It was greatest in time of siege, when, if the spring lay outside the wall, the supply might be cut off. To obviate this danger, cisterns were hewn out of the rock, and one assigned to "each group of houses." Usually they were bottle-shaped, their depth varying from 16 to 23 feet and the floor being 11 to 26 feet wide. Sometimes the underground homes of the ancient cave-dwellers were used. Attempts were also made to bring within the walls the water of a spring.

At Gezer there is an amazing tunnel. It is a staircase (*see* illus. p. 262) leading for 219 feet through the rock to a spring which is nearly 100 feet beneath the rock surface. Though used by their successors, it was hewn out by the earlier cave-dwellers, who could have used only very primitive tools for the work. Later generations were so impressed, that they were wont to say, according to Bertholet in his "History of Hebrew Civilization" (page 56), that "the ancient Flood began from the hill of Gezer and returned to it at the close."

Other cities also owned their tunnels. Under Jerusalem there is a spring, now known as the Virgin's Fountain, which has been identified with the ancient Gihon. Its flow is intermittent; tradition says there is a dragon in its depths, and that the water can only flow when the beast is asleep since, awake, it swallows it all. Many tunnels have been cut through the rock round this spring, all intended to "make its waters accessible from the interior of the city." Some at least were in existence in Joshua's time.

Homes of Prince and People

DWELLING-HOUSES varied in size, material and equipment. In probably every city, near the wall and with ready access to a gate, there stood a governor's residence, the palace of the "king." Here the treasury would be situated, and here, too, justice would most likely be administered. It was large and substantially built, with its rooms opening on to a courtyard. Good storage-accommodation was provided, and also, if it were possible, there was a private water-supply. It was in a "treble row" of palace store-rooms that the Jericho Expedition found the jars containing the remains of wine, oil and grain.

Most houses, if not all, had a courtyard leading to the street. Some were large, most were small. Usually they were built of brick, the walls being thin, on rough and shallow foundations of stone. The roofs, as shown by débris found at Jericho, were made of clay pressed into a framework of timber. Where stairs existed, they led up to the roof, which could be used for such purposes as the drying of flax.

Furniture must have been extremely simple. Wood was probably used, though none has survived. Beds may not have been unknown, but all save a very few would sleep on the floor, with a cloak as covering. Stone shelves

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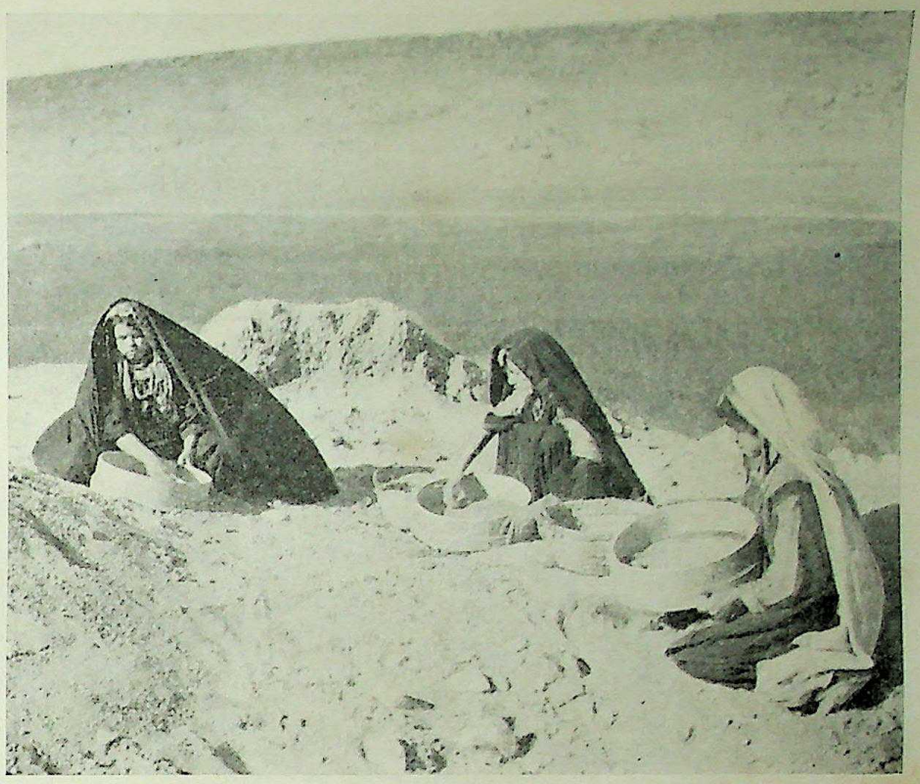
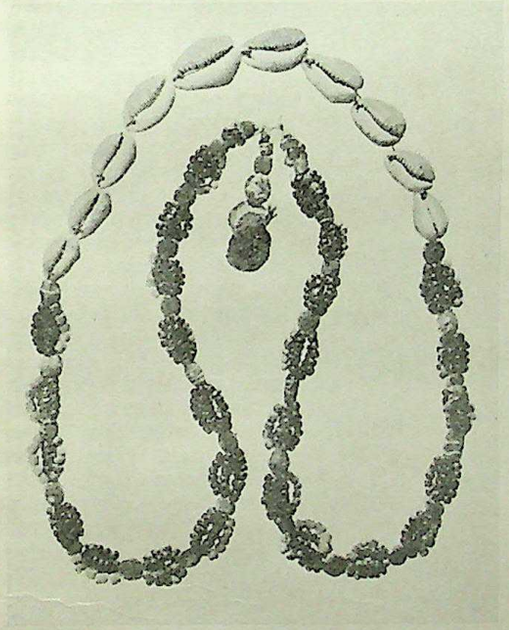
served as cupboards, while jars and bowls were used as containers for food and water. Some houses had private cisterns, hewn out of the rock near by.

Lighting and cooking arrangements were simple. The lamps used were of the "spouted saucer" type; that is to say, they consisted of flat pottery dishes the clay of which, while still soft, had been pressed between the finger and thumb to form an elementary spout. Cooking was carried out on open fires or in primitive ovens, the fuel being probably dung and thorns. Mostly rock presses were used to prepare oil and wine, but portable presses have been found, showing that, when occasion demanded, oil could be prepared by the housewife herself.

IT was a simple life that was lived in these ancient houses. But in many places it could never have been, or rarely have been, a life of want. Below the burned remains of houses in Jericho Dr. Garstang found "dates and olives, an onion, peppercorn and grain, stacked in pottery jars, as well as bread in which the grain was badly milled, and even the unbaked dough left over to serve as yeast." In these houses there may have been bad workmanship—but at least there was no dearth.





RECOVERING BURIED TREASURE OF CANAAN'S YESTERDAY. These children are sifting the sandy soil for beads and precious fragments after excavations at Lachish (Joshua x, 3-5; *see* illustration in page 254). In all parts of Palestine grave-mounds huge and small, of cities and of individuals, have yielded a wealth of objects to systematic research. Jewelry and beads were among the commonest finds in tombs where mourners thousands of years ago buried their dead with funerary offerings and specially-valued possessions. Such a possession must have been the shell, gem, and bead necklace, pictured left, found in a family grave in the Plain of Jordan.

Photos, H. J. Shepstone

In and around the towns the labours necessary to life were carried on. Women would occupy themselves with the domestic duties invariably assigned to their sex. They might also undertake pottery, spinning, weaving and dyeing. Work such as building, husbandry and the care of flocks and herds would be mostly undertaken by men.

Crafts such as pottery and metal-working were extensively practised. Of all the articles found by modern excavators, the most abundant are the pottery remains.

This is only natural. So much pottery was in use for so many purposes, and clay was common, while metal was rare. Besides, selfish excavators had their day before scientific work began; they were more likely to prefer the metal objects they found to the pottery, which was mostly in fragments.

But modern archaeologists do not despise the potsherds. They spend almost limitless time trying to fit fragments together. Pottery, indeed, is a most valuable instrument in the hands of the expert; he knows the history of the craft in Palestine and elsewhere, and by means of his finds can assign dates to the strata of ruins containing them.

It was a craft in which the pre-Israelite inhabitants of Palestine were skilled. Its development can be traced. At first, in the making of vessels, the sole aim was crude utility. But something more was found desirable, and beauty of form was attempted. Jars became more slender—sometimes so slender that the body of the jar was twisted by the weight of the long neck. Thus, misshapen vessels, not always unbeautiful, were produced, eventually to be named "bilbils" by the Arab labourers who helped to recover them from the places where they had lain for over thirty-five centuries.

Ornamentation was added to shapeliness, and pictures or other decorations were painted on pottery. Foreign influences taught something to native makers, and many beautiful objects were produced. Countless examples exist today of the bowls, jars, jugs, cups, lamps, and store-vessels made by the predecessors of the Israelites.

They worked also in metals. Theirs was the Bronze Age; that is to say, they knew how to work in that alloy. Dishes of bronze are not now abundant, possibly because they were not made to any extent; but other articles abound. Tools such as awls, tweezers, knives, and eyed needles were made and used. So also were weapons such as lance-heads and battle-axes. But bronze was not so common nor so cheap as to be available to all and for every purpose. The tools and weapons of an earlier age were made of flint, the use of which survived far into the Bronze Age. It seems to have continued longest in the south, the poorest region of Palestine.

Ancient Aids to Feminine Beauty

EXAMPLES of work in gold and silver are rare. Most of them are ornaments of one kind or another, many of them being earrings. The women of the land were apparently much given to the use of trinkets and ornaments. Beads were made of stone of every colour and of every size, from a "pin's head to a pigeon's egg." Toilet preparations were not unused, for enamelled scent and salve bottles, as well as bronze mirrors, have been found. At Beit Mirsim, believed to be Debir, about a dozen palettes,

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evidently designed for the preparation of antimony, malachite and red ochre face-paints, were discovered. They date from the time when the Israelites had settled in the land, and belonged to Hebrew women, but it is more than possible that such articles were in use among the women who lived there before Israel's coming.

Last among the accomplishments of the Canaanites, though it was the first with which the children of Israel were to become acquainted, we may take the art of warfare. Always liable to attacks from strong foreign powers, they seem to have been more concerned with defence than with attack. With showers of stones and arrows tipped with bronze or flint they could keep besiegers outside their strong walls; for ultimate relief they would trust to time and the enemy's lack of patience or of food.

Yet they did possess weapons for hand-to-hand or open fighting. Potsherds from Megiddo, belonging probably to the 13th century B.C., and described by Bertholet (*op. cit.* 89), "have painted Canaanite warriors in bronzed and black pigment on flesh-coloured ground. Their sole armour is a short triangular piece of breast-armour with large black bosses, the armour probably of wood, the bosses of metal. In the left hand they carry a small round shield, in the right a hatchet or battle-axe." Other hand-weapons were the sword, spear and stone-club.

Among the hills, only siege warfare and foot-fighting were possible. But another type developed on the plains, where roads and level country made possible the use of chariots. The type used by the Canaanites seems to have held three men, a driver, a shield-bearer and a warrior. In its later development it was iron-shod, and sometimes the wheels were spiked to obtain a better grip of the ground. As the Israelites were utterly unaccustomed to horses, we can imagine the terror they felt when first they encountered these dreaded war-machines.

Israel's Reaction to a New Culture

BUT now perhaps determination also entered their minds, as it must often have entered at other times. They had come to this new land and were finding they had come to a new and a large world. Here were cities and city-dwellers. Here was extensive agriculture with its plenty, and metal-work with its usefulness and its luxuriousness. Also, the commerce of the earth seemed to have its centre in this country of their adoption.

Palestine was a land of accomplishments, of which the art of fighting from chariots was but one of the lesser sort. Of these accomplishments the invaders were now ignorant; but they had come to learn them. And the Hebrews have always been quick to learn and to imitate.

The settled life of Palestine, with its cities and its crafts, thus brought Israel into a new world. The religion of the land must have been a still more astounding revelation.

Many gods were worshipped, and different forces of nature. Yet there seems to have been an underlying unity. Fundamentally the religion was a worship of nature. There were two supreme powers. One was the force which gives fertility; the other was the earth-mother who produces life and the means to sustain it. The sun, the bull, and the waters from the sky and the earth are but aspects of the first; the tree and perhaps the serpent symbolize the second. And though at many places of worship it was the local Baal or Master who was worshipped, yet there prevailed a certain uniformity of sacred furniture and probably of ritual also.

Worship was conducted at High Places. These were originally open, though later many were enclosed. A *massebah*, a pillar or standing-stone, marked the place where the god dwelt or where he was to be met. An *asherah*, a pole, symbolized the tree or grove which was the dwelling-place of the goddess. Every pillar was not a *massebah*: stones were used as memorials and pillars of witness and for other reasons. Nor was every pole necessarily meant to represent an artificial grove; many—only the sockets by which they were fixed into stones are now to be seen—may have been used for tethering sacrificial beasts.

Other necessary furnishings of a High Place or temple were cup-hollows in the *massebah* or in rocks, and an altar. These indicate the nature of the worship; from these and from other sources, such as the Bible, comes the scanty information that is available.

Incense and libations of wine were probably offered. There were sacrifices, both of animals and human beings. At the High Place of Gezer, on a small altar, the skeleton of a child was found, a sickening reminder of the last sacrifice carried out there. Probably, at the chief agricultural and pastoral seasons of the year, special feasts were held. Then there would be wine-drinking and noisy music, with dancing and self-laceration and licentiousness.

In these rites the worship of the god and goddess may have been joined. But there was a goddess, who must have been closely connected

SYMBOLS OF FALSE GODS. Each city of the Canaanites had one or more sacred standing stones, which represented Baal or its own protective deity. Gezer, city unconquered by the Israelites (Judges i, 29), guarding a pass between Jaffa and Jerusalem, possessed an alignment of such pillars, on its "high place." Three are shown above. The stone cube seen in front of them was probably an altar, or a ritual laver, with cavity to receive blood or water. It is thought that most of these monoliths were pillar-gods triumphantly removed from cities captured by the men of Gezer.

Photo, from Macalister, "The Mound of Gezer"

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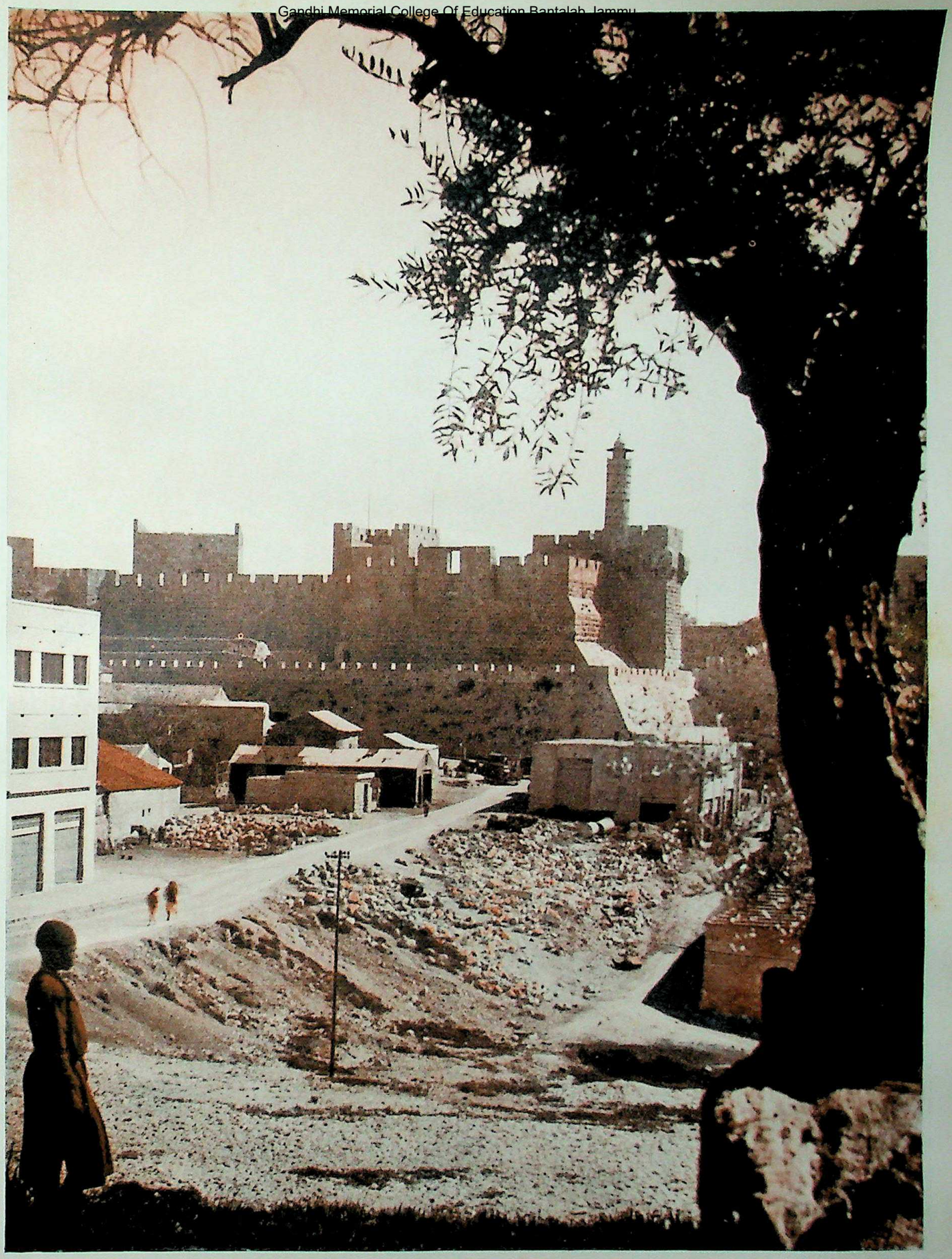

"OVER AGAINST JEBUS, WHICH IS JERUSALEM"

This view shows the approach to Jerusalem by way of the Jaffa Gate on the west. Here is the citadel, Tower of David, from the top of which all the existent city may be seen. This city must be dissociated from the earlier fortified city, Jerusalem of the Jebusites in the time of Joshua and of the Judges, "when there was no king in Israel" (Judges xix, 1, 10). Jebus stood on the site known as Ophel, between the pools of Siloam and the old Temple area on the Dome of the Rock. Isolated and strongly walled, its position was almost impregnable above the Valley of the Brook Kidron, which joins the Valley of Hinnom, extending west to a point on the road seen above.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

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Gustave Doré, 1833-1883

SAMSON RENDS THE LION "AS HE WOULD HAVE RENT A KID"

Champion of Israel and hero of famous single-handed combats with the Philistines at a time when his countrymen were under their oppression, Samson's first recorded exploit was performed when on his way to visit his proposed bride at Timnath. When he came to the vineyards near her home, "behold, a young lion roared against him" (Judges xiv, 5) and, weaponless, he attacked it. This Biblical illustration, designed by the well-known French painter, Gustave Doré, depicts the powerful youth in the act of breaking apart the lion's jaws to kill it. Timnath, called Tibneh today, is in the region of the Vale of Sorek, home of Samson's second wife, Delilah.

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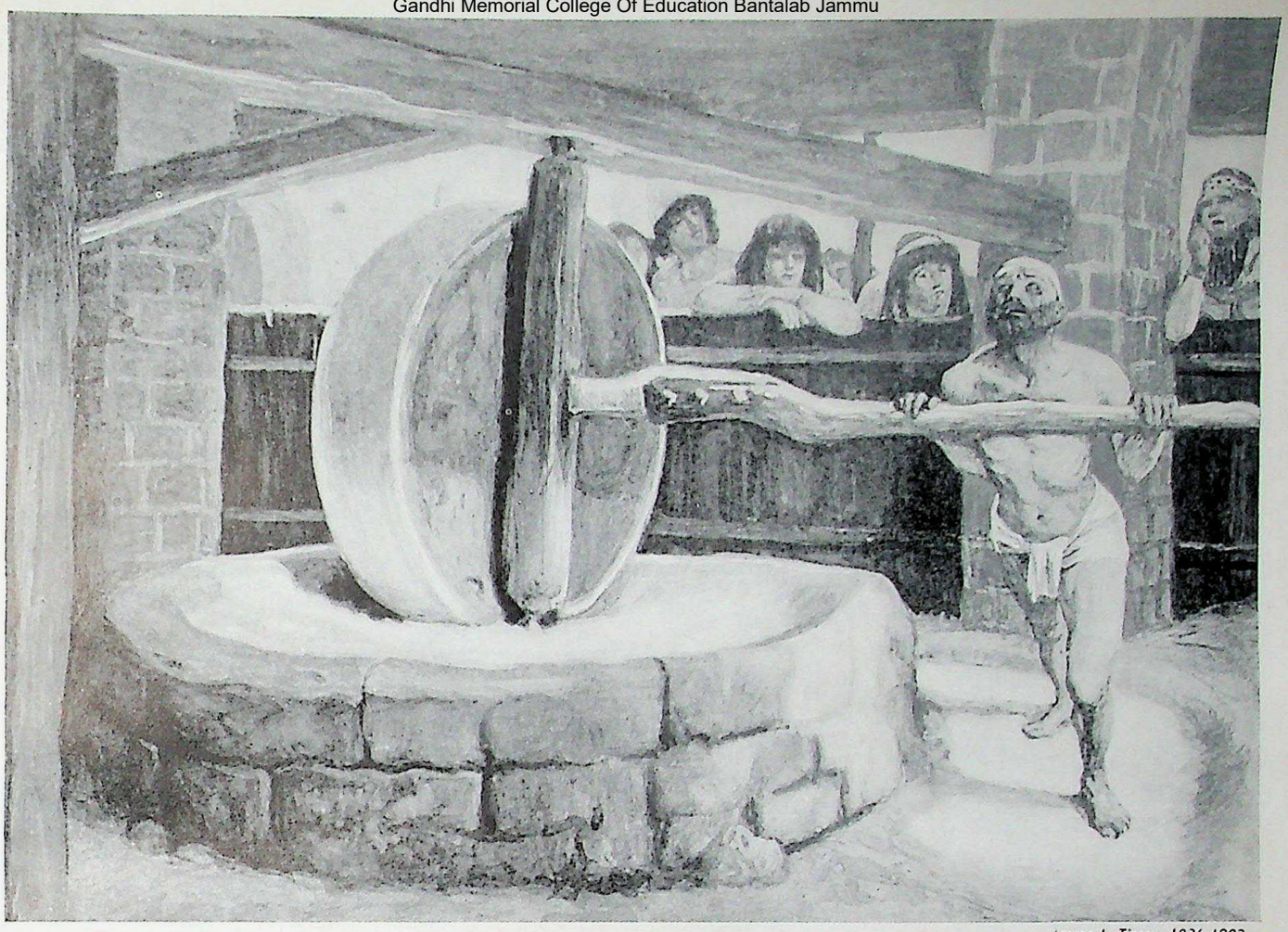
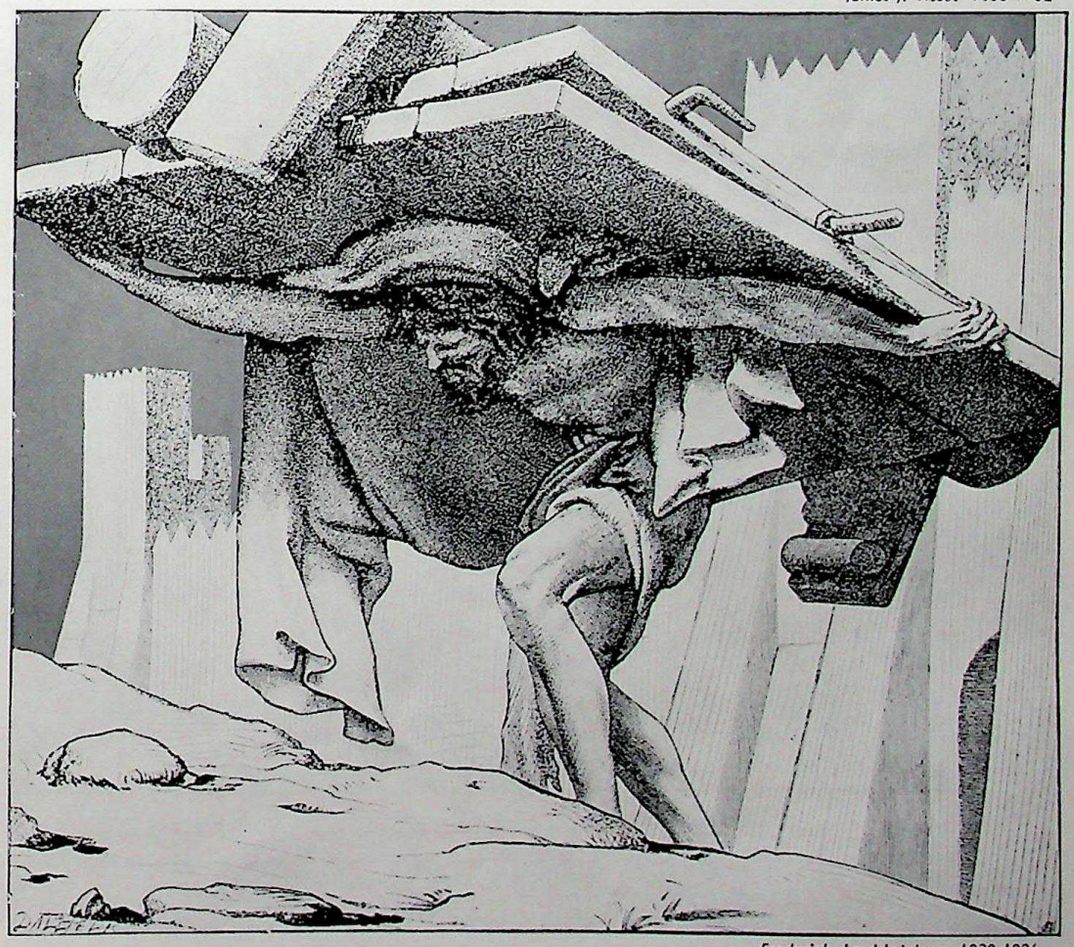


James J. Tissot 1836-1902

SAMSON AT GAZA

The pictures in this page show the Hercules of the Israelites in full pride of his strength, and when he was fallen on evil days, "eyeless in Gaza, at the mill with slaves" (Milton). James Tissot's blinded hero (above) is a hapless figure. Captured by the Philistines, he was brought down to their city, where "he did grind in the prison house" (Judges xvi, 21). The women slaves, whose customary work this was, mock at his degradation.

Lord Leighton's illustration of Samson with the Gates of Gaza is reproduced from a drawing in Dalziel's "Bible Gallery," by permission of the copyright owners. Samson, having escaped from the Philistines by pulling up the posts of the city gate, is bearing away framework and doors upon his shoulders (Judges xvi, 3) up "an hill that is before Hebron."



Frederick, Lord Leighton 1830-1896

"AND SAMSON TOOK THE DOORS OF THE GATE OF THE CITY"

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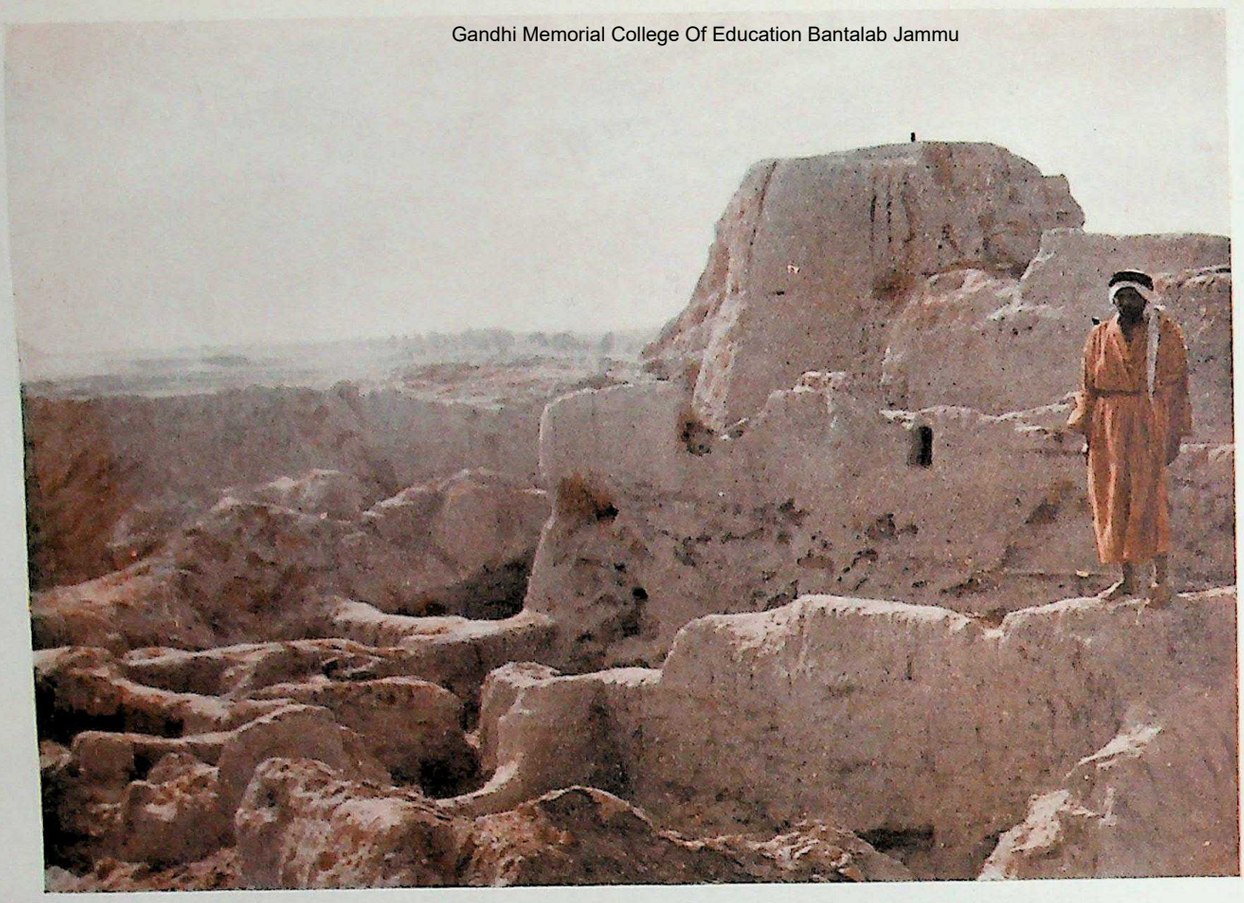

WHERE THE LAST ACT OF SAMSON'S TRAGEDY WAS PLAYED

GAZA FLOURISHES STILL AS WHEN THE JUDGES RULED

The ancient importance of Gaza in Philistia was due to its position on the military and commercial road between Babylon and Egypt; it was the starting-point of several caravan routes. The present town, largely rebuilt since the shattering bombardments of 1917, when it was the scene of battle between British forces and the Turks, is a stopping-place on air-routes from Europe and Africa to the East. Weaving is still one of its principal industries. The upper photograph shows the ruined walls of the Biblical city. The iron peg seen on the skyline of the loftiest portion denotes the height of the mound before excavation.

Photos, American Colony in Jerusalem

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GIDEON'S TEST SEEN TODAY AT GILBOA'S SPRING

From the foot of rocky Gilboa at the southern end of the plain of Esdraelon issues the spring where Gideon, divinely-commissioned to free Israel from the Midianites, tried his men. The number of the chosen warriors "that lapped, putting their hand to their mouth, were three hundred men: but all the rest of the people bowed down upon their knees to drink water" (Judges vii, 6). The suitability of the test can be realized from this photograph of Arab soldiers, all drinking correctly save one. Those Israelites who lapped with one hand, grasping spear or sword with the other, and facing the enemy possibly ambushed on the opposite bank, were alert to the danger of surprise attack. On the heights above, commanding the spring, Gideon encamped.

Photo W. F. Taylor

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Solomon J. Solomon, 1860-1927

"THE PHILISTINES BE UPON THEE, SAMSON"

Despite repeated proof that Delilah wished to betray him to her own people, Samson, yielding to her enticements, gave away the secret of his strength. Shorn of his long hair—outward sign of consecration from birth, as a Nazarite, to the service of Jehovah, and among the ancients regarded as a source of physical power—he fell an easy victim to the waiting Philistines. Solomon J. Solomon's painting, in the Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool, dramatically stresses the anguish of the captured Samson and the gloating triumph of his enchantress.

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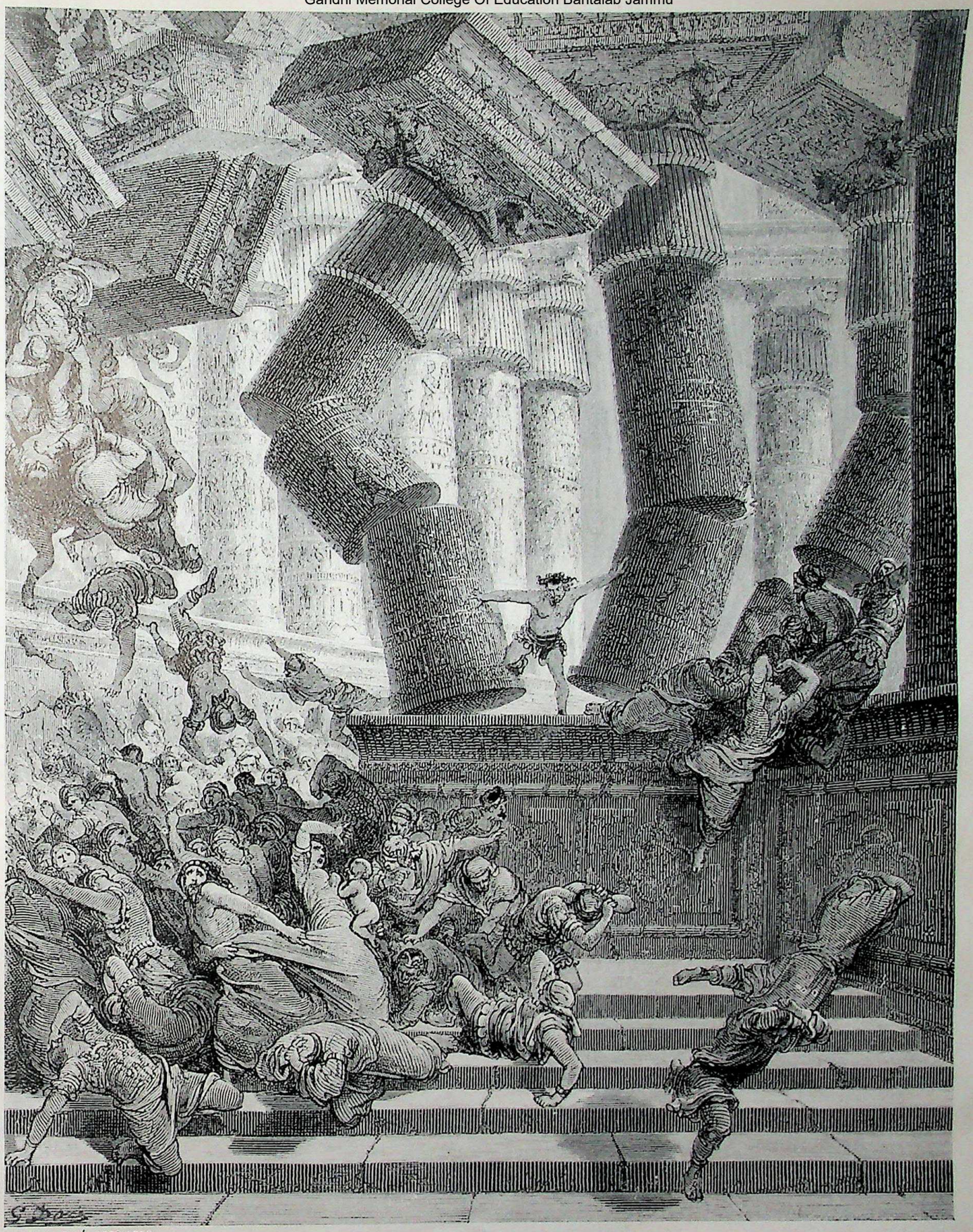

Gustave Doré, 1833-1883

"THE HOUSE FELL UPON THE LORDS, AND UPON ALL THE PEOPLE"

Gustave Doré in his Biblical illustration, the Death of Samson, has designed a magnificent house of Dagon for the blinded giant's final act of vengeance upon the Philistines. " So the dead which he slew at his death were more than they which he slew in his life " (Judges xvi, 30). Authorities have suggested that the pillars against which Samson leaned were those of the great portico where the Lords of the Philistines were seated, while the people were assembled on the flat roof of the temple. Such pillars were of wood on supporting bases of stone from which he wrenched them when " he bowed himself with all his might," thus bringing down the whole building.

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WITH SUCH AN OX GOAD SHAMGAR SLEW THE PHILISTINES

This tiller of the soil, on the hillside at Ramah, near Jerusalem, uses the primitive, one-handled plough. In his free hand he carries a goad to guide and occasionally to prod his team of oxen. The goad is about seven feet long, sharply pointed at the end; it is sometimes metal-tipped. Using one as a spear, Shamgar the son of Anath, a Judge and deliverer of Israel, "slew of the Philistines six hundred men with an ox goad" (Judges iii, 31), the only weapon to his hand. Agriculture was then, as now, the mainstay of the inhabitants of Palestine, land of "tillage and pasturage."

Photo, "Daily Mirror"

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with the deity whose symbol was the *Asherah*, who came to have a special place in worship.

She was Astarte, the Ashteroth of the Old Testament. Closely associated with the Babylonian Ishtar, Queen of Heaven, and with the Egyptian goddess Hathor, her sacred animals were the dove, serpent and lion. Numerous images of her, the *Teraphim* of which the Old Testament speaks, have been found. Some are on slabs, moulded in low relief, with holes in the plaques to show that once they were hung on walls. Others are of the "snowman" type, the heads having been made separately and affixed later to the bodies. Others are of bronze; one of these, designed to stand on a pedestal, shows the goddess with two horns growing in her head. She is here the Ashtaroth-Karnaim, Astarte of the Horns, of Genesis xiv, 5 (*see* centre illustration below).

The Mother Goddess in the House

MANY of these small figures show the female characteristics of the goddess strongly emphasized. This exaggeration points to her nature and function. Astarte was the tutelary goddess of women, the goddess of love and motherhood. Her worship was conducted in temples, possibly with licentious rites, and in the homes of her devotees. Portable altars, with hollows in their tops for incense, tell how common this domestic worship must have been. The same popularity is of course indicated by the countless figurines of the goddess which have been found. Offerings of cakes were, perhaps daily, made to her.

The gods lived in a realm into which human beings never penetrated further than they did during life. That is to say, the people of Palestine probably believed that death took men no nearer the gods. Man's future life seems to have been regarded as of the same nature as this.

So much can be gathered from burial customs. Tombs were situated in caves or in grottoes hewn out of the rock near the cities. With the bodies various articles were deposited. Dr. Garstang says that the essentials were "a lighted lamp, a juglet for oil, a platter presumably for bread, and a large jug, doubtless for water. Other vessels seem to have been designed for fruit and foodstuffs and choice beverages." ("Heritage of Solomon," page 127).

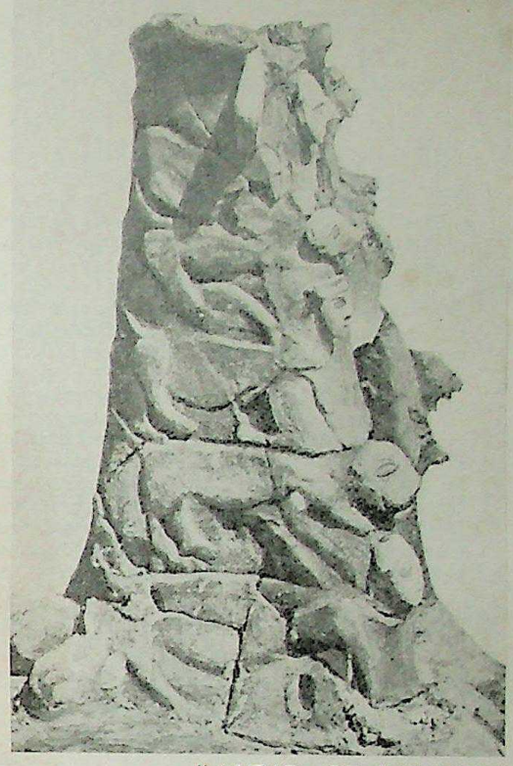
Thus the bodily needs of the dead did not differ from the needs of the living. Other articles were also deposited. The emblems of a man's authority and strength, such as his signet or his weapons of war, went with him to the grave. Women took their jewellery and ornaments, and "some of the things found in children's graves can perhaps only indicate toys." (Bertholet, *op. cit*, page 78).

With regard to young children a curious custom prevailed. Often they were buried under the floor of a house. It was probably believed and hoped that they would be born again into their families.

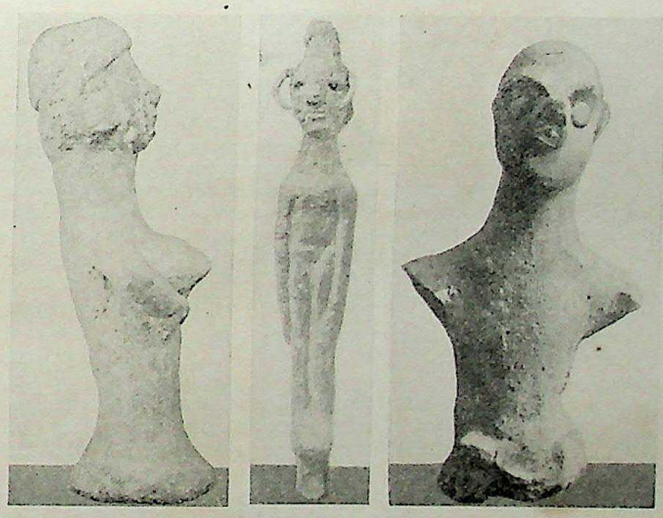
Not many articles of religious significance are found in the ancient tombs of Palestine. But during their lives the people were not underburdened with beliefs and practices of a religious or semi-religious nature. Sacred places abounded. Besides temples and High Places there were other spots associated with the deities. Oracles were probably consulted. Consultation with the dead may have been practised, and it is suggested that the game *Ki'ab*, played by modern Arabs, is descended from the use of animal and human bones for purposes of divination.

At the High Place of Gezer there is a narrow passage connecting two caves. It is cunningly constructed. If a person whispers in the smaller cave, his voice can clearly be heard in the larger one, though he himself remains unseen. This may very possibly have been the home of an oracle.

Superstition was common. Amulets to bring luck, or to ward off evil, were extensively used. Many were moon-shaped, so designed to ensure the protection of the moon for their wearers. The prevalence of blue as a colour for beads is explained by the belief, still existing, that the colour is efficacious in averting disasters threatened by the evil eye.



"ALTAR OF INCENSE." Part of the Israelites' religious ritual from arrival in Canaan was incense burning, and many small altars designed for this purpose have been found; the one above, sometimes claimed to be a brazier or censer, is from Taanach. It is of pottery, 3 feet high, and dates from 700 B.C.



CANAANITE "GRAVEN IMAGES." Numerous statuettes of pagan deities have been excavated in Palestine, many of them being images of Ashtoreth, goddess worshipped by the Canaanites. Her Babylonian prototype was Ishtar and the Greeks called her Astarte. The figurine of her on the left was found at Beth-shemesh; that in the centre shows her with two ram-like horns, "Ashtaroth-Karnaim." Like the image on the right, an unidentified "household god," this was found at Gezer.

Photos from Macalister, "The Mound of Gezer," and Palestine Exploration Fund Annual

These were vain beliefs, but they were fairly harmless. Infinitely more degrading was the practice of offering human sacrifices at the foundation and completion of a building. Infants were generally offered, it appears; a first-born was sometimes given as the foundation-sacrifice, and a last-born for the other. As time passed there was a tendency to offer persons who, by reason of age or disease, were not likely to add to the prosperity of the community. But this can scarcely be considered to reduce the vileness of the rite.

It is from these foundation-sacrifices and from what is known of Baal and Astarte worship that we must judge the character and morality of the people. They were, with exceptions, a brave people, and they seem to have been industrious and willing to learn. But cruelty and savagery and licentiousness lay near the surface of their nature. They had much to teach the Israelites; yet there was much in them that involved danger to any people who came, able and willing to learn, into their midst.

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Tragedy & Fable in Judges

STORIES commemorating the exploits of the great Judges, who ruled in Israel during the conquest of Canaan, are woven into the fabric of the book named after them, presenting a series of realistic accounts of the people's struggles under their various leaders and their transformation from nomads into agriculturists as they come into possession of the fertile land. The new economic conditions give to this book a different literary background from those which precede it, a background especially well delineated in the story of Samson.

THE Israelites, becoming villagers and farmers in Canaan, take on some of the pagan culture of the conquered. Samson is the Hebrew Hercules, the strong man hero who appears in the folk tales of every nation. In the Biblical history he is destined to save his people from their Philistine oppressors. In some measure he fulfils his mission, but his vainglory and weakness to his wives' enticements bring about his own downfall with that of his enemies. Superbly written, the climax of the story has a sharp twist of contrast to enhance the tragedy, before the humiliated and blinded hero wreaks his vengeance on his gay tormentors. With its appeal for all ages this epic has inspired such varied works as Milton's Samson Agonistes, Handel's oratorio, Samson, and the opera of Samson and Delilah by Saint-Saëns.

OF great historical and literary interest is the Song of Deborah, prophetess and Judge. At its close is a noted instance of an oratorical device, often used in Hebrew poetry, known as apostrophe. After the brilliantly imagined picture of the murdered Sisera's mother at the harem window, the singer turns away, or apostrophizes, by addressing herself directly to Jehovah in the two last lines. There is irony in her vindictiveness—a powerful characteristic of the Old Testament. Irony is also to be found in the Fable of the Trees, in which Jotham sarcastically compares Abimelech, the usurper, to the bramble. Fables, common in other classical literature, are rare in the Hebrew.

SONG OF DEBORAH

v, 2—7, 10, 12, 19, 20, 24—31

PRAISE ye the Lord for the avenging of Israel, [selves.
When the people willingly offered them-
Hear, O ye kings; give ear, O ye princes;
I, even I, will sing unto the Lord;
I will sing praise to the Lord God of Israel.
Lord, when thou wentest out of Seir,
When thou marchedst out of the field of Edom, [dropped,
The earth trembled, and the heavens
The clouds also dropped water.
The mountains melted from before the Lord, [God of Israel.
Even that Sinai from before the Lord

In the days of Shamgar the son of Anath,
In the days of Jael, the highways were unoccupied, [byways.
And the travellers walked through
The inhabitants of the villages ceased, they ceased in Israel.
Until that I Deborah arose,
That I arose, a mother in Israel.

Speak, ye that ride on white asses,
Ye that sit in judgment, and walk by the way.

Awake, awake, Deborah:
Awake, awake, utter a song:
Arise, Barak, and lead thy captivity captive, thou son of Abinoam.
The kings came and fought,
Then fought the kings of Canaan
In Taanach by the waters of Megiddo;
They took no gain of money.
They fought from heaven; [Sisera.
The stars in their courses fought against

Blessed above women shall Jael
The wife of Heber the Kenite be, [tent.
Blessed shall she be above women in the
He asked water, and she gave him milk;
She brought forth butter in a lordly dish.
She put her hand to the nail,
And her right hand to the workmen's hammer; [she smote off his head,
And with the hammer she smote Sisera,
When she had pierced and stricken through his temples. [down:
At her feet he bowed, he fell, he lay
At her feet he bowed, he fell: [dead.
Where he bowed, there he fell down

The mother of Sisera looked out at a window,
And cried through the lattice,
Why is his chariot so long in coming?
Why tarry the wheels of his chariot?
Her wise ladies answered her,
Yea, she returned answer to herself,
Have they not sped? Have they not divided the prey?
To every man a damsel or two;
To Sisera, a prey of divers colours,
A prey of divers colours of needlework,
Of divers colours of needlework on both sides, meet for the necks of them that take the spoil?

So let all thine enemies perish, O Lord:
But let them that love him be as the sun when he goeth forth in his might.

FABLE OF THE TREES

ix, 8—15

THE trees went forth on a time to anoint a king over them; and they said unto the olive tree, Reign thou over us. But the olive tree said unto them, Should I leave my fatness, wherewith by me they honour God and man, and go to be promoted over the trees?

And the trees said to the fig tree, Come thou, and reign over us. But the fig tree said unto them, Should I forsake my sweetness, and my good fruit, and go to be promoted over the trees?

Then said the trees unto the vine, Come thou, and reign over us. And the vine said unto them, Should I leave my wine, which cheereth God and man, and go to be promoted over the trees?

Then said all the trees unto the bramble, Come thou, and reign over us. And the bramble said unto the trees, If in truth ye anoint me king over you, then come and put your trust in my shadow: and if not, let fire come out of the bramble, and devour the cedars of Lebanon.

EYELESS IN GAZA

xvi, 21—23, 25—30

BUT the Philistines took him, and put out his eyes, and brought him down to Gaza, and bound him with fetters of brass; and he did grind in the prison house. Howbeit the hair of his head began to grow again after he was shaven. Then the lords of the Philistines gathered them together for to offer a great sacrifice unto Dagon their god, and to rejoice: for they said, Our god hath delivered Samson our enemy into our hand.

And it came to pass, when their hearts were merry, that they said, Call for Samson, that he may make us sport. And they called for Samson out of the prison house; and he made them sport: and they set him between the pillars. And Samson said unto the lad that held him by the hand, Suffer me that I may feel the pillars whereupon the house standeth, that I may lean upon them.

Now the house was full of men and women; and all the lords of the Philistines were there; and there were upon the roof about three thousand men and women, that beheld while Samson made sport. And Samson called unto the Lord, and said, O Lord God, remember me, I pray thee, and strengthen me, I pray thee, only this once, O God, that I may be at once avenged of the Philistines for my two eyes. And Samson took hold of the two middle pillars upon which the house stood, and on which it was borne up, of the one with his right hand, and of the other with his left. And Samson said, Let me die with the Philistines. And he bowed himself with all his might; and the house fell upon the lords, and upon all the people that were therein.

So the dead which he slew at his death were more than they which he slew in his life.

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Judges

I

The Book in Outline

'It Came to Pass in the Days when the Judges Ruled'

by RT. REV. BERTRAM F. SIMPSON, M.A., D.D., M.C.

Bishop Suffragan of Kensington, and Rector of St. Botolph, Bishopsgate; Author of "The Prayer of Sonship," etc.

THE Book of Judges has a certain charm of its own in spite of the fierce character of its contents. It is a narrative of incessant and ruthless warfare, of cruelty and licence such as our present moral standard sternly condemns. But the whole picture is relieved by acts of courage and heroism and by touches of grim humour, by a magnificent battle-poem from the distant past which is one of the glories of early literature, and by graphic, vivid descriptions of life in Palestine three thousand years ago which are of priceless value to the historian in his endeavour to recreate the past.

It is perhaps the most warlike book in the whole Bible, and assumes that battles are an inevitable part of human life. That fact alone would be enough to arouse the suspicion of the modern reader. One of the greatest aims of our present age is to make an end to war, with all its horror, futility and wastefulness. We no longer believe that it is a necessity, even if an evil necessity, in human existence. Modern methods of production can supply enough to render a full life for the whole population of the world a practical possibility, and most of us are convinced that the legitimate needs of nations could be met, and their differences settled, by peaceful means.

Interpretation in the Light of History

IF this book is to be read sympathetically, the first essential is to bring to it an historic sense, and to realize the enormous gulf which separates the aspirations and conditions of that ancient world from our own. Surplus population can now emigrate to distant parts of the earth in fast steamers; in those days a growing tribe could only move slowly, mostly on foot, to a neighbouring land in search of more room, and usually found another tribe in possession. We have all sorts of industries, and the multitude of workers in an industrial district can be fed with produce brought from the ends of the earth. In those days the population lived entirely on the land which it occupied, either wandering about with cattle for which pasture had to be found, or settled in one spot as agriculturists. It is difficult to see how teeming populations could avoid clashes in limited areas; the industrialism and mobility of our modern world present an entirely different picture. We shall read the whole story of the long and painful process of Hebrew settlement in Palestine with more sympathy if we remember how our own race left its native shores in north-west Europe and wrested a new home from the ancient Britons who previously occupied it.

The present writer had occasion to teach the contents of this book to a class of Elementary Schoolchildren in Central London during his first curacy. He was very doubtful about the wisdom of selecting so bellicose a narrative for a school curriculum. But the children loved it, not so much for the battles, though there is a militant streak left in most childhood, but because of the stories of the great heroes from whom the book takes its name. Gideon, Jael and Samson have been beloved favourites in the nursery for many generations.

WE have said that the Book is of immense value to the historian. The unknown author brought a later outlook to bear on the history and did not approve of all that he had to narrate. But he was using old materials—an ancient battle-song, primitive records and age-long traditions; and usually he lets them tell their own story, with an occasional note of personal criticism. It is impossible to give dates or be certain of chronology; there was no definite system of numbered years at the time when the early records were made; the author has to speak roughly in terms of 40 or 80 years, by which he means one or two generations. But it is very easy to reconstruct the conditions and the atmosphere of a period which had passed away long before the author wrote this book. And the story which he tells is a thrilling and important one, nothing less than how his people came in and established themselves in a small territory which they were to make famous throughout the world, how a collection of scattered tribes became a nation; how wandering pastoral people won for themselves a home where they could settle down as agriculturists in a "land flowing with milk and honey."

Two Hundred Years of Struggle

THIS is one of the most important chapters of the history of Israel, covering perhaps a couple of centuries. It takes up the story where the Book of Joshua leaves it, with the invasion of Palestine under his leadership, the crossing of the Jordan and the capture of Jericho; it closes just before Samuel, the last of the Judges, chooses a king for a united nation which has been formed from this collection of wandering tribes. It is a record of incessant fighting, of many moral lapses, of constant falling away to the idolatry which existed among their neighbours and frequent defections from the purer religion of the wilderness. But through it all there runs the thread of purpose and progress; a nation is being formed which is to be

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the great religious teacher of the world, and in whose new home our Lord Himself is to bring God's ultimate revelation.

From the point of view of the author writing centuries later, the period was one of decline from that of Joshua. When the former book closes, it looks as if a united nation had only to march forward and possess the lands assigned to the different tribes in a conquered country. He wants to regard all their warfare with the original inhabitants as God's punishment of their idolatry and of their tendency to fraternize with the heathen in their midst. But it is almost certain that there has been some idealization of the earlier period. Joshua's invasion may have been a more sectional incident than was supposed; the different tribes were more accustomed to work in isolation and thus found co-operation difficult; each one tended to play for its own hand and establish itself in the territory which it had won.

And the earlier dwellers in the land put up a fierce resistance to the newcomers. The Canaanites had strong walled cities scattered throughout the country. On the sea coast to the west the Philistines were firmly established and gave constant trouble down to the time of David. Ammonites and Moabites had their settlements in the east and south, while the wandering Midianites were always ready to descend from the east and plunder the land in the time of harvest.

Once more we would ask the reader to think back to the time when the Angles, Saxons and Jutes came to this island in waves, and first of all established their different settlements in East Anglia, Essex, Sussex, and Wessex; to remember their long and strenuous strife with the Britons whom they dispossessed; to think of the time which it took the separate kingdoms of the Heptarchy to become welded into one English Nation; and he will understand the somewhat parallel story of the establishment of the Hebrews in Palestine.

Doubtless there was some decline from the life in the wilderness; the local Canaanite idols on the hill tops, with the sacred poles, were a constant temptation to idolatry which had not existed in the desert. But in spite of all the bloodshed, lawlessness and superstition of that troubled time, we shall read between the lines of the story and detect purpose and progress in this turbulent settlement of scattered tribes and their welding into God's chosen Nation.

WHAT were the chief factors in this uniting process? First of all the common faith in Jehovah, shared in the wilderness, and maintained, in spite of lapses into idolatry, as a deep bond of union. Secondly, a sense of family relation among the tribes which could be relied upon in moments of emergency. Thirdly, the pressure of a common danger which sometimes sufficed to unite their forces against the oppressor; and last, but not least, the magnificent leadership of the great heroes whom God raised up for their deliverance, the "Judges" who have given their title to the whole book.

To us the name conveys the idea of law and magistracy, but this was a very secondary function of the Shophet or Judge among the early Hebrews. He was primarily a great military general; a dictator raised up in the time of overwhelming danger, who led his people out against the enemy and ruled and legislated afterwards, legislation being a simple affair in a primitive race. He was no hereditary monarch but the strong man of the moment. Usually his rule was confined to his own tribe, but the greater Judges managed to secure the co-operation of other tribes and so paved the way for the union into one nation under King Saul, who was chosen by Samuel, the last of the great leaders. All the progress in safety, discipline and unity must be placed to their credit. The whole book might be a vindication of strong leadership in national life.

In a slightly petulant mood of criticism of the mediocrity of his own times Tennyson once wrote:

> Ah God, for a man with heart, head, hand;
> Like some of the simple great ones gone
> For ever and ever by,
> One still strong man in a blatant land,
> Whatever they call him, what care I,
> Aristocrat, democrat, autocrat—one
> Who can rule, and dare not lie.

There is a touch of Nietzsche's worship of the superman in these lines, and a democracy like our own is

JUDGES: A SYNOPSIS

The Occupation of Canaan

	Chapters
Settlement of Judah	i, 1-21
Capture of Bethel	i, 22-26
Victories and Defeats	i, 27-36
Consecration of Bethel (Bochim) ...	ii, 1-5
Survey of the Period	ii, 6—iii, 6

Exploits of the Judges

Stories of Othniel and Ehud	iii, 7-31
Deborah and Barak	iv, 4-13
Battle of Kishon and Death of Sisera ...	iv, 14-24
Song of Deliverance	v
Midianite Oppression and the Call of Gideon	vi, 1-32
Gideon's Victory	vi—viii
Offer of the Kingship	viii, 22-28
Abimelech made King of Shechem ...	ix, 1-6
Sedition of Shechem and its Destruction	ix, 22-49
The Story of Jephthah	xi—xii, 7
Civil War between Gilead and Ephraim	xii

The Epic of Samson

Birth of Samson	xiii, 1-24
His Betrothal	xiv, 5-20
Samson's Revenge upon the Philistines	xv
He carries away the Gates of Gaza ...	xvi, 1-3
Samson and Delilah	xvi, 4-22
Death of Samson	xvi, 23-31

Stories of Lawlessness

Micah and the Danites	xvii—xviii
The Outrage of Gibeah	xix—xx
Benjamin Saved from Extinction ...	xxi

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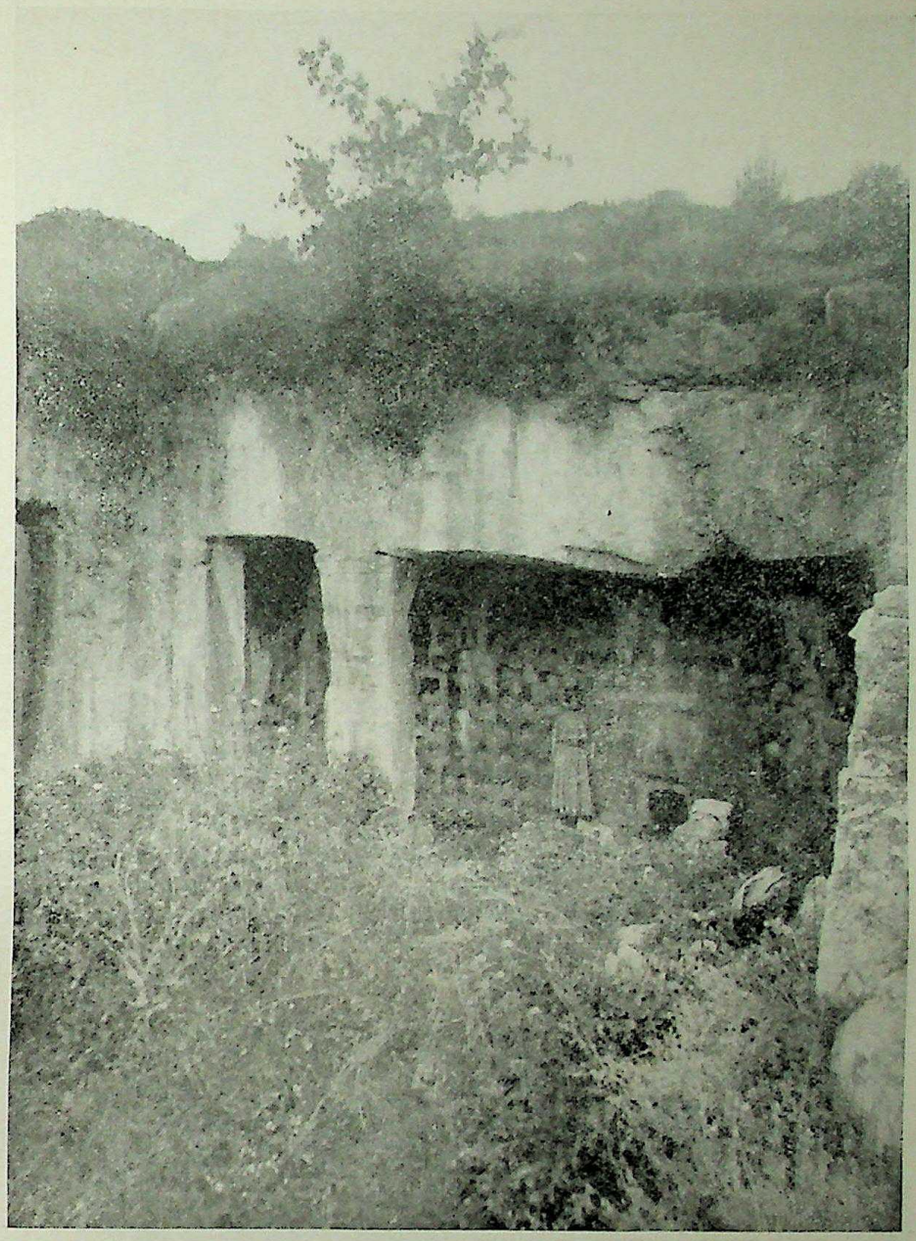
rightly suspicious of the autocrat. But in our own days we have seen modern nations in danger of disintegration which have been rallied, unified and enheartened by the rise of just such vigorous leaders as the Judges of ancient Israel. We are aware of the price which may have to be paid in the shape of the loss of personal liberties and still graver risks. But it is hard to escape the conclusion that when the government of a nation fails, whether through incapacity or through the presence of too many contending parties, none strong enough to rule, salvation may lie only through the strong hand of a born leader.

The confusion of this period of Hebrew history led to the same remedy. It was the Judges who restored safety, law and order. When the later author felt unhappy at having to record some particularly atrocious crime in this period he explained it by saying: "In those days there was no King in Israel; every man did that which was right in his own eyes."



SEPULCHRE OF JOSHUA, "SERVANT OF THE LORD." At Tibneh, perhaps the ancient Timnath-Heres, not far from Bethel and among the hills of Ephraim, Joshua's grave has been pointed out since the 5th century of the Christian era. It is mainly distinguishable from the other rock-tombs of the district by its larger size. The Samaritans identify the city of Joshua's inheritance and burial (Judges ii, 9) with a location about ten miles south of Shechem, where there are two shrines to Israel's great military commander, whose "fame was in all the land".

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

IT is the story of these Judges which we now have to tell. We have asked the reader to bear in mind the distant parallel of the Anglo-Saxon settlement in England. It will help him also to have a map of Palestine in front of him, such as that given in page 222, showing the little country which has played so immense a part in human history, with the River Jordan running from north to south through the little lake of Merom, the Sea of Galilee and the Dead Sea in the south; with the long seaboard on the west looking out to the Mediterranean; and the mountain chain running between the Jordan and the sea. He will remember that the southern part of the coast was in possession of the vigorous Philistines; that Amalekites, Amorites, Ammonites and Moabites held the southern and eastern portions of the land; and that the original Canaanites not only occupied the great plain of Esdraelon opposite the Sea of Galilee, but had their walled cities scattered throughout the country. His map may show him the disposition of the twelve tribes, each in its own territory; it will not show him that they were often separated from each other by strips of territory held by the enemy, isolating groups of tribes and making common action very difficult.

The opening chapters of the Book set out in detail the actual position of the different tribes and the enemies with which they were contiguous; it is ancient and extraordinarily valuable evidence of the actual occupation, better than we possess of the different settlements of East, Middle or South Saxons in our own country. The tribes tended to be in groups, separated by enemy strongholds, and they maintained a stronger hold on the hills, for which their warfare was more adapted. The Canaanites fought with iron chariots which were a formidable weapon in the plains and which the Israelites did not then possess.

Then the author sets out the stories of the exploits of the Judges, using the old records which have come down to him. Several of them were comparatively unimportant local leaders, as Othniel, who saved his tribe from the King of Mesopotamia, and Ehud, the left-handed Judge of Benjamin, who delivered his

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"A BRIDLE FOR THE ASS." This dignified patriarch with his habitual saddle-animal recalls the words in Deborah's Song, "Ye that ride on white asses, ye that sit in judgment" (Judges v, 10). Palestinians acquainted with the law, religious or secular, rabbis and lawyers, usually select the white ass for peaceful journeyings in preference either to the donkey of ordinary breed or the horse, the former being a less impressive mount while the latter is not so sure-footed or easy of gait.

Photo, Mondiale

people in the south-west of Jordan from Eglon, king of the Moabites. Ehud carried his people's tribute to Eglon, and asked for a private audience for a secret message. Relying upon a surprise from his left-handedness he drew from his thigh a two-edged sword which he plunged into the body of the King, and escaped to stir up a successful revolt of his tribe against the leaderless enemy.

But the great heroes of the book are only four in number—Deborah, aided by Jael, who led a great campaign in the north against the Canaanites established strongly in the great plain, Gideon of the same region who led the tribe of Manasseh against the marauding Midians from the east; Jephthah of Gilead on the east of Jordan, who stayed the oppression of the Ammonites; and Samson, the mighty man who devastated the Philistines single-handed.

The story of Jael and Sisera is one of the most famous narratives of the Old Testament. It is almost unique in having women for its heroines, and the prose record is supplemented by an ancient battle poem which is one of the most ancient lyrics in literature, having been handed down from a remote age and probably sung at camp fires by generations of warriors. Its passion and artistic expression are so vivid that it is capable of thrilling us even after the lapse of three thousand years.

THE trouble is in the north of the country in the fruitful plain of Esdraelon, then strongly held by the Canaanites, and destined to become the cockpit of Palestine. The leader of the Canaanites is Sisera, of Harosheth, near to Mount Carmel, who possessed nine hundred chariots of iron, and held the whole district in subjection. For twenty years the northern tribes suffered his yoke, and then Deborah, a prophetess to whom the Hebrews went for religious direction, summoned a military leader named Barak and urged him in the name of the Lord to lead the people against the tyrant. Barak was afraid to go unless Deborah accompanied him, which she promised to do, but told him that he would get little honour from the campaign as Sisera would fall into the hands of a woman.

So Barak gathered ten thousand men out of the two tribes of Zebulun and Naphtali, which were holding on to the hills west of Galilee, obtained assistance from some adjoining tribes, and led his footmen out against the iron chariots of Sisera in what he must have thought a desperate venture. The battle was fought by the river Kishon and we are given no details, but it reads as if a great storm had played a large part in the contest; the river Kishon was flooded and impeded the iron chariots as the Red Sea did those of Pharaoh.

At last Sisera himself was driven to alight from his chariot and flee on foot, stumbling later to the tent of Jael, a Kenite, who was presumably at peace with the Canaanites, and who induced him to come in for safety and rest.

She gave him milk, and "butter in a lordly dish," and then seems to have come behind and smote his head with one of the tent pins, or the mallet with which she was accustomed to drive them in. Such is probably the significance of the poem with its Hebrew parallelism of putting her "hand to the hammer, her right hand to the shaft of the hammer."

Deborah's Song of National Deliverance

THIS is the event which was handed down from the actual happening in the glorious poem which stands in the fifth chapter and is known as the Song of Deborah. It is a magnificent paean of victory, here given in the Revised Version, starting with an act of worship to the God of the nation, who had sent the storm:

> I will sing praise to the LORD, the God of Israel.
> LORD, when Thou wentest forth out of Seir,
> The earth trembled, the heavens also dropped,
> Yea, the clouds dropped water.

It goes on to describe the deserted state of the country under Sisera's tyranny:

> In the days of Jael the highways were unoccupied,
> And the travellers walked through byways.
> The rulers ceased in Israel, they ceased,
> Until that I Deborah arose,
> That I arose a mother in Israel

All resistance had ceased:

> Was there a shield or spear seen
> Among forty thousand in Israel?

Then comes the summons to battle:

> Awake, awake, Deborah;
> Arise, Barak, and lead thy captivity captive, thou son of [Abinoam.

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There is praise for the tribes who responded to the martial call:

Then came down a remnant of the nobles and the people;
Out of Ephraim came down they whose root is in Amalek;
After thee, Benjamin, among thy peoples;
Out of Machir came down governors,
And out of Zebulun they that handle the marshal's staff.
And the princes of Issachar were with Deborah;
As was Issachar, so was Barak;
Into the valley they rushed forth at his feet.

And stern censure for those who stood aloof:

At the watercourses of Reuben
There were great searchings of heart.
Gilead abode beyond Jordan:
And Dan, why did he remain in ships?
Asher sat still at the haven of the sea,
And abode by his creeks.

But the brunt of the battle fell on the two tribes:

Zebulun was a people that jeoparded their lives unto the death,
And Naphtali, upon the high places of the field.

The storm broke:

They fought from heaven,
The stars in their courses fought against Sisera.
The river Kishon swept them away,
That ancient river, the river Kishon.
O my soul, march on with strength.
Then did the horsehoofs stamp.
By reason of the pransings.

The slaughter of Sisera by Jael is described in vivid and graphic terms which must be read in full, and the poem ends with a sardonic description of Sisera's mother looking out of the window and listening for the sound of the hoof-beats of the chariot horses which are to bring back her son in triumph from the battle.

It is useless to try to justify the action of Jael by any modern standard. The children to whom the writer narrated it in past years described it as a "dirty trick." These were older and more advanced in their moral code than those children of the race with their primitive sense of right and wrong; out of such childhood God was slowly leading them up to those high moral and religious conceptions which they were eventually to give to the whole world.

The next of the great Judges fought his battles in this self-same plain of Esdraelon, but he belonged to the tribe of Manasseh, in the hills to the south, and the enemy against which he fought were the Midianites, wandering tribes who came out of the east with tents and camels, and loved to descend on peaceful agriculturists at the time of harvest and carry off the ripe corn. For seven years they had invaded the country "as locusts for multitude," and driven the Hebrews into hiding while they raided their crops.

Gideon was reduced to beating out such corn as he had saved in the secrecy of the winepress to hide it from the marauders, when an angel appeared and greeted him with the assurance that Jehovah was with him. Gideon was somewhat sceptical. "If Jehovah is with us," he said, "why has all this evil befallen us, and where be all his wondrous works of which our fathers told us?" But the angel assured him that he was to go forth and save the people. Still doubting, Gideon asked for a miraculous sign, which was given to him, and he thereupon commenced his career by breaking down the idolatrous altar and sacred pole which his father had erected in imitation of the surrounding heathen.

THEN he summoned the men of his own tribe, and secured the help of three others, Asher, Zebulun, and Naphtali, and started out with an army of 32,000 men, proud of the strength which he had mustered. But the word of the Lord came to him and warned him that the army was too big; if he conquered with such forces the victory would be ascribed to human power; he was to send back all those who had no heart for the battle; thereupon 22,000 men went home and left him with 10,000. But he was told that even this was too large an army, and he was to take

WHERE SAMSON SLEW THE THIRTY PHILISTINES. Excavation of the site of Askelon, within a rocky amphitheatre on the coast of the Mediterranean, revealed ruins of the Philistine city beneath medieval walls and buildings. This was the scene of Samson's exploit recorded in Judges xiv, 10-19. Having promised thirty changes of garments to that number of young Philistines if they could guess his riddle, when they did so he went down to Askelon "and slew thirty men of them, and took their spoil" to pay his forfeit.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

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"DIVERS COLOURS OF NEEDLEWORK." This little maid of Bethlehem peers closely at her embroidery carried out in coloured silks. Ornamental stitchery on linen or muslin has been a highly-developed craft in the Bible lands for thousands of years. In the time of the Judges fine specimens were so valuable that Sisera's mother speaks of "divers colours of needlework" (Judges v, 30) as booty "meet for the necks of them that take the spoil".

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

the host down to the river and watch them drink; only those who lapped from their hands were wanted—and the test reduced his numbers to a pitiful 300.

Nevertheless it was with this tiny band that Gideon was to overwhelm the myriads of Midian. Greatly daring, he crept with a trusted servant into the enemy camp at night and was encouraged by a dream which he heard one man relating to his fellows. He then divided his band into three small companies of one hundred each, gave to every man a trumpet, a torch and a pitcher in which to hide his torch, descended in the darkness on the enemy's camp from three different directions, and at a given signal ordered every warrior to blow his trumpet as he drew his torch from its covering and waved it in the air. Confused by the noise and glare in the middle of their sleep, the Midianites thought that a large army was surrounding them, mistook their own comrades for foes in the darkness and after a thorough rout fled towards the south. Gideon thereupon sent messengers to the tribe of Ephraim to cut them off, and the whole army was dispersed and its princes slain.

Before we leave these two vividly told narratives with their disquieting notes of relentless slaughter, treachery and complete absence of mercy, we must pause to note the development of something finer which was to play a great part in Hebrew history. Both Deborah and Gideon secured some measure of common effort among the tribes, though the powerful family of Ephraim was annoyed with Gideon for not having summoned them to the original campaign. But better still is the growing reliance upon God, rather than on their own strength, which is hinted in the Song of Deborah and finds more explicit expression in the reduction of Gideon's army to such a negligible size.

In accordance with the custom of the time Gideon formed many matrimonial alliances and left behind him a large progeny. A long chapter is devoted to the story of internecine strife which resulted from the attempts to establish hereditary rule in his family. The time for a King of Israel had not yet arrived.

THE narrative of Jephthah is the most pathetic in the history of these great leaders. The scene has shifted to the east side of the Jordan where the tribes of Reuben, Gad and part of Manasseh had their settlements. They were shut off from their comrades by the river and were open to invasion from the Ammonites on their southern and eastern borders. Jephthah was an illegitimate son who had been outlawed by his brethren, and had gathered around him a band of fellow-outcasts and become a brigand chief "in the land of Tob".

In a period of tyranny under their neighbours, the men of Gilead turned to this outlaw and his following as their only hope, and invited him to lead them against the Ammonites, promising him tribal leadership if he delivered them. Jephthah appealed to the Ammonite leaders for a peaceful settlement; urging that each nation was entitled to what their God had won for them, and the Hebrew tribes should be left unmolested in the inheritance which Jehovah had helped them to conquer, while the Ammonites remained content with the territory secured for them by their god Chemosh. This is of great interest as suggesting that the Hebrews were not yet completely monotheistic, and regarded Jehovah as their own god, among others worshipped by the surrounding peoples. The argument was futile against the warlike Ammonites, and Jephthah led the eastern tribes against them in a successful campaign, of which we are given no details. The outstanding feature of the story is the vow which the leader had made that in the event of victory he would sacrifice to Jehovah the first living thing which came forth from his house on his return. He came home triumphant, and the first person to cross the threshold was his only daughter who came out dancing and singing in her joy at his success. His grief was great, but neither

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he nor his daughter regarded it as conceivable that such a vow should be broken, and we must presume that she was sacrificed.

This incident was a source of considerable trouble to the class of school-children referred to above, who were convinced that the breaking of a wrong vow was a lesser evil than the slaughter of a human being. It was another instance of the development of a moral standard. We must accept the sad fact that at this stage of history even the Israelites could still imagine that human sacrifice could be pleasing to God.

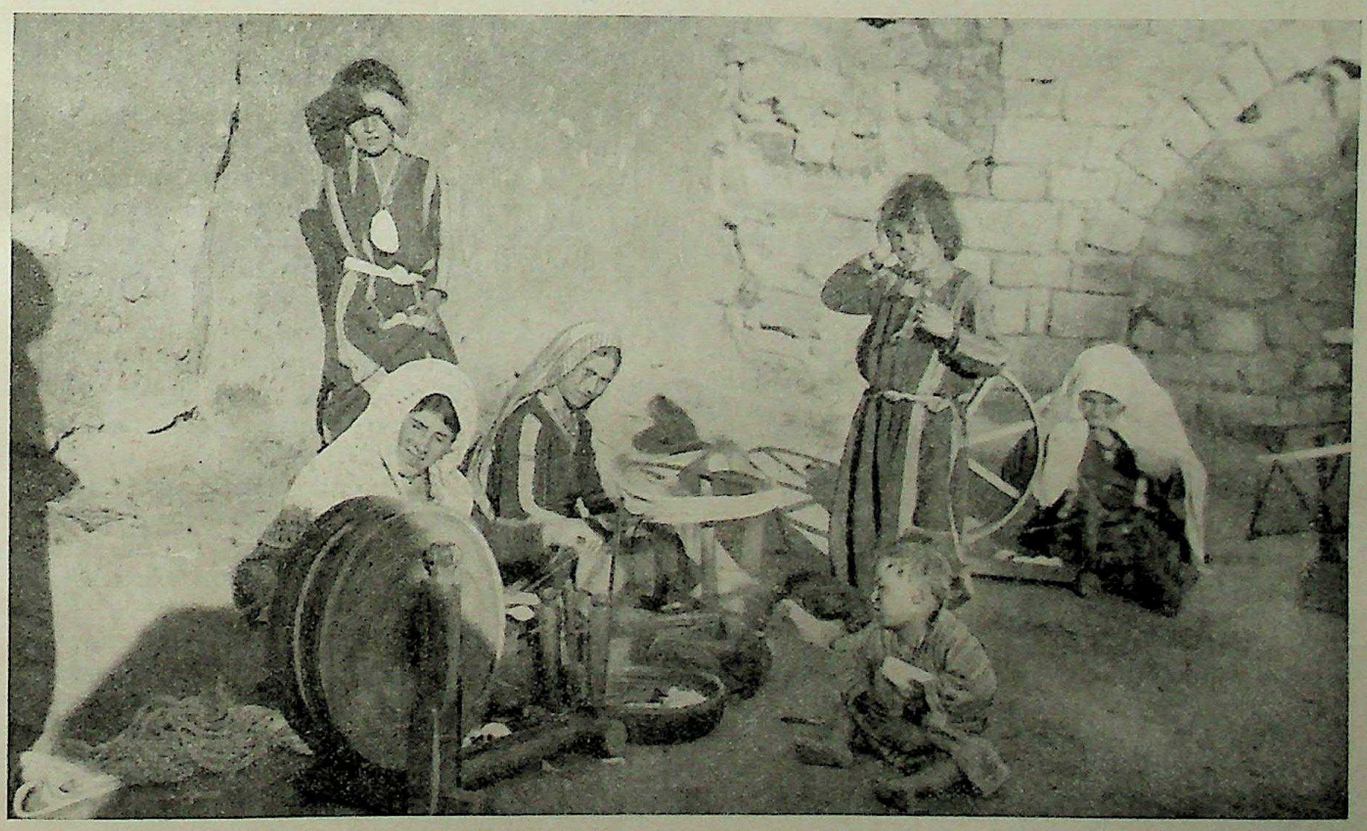
Deadly Shibboleth in Tribal Strife

JEPHTHAH'S victory had yet another sad sequel. The dominating tribe of Ephraim on the other side of Jordan was incensed again at being left out of the struggle. This time they made it a matter of war, and tribe fought with tribe, leaving Jephthah victorious. It is a tragic business of tribal jealousy, worth recording only because it has given us a modern word in constant use. Jephthah held the ford of Jordan against the fugitive Ephraimites trying to get back to their own land. To distinguish friend from foe in this civil strife, every man passing the river was asked to pronounce the word Shibboleth, which simply means "an ear of corn." The Ephraimites could not aspirate the S in the way which the Eastern tribes used, and so were discovered. That chance has made the innocent word a symbol for a test phrase down to the present day.

We need not linger over one or two minor Judges whose deeds are recorded before the author passes on to the popular story of Samson. Nor was Samson really a Judge in the sense of leading his people; his exploits were nearly all single-handed. And there is not much significance in his achievements; they are all connected with various love-affairs which the standard of his age tolerated, but most of which we are bound to reprobate. He was a man of intense physical strength, but morally weak in one direction. It seems obvious that legend has played a greater part in this narrative than anywhere else in our Book. We can only summarize the story without trying to discriminate between history and the creations of popular fancy around a national hero.

He belonged to the tribe of Dan in the south-west of the country, contiguous to the Philistines who were a troublesome thorn in the side of Israel and remained so right into the time of David. Their enmity probably played a great part in persuading the whole nation eventually to accept one King. Samson was a child of promise, dedicated as a Nazarite before his birth, vowed to abstinence from strong drink and to uncut hair. The redeeming feature of the narrative is the attribution of his prowess to the Spirit of the Lord which seized him and used him, rather than to any natural strength.

The first exploit was connected with his marriage to a daughter of the Philistines. Having slain with his bare hands a lion on his way to court her, and finding a honey-comb in the carcase when he went down for



ROPE-MAKING IN THE SAMSON COUNTRY. Cotton is probably the fibre which these women are spinning for rope manufacture. They are dwellers in Majdal, a town on the Philistine Plain and four miles east of Askelon, which has a flourishing cotton-weaving industry. The "new ropes" with which Delilah bound Samson, who broke them "from off his arms like a thread" (Judges xvi, 12) were of twisted flax. It was a powerful gesture, as this fibre is very strong. Such ropes were used for traces dragging heavy loads and for tent-cords. A thick, soft rope was, and is, made of camel's or goat's hair.

Photo. Emmerson

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the wedding, he composed a riddle on the circumstance and propounded it to thirty young men who attended the wedding-feast. They elicited the answer from the bride, who tormented him until he yielded the secret; and when they claimed the forfeit of a change of raiment for each of them, he went out and slew thirty Philistines and brought their clothes back to the guests who had expounded his riddle, returning in dudgeon to his own home alone.

When he came back for her much later and found her given to another husband, he revenged himself by catching 300 foxes or jackals, tying them in pairs by their tails, to which he fastened a lighted torch; and sending them into the standing corn of the Philistines and so destroying all their harvest.

It was while he was with another woman in the Philistine city of Gaza that he is reported to have escaped at midnight when they had closed the city gates against him, and to have carried the gates, complete with posts, away upon his shoulders.

True to his character, it was still another woman named Delilah who brought about his downfall. She was bribed by the Philistines to discover the secret of his strength. He put her off three times with imaginary reasons, and when these were tried by the men of the city, he escaped quite easily. At last, by her tears and solicitude, she extracted his secret and cut off his hair while he was asleep. When he awoke he found himself powerless in the hands of his enemies, who put out his eyes, carried him away to Gaza and completed his humiliation by making him do the woman's work of grinding corn in the prison.

On a feast day they brought him out and stood him in the midst of the temple to make sport of a blind enemy. But his hair had started to grow again, and standing in the centre he stretched out his hands and placed them against two of the great pillars, and with one last prayer for help bowed himself and pushed. He brought down the whole building and involved the multitude both in the temple and on the roof in the disaster with which he closed his own life.

It is a popular story, and poet and musician have conspired to immortalize this strange figure; but neither moralist nor historian will feel that Samson contributes much to the lessons of this Book.

When there Was Neither King nor Judge

THE Book closes with two appendices which are undated, so that we do not know to what precise period they belong in this time of gradual settlement; but nothing could illustrate in a more tragic manner the condition of lawlessness, of superstition and low moral standard which prevailed in a leaderless time. The later author, as he inserts the ancient records, introduces a note of explanation and apology: "In those days there was no King in Israel; every man did that which was right in his own eyes." There was not even a Judge to preserve discipline and order among an unruly people.

The first story tells of a man named Micah who robbed his own mother of eleven hundred pieces of silver. When he restored them she devoted two hundred to the manufacture of a graven and molten image which she set up in the house, appointing her son to act as a priest. Later on a man of Judah who was a Levite travelled in the neighbourhood and was persuaded to act as a more regular chaplain to this private sanctuary.

Some time afterwards some dispossessed members of the tribe of Dan, on their way to a city of the Sidonians, called Laish (which had been reported to them as opulent, at peace and far separated from neighbours who might defend it), passed by this sanctuary, and when they learned of its contents, took away the idol, bribed the Levite with the promise of the more important position of priest to their whole tribe, left Micah robbed and without redress, and descended on the peaceful city which they sacked and converted into their own new home. It is difficult to point the moral to such an incident as this.

Benjamin Pays the Price of Shame

STILL more tragic is the second story. It tells of another Levite who, travelling with his concubine, passed by Jerusalem which was then in the hands of the Canaanites, and, when night fell, turned into the City of Gibeah belonging to the tribe of Benjamin. But there was not enough sense of brotherhood between the two tribes for anyone to take them in, until an old man had pity and offered them a lodging. Hearing of their arrival the criminal element in the city besieged the house and treated the woman in such a fashion that the Levite found her dead on the step in the morning. Thereupon he divided her body into twelve pieces and sent them as a challenge to the tribes, who, stung by shame of an action which even in those days was something which the national conscience could not tolerate, assembled at Mizpeh and vowed vengeance on the tribe of Benjamin, even to extermination, and took oath to supply no wives to any of its men who should survive.

After a preliminary disaster the united army carried out its threat and practically depopulated the tribe. When only about 600 males remained, it occurred to the assembly that they were in danger of mutilating the brotherhood of Israel by the entire loss of one of its members, and that this could not be permitted. So they allowed the remaining men to survive, but were faced by the problem of continuing the race, being prevented by their vow from giving their daughters to the offenders.

From our point of view the solution arrived at was as strange as it was indefensible. They found that the city of Jabesh Gilead had sent no contingent to the assembly and was therefore exempt from the vow. In retribution of this failure to respond they sent and wiped out all the inhabitants except four hundred maidens whom they handed over as wives for the Benjamites. As these did not suffice, they prompted the remaining young men to hide themselves in the vineyards at the time of a yearly harvest feast in Shiloh, and when the maidens came out to dance at the festival

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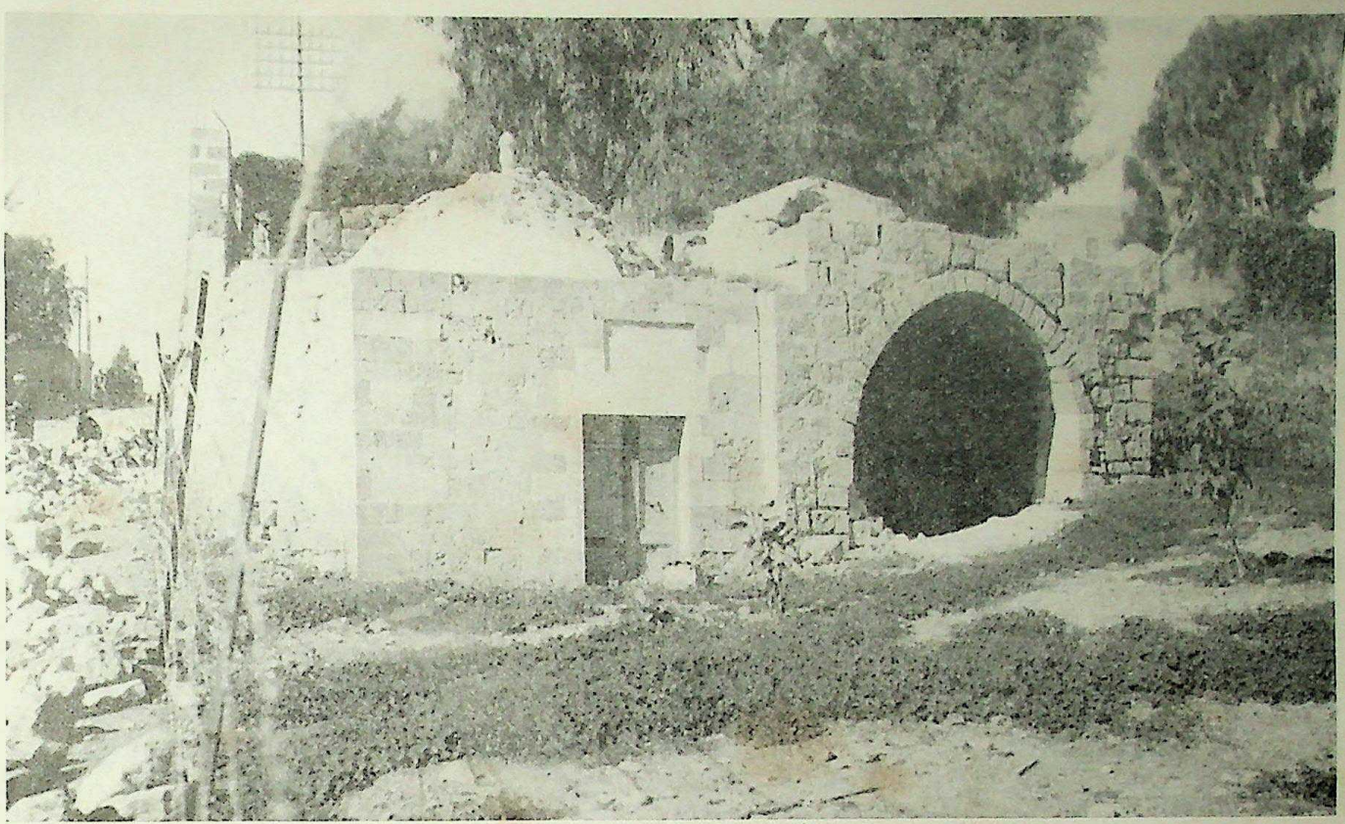

TOMB OF SAMSON, "FATHER OF STRENGTH." At Gaza, in the eastern part of the upper town by the Hebron Gate, are the Moslem sanctuary and so-called tomb of Samson. They are memorials to the herculean exploits of the Hebrew champion. According to the Bible narrative (Judges xvi. 31), after Samson had pulled down the house of Dagon in ruins, killing himself and all the Philistines therein, his brethren came to Gaza and "took him and brought him up, and buried him between Zorah and Eshtaol in the buryingplace of Manoah his father." Zorah is at the opening of the Vale of Sorek.

Photo. Emmerson

they were to rush out of hiding and each man could seize his own bride. A forcible abduction was regarded as not violating the oath.

So closes the ancient record, and the reader should now have some conception not only of its contents but also of the atmosphere of that troubled time. There is no escape from the depressing evidence of much that cannot be condoned. In addition to the endless fighting there is violent theft of territory from peaceful people and larceny from individuals ; there is treachery like that of Jael, brutality such as occurs in some of the acts of Samson ; hideous sexual perversions hinted at in the story of the wandering Levite, strife between brethren among the tribes themselves, superstition and idolatry and a very defective conception of God. Let us be grateful to the later author for so often allowing the ancient record to tell its own story, even when he had compunction about the events. But if we bring a proper historic sense to bear upon the narrative, we shall not let these blots blind us to the deeper lessons and to the achievement which is being painfully and slowly wrought out.

A FEW centuries later we shall find a united nation under a single King--slipping far too soon into two kingdoms instead of one—worshipping together at a single Temple in Jerusalem, with idols forbidden, led by its prophets to higher and ever higher conceptions of the One God of Heaven and earth, and conscious of the exacting demands which God makes on human conduct. All this is to emerge eventually from the turbulent period described in the Book of Judges.

The progress was rendered possible, as we have seen, by the common faith in the One God, with all its driving and uniting force ; by a slowly developing consciousness of family unity, strong enough at times to bring tribes together in a common effort ; by the acknowledgement that there were at least some actions unworthy of an Israelite which the whole nation would not tolerate.

WE learn that troubles and difficulties may play a great part in disciplining a people and bringing them together, and that selfishness, whether personal, tribal or national, in the long run spells disaster. We can see on a large scale how destructive of everything of value in the common life are lawlessness and lack of discipline, and perhaps that is an important lesson for democracy which has to learn to discipline itself. And, finally, we catch a glimpse of the importance of good leadership in all human affairs. The tribes were saved during the centuries of settlement in Palestine by the Judges who were raised up as their leaders. Although they were mainly military leaders, they helped to secure law and order as well. Their task was taken up after Samuel by Saul and David, but another leadership was introduced later by the Prophets who did for the nation in the religious and moral sphere what the Judges had done in the military and legal direction, and prepared Israel to become at last the channel for God's revelation to the world through Our Lord Himself. The gulf which separates the Book of Judges from the Gospel of Christ is a measure of the greatness of the achievement which has still to be related in the remaining Books of the Old Testament.

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Judges

II

The Story of the Book

Ancient 'Heroes' Caught in the Net of History

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IN the Hebrew Bible, as in the English, the Book called "Judges" takes its natural place between Joshua and Samuel, with both of which it is closely connected, for it bridges the gap in the story of the Hebrew tribes between the death of Joshua and the birth of Samuel, "the king-maker."

The name is derived from the subject-matter of the greater part of the book, namely, the mighty deeds of a number of men (and one woman) who were raised up to deliver one or more of the tribes from foreign oppression and bore the title of *shōphĕṭîm*. But it should be noted that the primary meaning of *shōphēt* or "judge," as the word is used in this book, is not that of an official who decides legal cases or arbitrates between man and man, but of one who "vindicates" or "champions" the cause of God and "saves" or "delivers" His people from their enemies on the field of battle (ii, 16-18). No doubt, when a "judge" had wrought a signal deliverance, he was at once recognized as a ruler by divine right and began to exercise judicial functions. This is definitely stated in the case of Jephthah (xii, 7) and of Samson (xvi, 31) and implied by the oft-repeated concluding formula, "and the land had rest . . . years"; but these judicial functions were the sequel and consequence of the "deliverance" or "liberation" which the judges had already achieved.

The *shōphĕṭîm* from whom the book takes its name are twelve in number, and are usually divided into two groups: (a) the six "greater" judges—Othniel, Ehud, Barak, Gideon, Jephthah, and Samson; and (b) the six "lesser" judges, so-called because of the brevity of the narratives which tell of their exploits—Shamgar, Tola, Jair, Ibzan, Elon, and Abdon. But all we know about them is contained in the section of the Book which begins at ii, 6 and ends at xvi, 31. To this there is added a short introduction (i, 1-ii, 5), which describes the fortunes of various tribes during the conquest of Palestine, and corrects the impression given by the book of Joshua that the conquest was rapid and complete; and a long appendix (xvii-xxi), which explains the origin of the famous sanctuary at Dan (xvii-xviii) and relates the gruesome story of an outrage at Gibeah, with the punishment which ensued for the tribe of Benjamin (xix-xxi).

Tracing the Story of the Book's Growth

SO much for the arrangement of the Book as we read it today. But its composition cannot be so briefly dismissed, for it has a long history, extending over many centuries. This, however, can be reconstructed without much difficulty. Budde does not exaggerate when he says that "no other book of the Old Testament shows on the whole so simple and transparent a structure." Let us see then how it was built up, stage by stage.

In the first place, it is clear that the main body of our Book contains material of great antiquity and is based ultimately on *oral tradition*. The song about Deborah and Barak (Chapter v), for instance, is a poem composed by an eye-witness, "still breathing the passion of the fight," and is therefore one of the oldest documents in our Bible. Stories about these and the other tribal heroes, who lived in "the brave days of old" and fought in "battles long ago," were told and retold on the hills of Judah and in the valleys of Ephraim; "in tent and homestead, at merry vintage feast and solemn festival" they were "loved and treasured" (Kennedy). Many of them were closely connected with village patriotism, tales centring round the tombs of local worthies (viii, 32; x, 2, 5; xii, 7, 10, 12, 15; xvi, 31).

Secondly, in the early days of the monarchy (xviii, 1; xix, 1), while these popular traditions still flourished, two writers, or more probably two groups of writers, *collected them and put them into writing*. That there is more than one document underlying the stories which form the basis of "the Book of Heroes" (ii, 6-xvi, 31) is evident from the dual versions which may be here and there detected. Thus in Chapter iv the story of Sisera has been combined with an account of a campaign against Jabin, king of Hazor, the two being harmonized by making Sisera the captain of Jabin's host (iv, 7), but the ancient song in Chapter v, which itself diverges in details from the prose account, makes it clear that Sisera was the leader of "the kings of Canaan."

Separate Strands in the Ancient Tales

THE different traditions stand out very clearly in the story of Gideon (Chapter viii), where the account of the pursuit and capture of Zebah and Zalmunna comes from a source other than that of the night-attack of Gideon's three hundred and the slaying of Oreb and Zeeb. It would seem, by the way, that the story of the night-attack itself is a combination of two stories, one of which attributed the alarm in the camp of the Midianites to the use of torches concealed in pitchers, and the other to a simultaneous blowing of trumpets. When this fact is understood, the old difficulty that the hands of Gideon's men were more than full is at once removed.

There is a double strand also in the story of Abimelech's feud with the men of Shechem in Chapter ix. According to ix, 23 it is an evil spirit sent by God which causes the Shechemites to deal treacherously with their ruler. But in ix, 26-29 it is Gaal and his family who stir up the racial pride of the men of Shechem against the half-breed, Abimelech. It will be found that, if those portions of ix, 23-45 which tell the story of Gaal and his plot are isolated from the rest of the chapter, two almost complete narratives can be obtained.

The Jephthah story (x, 17-xii, 7) is not so easy to disentangle, but here again the existence of a double tradition cannot be denied. According to one version, Jephthah, a native of Gilead and the son of a harlot, was banished by his brethren and became a freebooter. But when the Ammonites invaded their country, the elders of Gilead invited him to come to their assistance. He agreed on the understanding that, if he was victorious, they should

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"WORK OF THE HANDS OF THE POTTER"

Since remote antiquity there has been pottery-making in Syria, where clay is plentiful. The Israelites and their predecessors in Canaan were skilled in the craft. Many are the figurative allusions in the Scriptures to the fragility of the potter's wares, comparing their breakage with the easy destruction of human possessions and power. This Arab smooths a jar modelled in the age-old way. He has first made the clay consistently plastic by treading and squeezing it, and then shaped it on the revolving disk fixed to a wooden support which turns on a pivot. A disk, or wheel, below he works with his foot.

Photo, Oscar Marcus

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PALESTINE WARE RANGED IN A POTTER'S FIELD

This array of modern earthenware set forth to dry, varies somewhat in form, but little in workmanship, from the Canaanite pottery of the period of the Judges, 1360-1025 B.C. From present archaeological knowledge it would seem that the Israelites, during this time of occupation and settlement, did not devote themselves much to industries, but used pottery and other household goods made by the Canaanites. That earthenware was obtainable in bulk by Gideon we know. He provided the three hundred vessels in which his men concealed their torches, so that they might approach the Midianites unseen by night, until word was given to " brake the pitchers that were in their hands " (Judges vii, 19), charge and produce a sudden panic among the enemy.

Photo, Oscar Marcus

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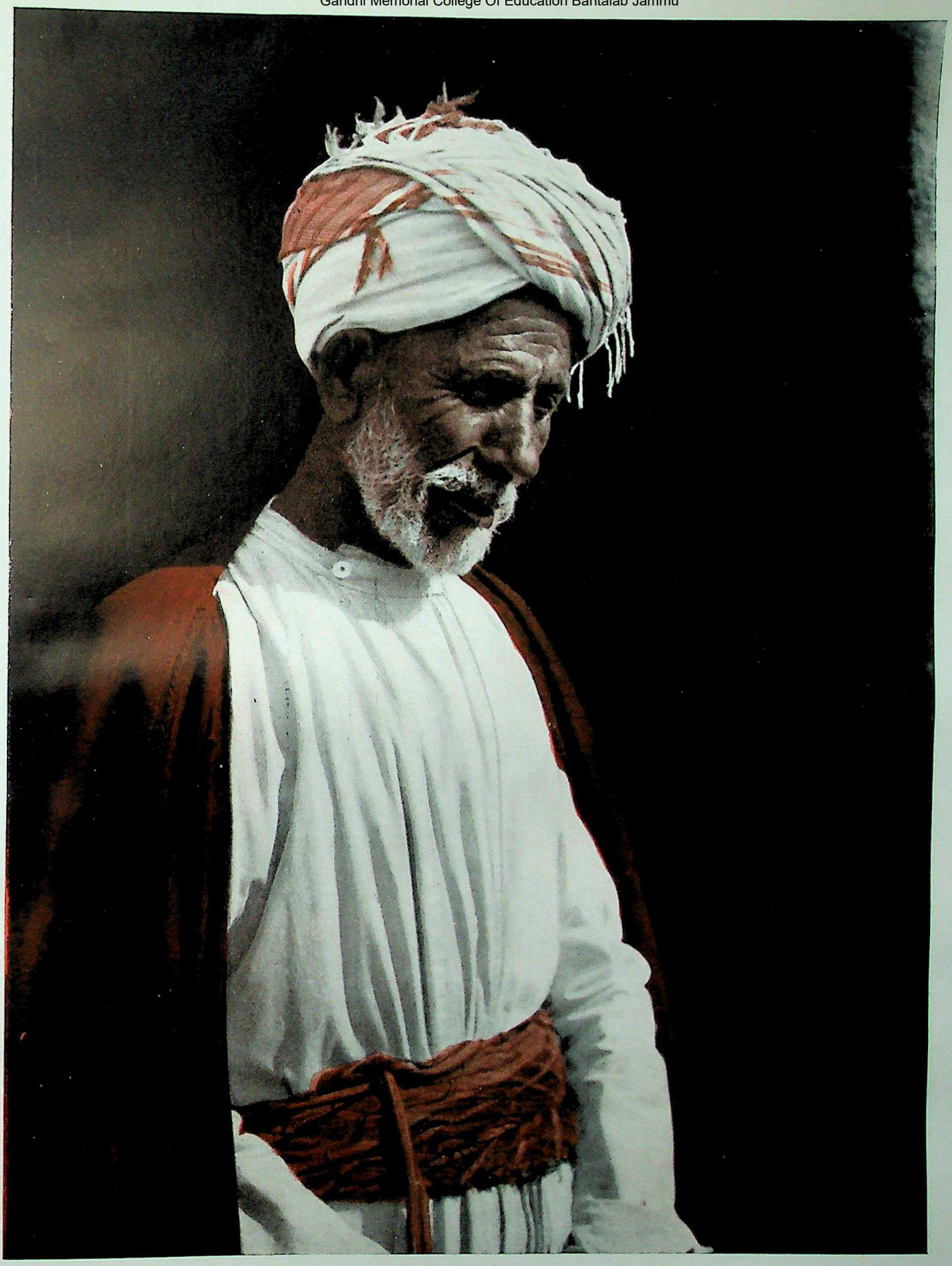

A PEASANT IN "THE LAND OF TILLAGE AND PASTURAGE"

The Arab villager in Palestine is quite distinct in dress, mental outlook and living conditions from the Beduin or wandering tent-dweller in the desert. Understanding of this constant difference enables one to realize the change that came over the Israelites "in the days when the judges ruled" (Ruth i, 1). The people were transformed from nomad shepherds and warriors into agriculturists. Pictured above is a characteristic "fellah"—an Arabic word which signifies cultivator of the soil. Farmer or farm labourer, the fashion of his garb is unchanged; a white shirt held in place by a broad belt of coloured cloth, and a coat reaching to the ankles but girded for work. A turban replaces the Beduin headdress of roped scarf.

Photo American Colony in Jerusalem

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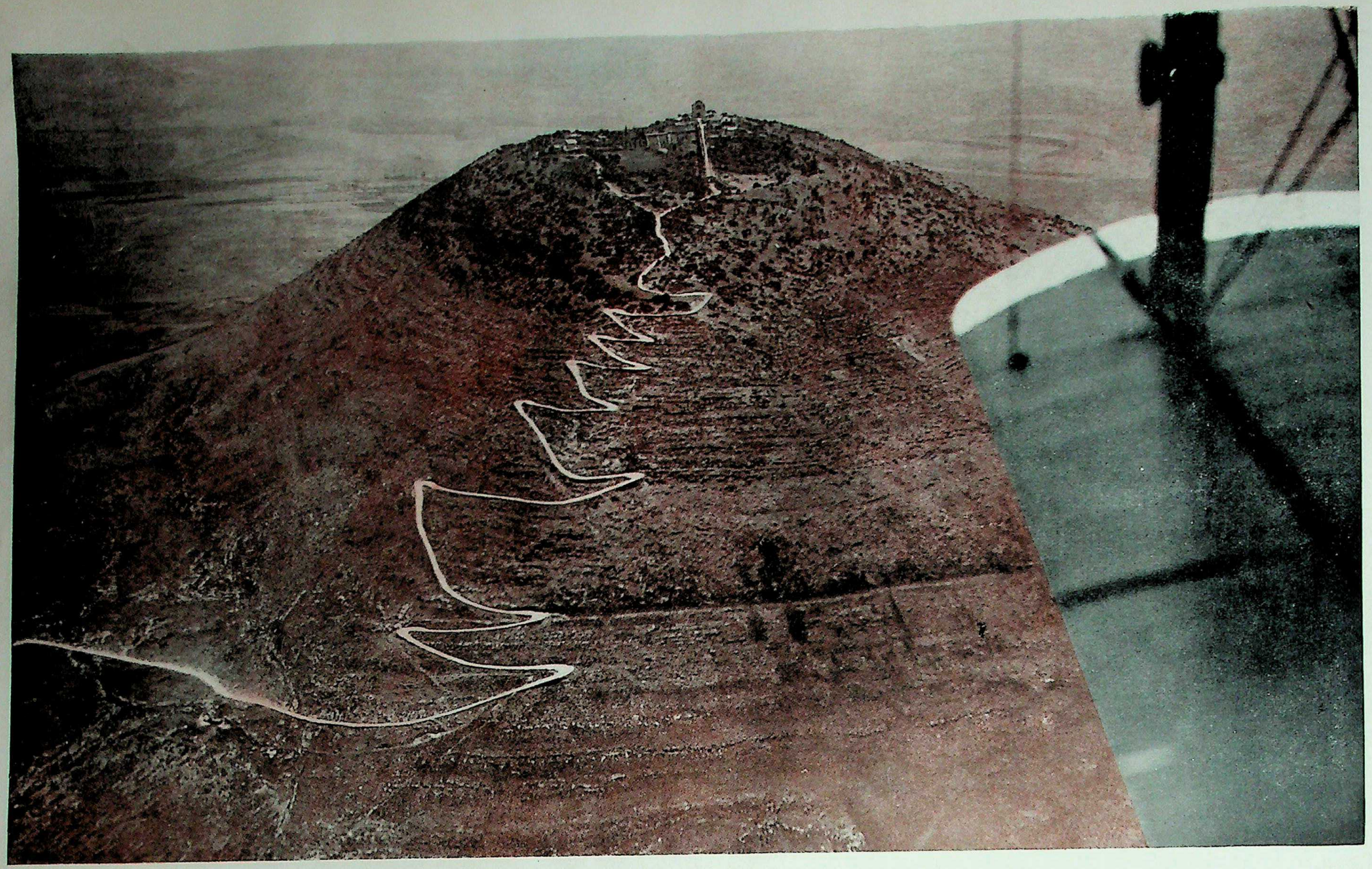

MOUNT TABOR, TRYST OF THE MEN OF BARAK AND DEBORAH

Rising 1,700 feet above the sea-level north-east of the Plain of Esdraelon, Tabor is the highest mountain in Palestine. This striking aerial view shows the curiously-rounded head and the zigzags of a recently-constructed motor road. The buildings on the suminit are a church and hospice for pilgrims. In the time of Deborah and Barak the lower slopes of Tabor were the mustering place of their ten thousand Israelites. At the former's word, "This is the day in which the Lord hath delivered Sisera into thine hand" (Judges iv, 14) Barak gave battle in a fierce descent on the Canaanites, whose defeat was completed by the flood-torrents of the river Kishon.

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make him their permanent head. He routed the Ammonites and then proceeded to smite Ephraim. In the other version, Jephthah's home-town was Mizpah, where he was a man of some importance. The Moabites were the invaders, and the Gileadites agreed that the man who was willing to lead them against the enemy should become their ruler. When he failed in his attempt to persuade, by diplomatic means, the king of Moab to withdraw, Jephthah gave battle, and obtained the victory (so the story goes) by making a vow that he would sacrifice the first member of his household who came out to meet him when he returned in triumph.

"OF THE HOST OF THE PHILISTINES." During the earliest period of the Judges the Philistines had not settled in numbers on the shores of Canaan, but from about 1104-1026 B.C. their supremacy was established in the Maritime Plain, coastal region south of Joppa. From its name of Philisti[n]a came that of Palestina, which spread to include the whole country to Jordan and the desert. Hebrew tradition regarded these people as immigrants from Caphtor, that is Crete, but they may have come from the adjacent mainland of Asia Minor.

Photo, courtesy of Sir Flinders Petrie

Clearly, then, there were two collections of these ancient sagas current in Israel and Judah during the early days of the divided monarchy, and, since the book of Joshua has close affinities with the book of Judges, and the one is the natural sequel to the other, it is generally agreed that they belong to the same schools of literary tradition as the documents which from Genesis to Joshua we denote by the familiar symbols, J and E. (*See* Dr. J. W. Jack's chapter on Exodus, page 107). So the third stage in the history of our book came when these collections were *combined by some editor or editors*, with the somewhat confusing results indicated above.

Hero Leaders of the Hebrew Tribes

NOW it will be obvious to the careful reader that if the ancient J and E stories about the "greater" judges are detached—and, as we shall see presently, they are easily detachable—from the framework in which they have been set, they stand out as traditions about *tribal and local heroes* who won signal victories over the resident Canaanites, or over invading nomadic tribes.

It is clear that during the period of settlement and consolidation there was no such thing as a united Israel. Thus the story of Ehud is that of a local conflict between the tribes settled in the hill country of Benjamin and their neighbours of Moab on the other side of the River Jordan. It is his own clan of Abiezer which Gideon leads when he repels a Midianitish raid, and it is the country of Gilead which Jephthah frees from the Ammonites. The nearest approach to united action on a national scale is seen in the battle of the Kishon, but even Deborah and Barak could only rally volunteers from about half the tribes to come "to the help of the Lord against the mighty."

Two other facts emerge from the study of these ancient sagas: one is that they do not contain in themselves any notes of time, and the other, that, apart from editorial passages, such as vi, 7-10 and x, 6-16, the conceptions of sin, punishment, and repentance are nowhere mentioned. The original story-tellers recount the exploits of their heroes, men raised up by God, it is true, and incited by His spirit to deeds of valour, but they make no attempt to point the moral or adorn the tale by pious reflections on the events which they record.

The fourth stage in the building of our book began when the now composite narratives of the six "greater" judges were selected by an editor from the rest of the material at his disposal and worked up into a book which, for want of a better name, we may call "The Deuteronomic Book of Judges." This writer had theories of his own, but, fortunately for the historian and for the student of the evolution of Israel's faith, he left the original stories very much as he found them. His own conception of events is contained in a literary framework, or "a kind of external envelope," which is easily detachable from the narratives proper. Thus the ancient (JE) story of Ehud's exploit begins in the middle of verse 15 of Chapter iii, and continues without a break to the end of verse 29, but the editor has embellished it with introductory (iii, 12-15a) and concluding (iii, 30) comments.

The first thing to notice about these comments is the editor's interest in *chronology*: "they served Eglon the king of Moab eighteen years. . . . And the land had rest fourscore years." There are similar notes of time in his comments on the stories of Othniel, Barak, Gideon, Jephthah, and Samson, but the whole scheme seems to be artificial and scholars attach little importance to it.

WE may observe in the second place, that whereas in the early story Ehud is a local Benjamite hero who hurls back a Moabitish invasion from the other side of the river, the editor makes him the leader of *all* Israel: "the Lord strengthened Eglon king of Moab against Israel . . . and the children of Israel served Eglon . . . so Moab was subdued that day under the hand of Israel." And so he deals with the other five "saviours." He quietly transforms them from being merely local and tribal heroes into liberators of the whole people, and fits them into an artificial scheme which represents them as following one another in a chronological succession. It is this writer, by the way, who introduced the title, "judges" (*shōphĕtîm*).

But there can be no doubt that his primary aim, all through those sections of ii, 6 to xvi, 31 in which his hand can be detected, was to expound his philosophy of history.

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He was a Deuteronomist, that is, he drew his inspiration and ideals from the prophetic teaching which was embodied in the Book of Deuteronomy and led to the reformation of Josiah in 621 B.C. This great book was in some ways puritanical in its religious outlook. It taught the doctrine of a single altar, where alone sacrifice might legitimately be offered, and it said that all Canaanites ought to have been destroyed when Israel entered the Promised Land, and all traces of their cults eradicated, lest Israel should be tempted to forsake Jehovah.

NOW, when he tested the history of his people after the death of Joshua by this standard, it appeared to our Deuteronomic editor to be one of repeated apostasy. So he interpreted every oppression by a neighbouring enemy as a punishment for Israel's unfaithfulness. When punishment had done its work, and the people turned in penitence to Jehovah, He raised up a "judge," who freed them from the heathen oppressor, and under whom, so long as he lived, the land had rest. When the deliverer died, however, there was a relapse into unfaithfulness, resort was made once more to the worship of the local deities, the Baals and Astartes, with the inevitable result of a further period of chastisement at the hands of their enemies.

This philosophy of history is stated at length in ii, 6-iii, 6—especially ii, 11-19—and repeated in the comments which the editor makes on each of the stories of the six "greater" judges. Thus in the case of Ehud, which we have taken as an example, we read how "the children of Israel did evil again in the sight of the Lord," and how "the Lord strengthened Eglon king of Moab against" them, so that they had to serve him eighteen years. But apostasy and its punishment is followed by penitence ("the children of Israel cried unto the Lord") and deliverance ("and the Lord raised up to them a deliverer"), with the result that "Moab was subdued . . . and the land had rest eighty years."

We have the same scheme or framework in the accounts of Othniel, Barak, Gideon, Jephthah, and Samson. Notice how often at the beginning and the end of a story the following words or sentences occur: *they did evil in the sight of the Lord, He sold or delivered them into the hand of . . . they cried unto the Lord, subdued* or *was subdued, and the land had rest . . . years* (iii, 7, 8, 9, 11; iii, 12, 15, 30; iv, 1, 2, 3, 23; v, 31; vi, 1, 6; viii, 28; x, 6, 7, 10; xi, 33; xiii, 1).

Always we have this rhythmic alternation of apostasy and chastisement, a cry for help and deliverance, described in the same, or in similar, phraseology.

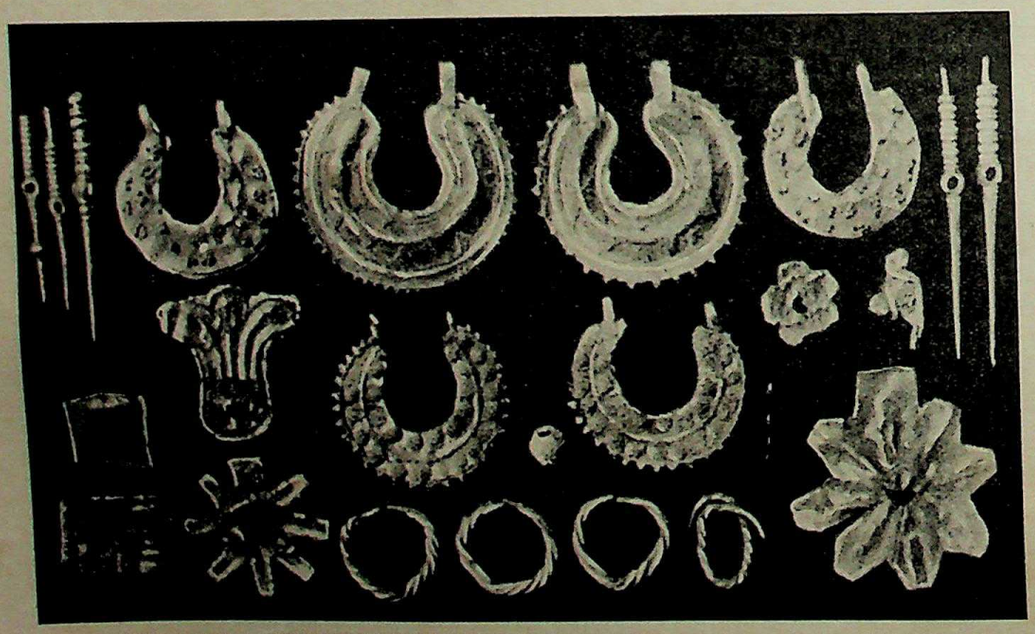
The reader will have noticed that only the six "greater" judges are treated in this way. The story of Abimelech (Chapter ix), who was not a "judge" in the strict sense of the term, seeing that he did not save his people from an enemy, lacks the customary introduction and conclusion, the place of which is taken by the somewhat colourless summary, viii, 33-35. The Deuteronomic editor also omits from his scheme the six "lesser" judges, Shamgar (iii, 31), Tola and Jair (x, 1-5), Ibzan, Elon, and Abdon (xii, 8-15). Some later hand must have inserted them into the book, perhaps with the idea of bringing up the number of judges to twelve.

Peculiar Features of the Samson Epic

IT should also be mentioned that there are some scholars who hold that such exploits of Samson as are related in Chapter xvi were not included in the Deuteronomic edition, and that there are others who assert that none of the Samson stories appeared in this earlier form of our Book. It must be admitted that Samson was not a judge in any sense of the word. He never secured deliverance, or even respite, from the yoke of the Philistines, and his deeds of valour were dictated, not by the spirit of Jehovah, but by his own wayward inclinations.

So far we have been considering the main portion of the Book of Judges (ii, 6-xvi, 31). It now remains for us to account for the rest of the book—those sections which show no traces of Deuteronomic influence.

The introduction (i, 1-ii, 5), which belongs in the main to the Judaean document known as J, consists of fragments of an old account of the conquest of Canaan, not by a united Israel under the leadership of Joshua, but by the individual efforts of the separate tribes. Positive success, however, was only achieved by Judah and Simeon and the "house of Joseph." The other tribes mentioned failed to dispossess the native inhabitants. This is a very different story from that which the Book of Joshua as a whole suggests—a complete conquest of the land made under a great leader and accomplished within a single generation. It is easy to understand why the Deuteronomic editor discarded this section: it did not tally with his idea of the thoroughness of Joshua's conquest.



"FOR THEY HAD GOLDEN EARRINGS." These treasures, dating back to 2000 B.C., were unearthed from the site of ancient Gaza. The large crescent-shaped earrings were common in Egypt; so were the toggle-pins, pierced in the middle, seen left and right of the photograph. Before Gaza became the southernmost city of the Philistine league it was a centre of Egyptian authority. The Canaanites were also skilled in the goldsmith's art. They knew how to ornament gold leaf in repoussé and how to draw it into wire to make the small type of earrings shown.

Photo, H. J. Shepstone

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The appendix (Chapters xvii-xxi) consists of two long narratives which do not describe the doughty deeds of any judge, but merely relate events belonging to the period in which the judges lived. It is for this reason, perhaps, that it did not appeal to the Deuteronomic editor of "The Book of Heroes." And yet both stories might have provided him with ample material for the moralizing which he loved.

The first story (Chapters xvii-xviii) describes the founding of a sanctuary in the newly conquered territory of Dan. It takes us back to an early stage of Jehovah-worship in Canaan, and it is worthy of note that no disapproval is expressed either of Micah's private chapel or of his ephod and teraphim as instruments of divination.

The second narrative (Chapters xix-xxi), which shows signs of expansion and exaggeration by later hands but is in the main archaic, tells of an outrage at Gibeah (alluded to in Hosea ix, 9 and x, 9) and the vengeance taken for it on the Benjamites, and describes how the survivors of this tribe were provided with wives. Like the first, it is valuable for the light which it throws on the moral and social customs, and on the political conditions, of the age of the judges.

Some later editor found these ancient stories and appended them to the Deuteronomic book of Judges. He also inserted in that book the story of Abimelech and, by using old material, brought the number of the judges up to twelve. To him, too, perhaps, we owe all or at least some of the popular tales about Samson. To the whole book as it now stood, he prefixed an introduction. This he took from the early narrative which still existed in separate form, and his purpose in adding it was to explain the unsettled state of affairs revealed by the stories which were to follow.

SHRINE AT THE BIRTHPLACE OF SAMSON. **Near the modern village of Sar'a, where is located the site of Zorah, native town of Samson, is a Moslem shrine to his memory. It is on the north side of the Vale of Sorek, by "the camp of Dan" where he first began to prove his strength (Judges xiii, 25), and where he was buried. The site, on the border of the Philistine territory, was originally assigned to the tribe of Judah, but had passed to the Danites before the time of Manoah, father of Samson.**

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

Disentangling the Threads in Judges

To sum up, the various stages in the composition of our book were as follows: (1) Popular hero-stories, commemorating the brave deeds of local and tribal worthies, and handed down from generation to generation by word of mouth; (2) the collection, and reduction to writing, of these stories by scribes of the schools known as J and E; (3) a compilation, made by combining these two versions, and (probably) omitting our present introduction (i, 1—ii, 5); (4) a selection from this "Book of Heroes" so compiled, "edited" in such a way as to explain what was believed to be God's method of dealing with His people, couched in the language, and applying the standards, of the Deuteronomic school; and (5) yet another edition, which added such ancient material as the previous editor omitted, or for which he had no use.

Certain conclusions may be drawn from this disentanglement of the earlier from the later material in our book. One has already been noticed, namely, that the conquest of Canaan was not quick and complete, as the later writers would have us believe, but a long-drawn-out affair, extending over several generations, and that it was made, not by a united Israel, but by the individual efforts of various tribes.

But there is another conclusion that is worth mentioning in this connexion: that, so far from having exterminated or driven out the native inhabitants, the nomad Hebrews settled down in their midst, and, during the peaceful intervals between the tribal wars, intermarried with them. Recent excavations show how they learned from their neighbours the arts, industries, and technical methods of the Canaanitish civilization. We may go further and say that not only did the Hebrew tribes live side by side with the Canaanites, but that in the end the two peoples merged into each other. Only so can we explain what became of the original inhabitants when under the early kings Palestine became a more or less Israelitish country.

It is probable that much of the original penetration of the country was (nomadic fashion) of a peaceful

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nature. Nor are there any grounds for supposing that, once they had gained a footing in the land, the Hebrew tribes fought against their neighbours merely for fighting's sake. Certain it is that there is no evidence in the earliest traditions for the ceremonial extermination of Israel's enemies of which we read in the later narratives. "Such an appalling massacre is a creation of the fancy of the Deuteronomist historians. It is merely, if one may use the expression, 'a pious wish' on the part of these fierce opponents of heathenism, and reveals the intensity of their fear of pagan influences. It is the expression of a regret that Israel had not preserved its purity by the extermination of the contaminating influences" (Lods). In other words, we now know that, barbarous though they were as judged by Christian standards, the Hebrew invaders of the Promised Land were not nearly so barbarous as we used to suppose.

Vivid Stories of Days of Struggle

IT may be said with confidence that, generally speaking and making allowances for the exaggeration and idealization inevitable when popular stories have been transmitted from generation to generation by word of mouth, these early narratives give us a true picture of the struggles in which the Hebrew tribes during this period of occupation and settlement were from time to time involved.

One of the earliest of the stories (xvii-xviii) shows a small tribe or clan of Danites driven into the hill-country of Ephraim by the Amorites, moving northwards, and capturing the Phoenician city of Laish. Chapter iv tells of a local success of Naphtali, Barak's tribe, over Jabin, king of Hazor in upper Galilee, and, with Chapter v, relates how one Sisera placed himself at the head of a confederacy of the kings of Canaan and cut off communications between the tribes in the north and those which dwelt in the hill country of Ephraim, and describes the panic which ensued. The historical importance of the battle of the Kishon lies in the fact that this was the first victory of the Hebrew highlanders, armed only with swords and spears, bows and slings, over the dreaded war-chariots of the city-dwellers on the open plain, and that this was the first time since they entered Canaan that the possibility of united action as members of Jehovah's people was entertained by some at least of the scattered tribes.

The stories of Gideon and Jephthah remind us that the Hebrews had to contend, not only with the native population in whose midst they were settling, but also with marauding bands of Midianites, Moabites, and Ammonites from the other side of the Jordan, and in both stories we can trace the beginnings of a movement which led to the institution of the monarchy by Samuel, the last of the judges. Gideon was king of Manasseh in all but name, and on his death one of his seventy sons, Abimelech, whose mother was a Canaanitess, succeeded to his position and held it for a time. Jephthah, too, as the reward of his successful defence of Gilead, seems to have become the permanent ruler of that country.

Thus the age of the judges was a formative period in Israel's history, during which the widely-scattered tribes, separated alike by mutual jealousy and by the geographical features of the country, were learning under the pressure of circumstances that only by union could they achieve strength and stability. From their Canaanitish neighbours they were learning how to build houses, make pottery, and how to produce "corn and wine and oil."

It was almost inevitable, humanly speaking, that with the farmer's lore they should learn the farmer's religion; that with the arts of agriculture and viticulture they should adopt the forms and symbols of religious worship which in ancient times were inseparably associated with those arts. That they did so, that the austere Jehovah of the wilderness became for them a God of altars and images, and that there was a tendency to identify Him with the local Baals of the Canaanitish high-places, may be clearly seen, not only in the writings of an eighth-century prophet like Hosea (ii, 6ff.) and in the denunciations of the later Deuteronomic school, but also in the earlier documents which form the basis of our book.

It is part of the value of Judges that it gives us historical evidence about the process through which the religion of Israel passed before it attained its full growth. In other words, it has an *evidential* value. And it is worth noting in this connexion that, whenever a crisis occurred, the deliverer whom the crisis produced, and who, as in the case of Deborah and Barak, roused the scattered tribes to a measure of common action, is always inspired, not by some local Baal, but by Jehovah, the desert-God whom Moses had taught his people to worship.

Why, asks Dr. Burney in his commentary, did this worship of Jehovah, fostered by crisis and misfortune, always emerge as the dominant religion and come (amid such unpromising surroundings) to be of the lofty spiritual and ethical character which we find exemplified in the prophetical writings? Biblical history, he says, supplies the answer. "A special Providence, a chosen people, a unique revelation made at an early period in the history of the race to a leader or teacher endowed with exceptional qualifications for his office—these are factors which tradition pictures as guiding and determining the evolution; and, however much modern scientific study may modify our conceptions of the *process*, it will be found that, apart from the recognition of such factors, the history of Israel's religious development remains an insoluble enigma."

It is this fact, that the valorous deeds of the judges were wrought in reliance on Jehovah, which impressed the author of the epistle to the Hebrews and enabled him to regard them as heroes of faith: "the time will fail me if I tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah . . . who through faith subdued kingdoms . . . from weakness were made strong, waxed mighty in war, turned to flight armies of aliens" (Hebrews xi, 32-34, R.V.).

Mighty Men in an Age of Blood and Iron

WE must not inquire too closely into the quality of that faith as viewed from a Christian standpoint To us the judges seem to be far from faultless characters. "We shrink in dismay from the approval of a woman's treachery, shudder at the barbarity with which captives of war were treated, and look askance at the amatory adventures of a Samson" (Kennedy). But we have to remember that the upward trend of revelation had to begin at the bottom of the scale, and to learn to measure the faith of Israel's heroes by the standards of the age in which they lived, and not by any other. If we can bring ourselves to see that in an age of "blood and iron," when there were the strongest possible temptations to forsake Jehovah, there could always be found men who were ready to act upon the best religious and moral ideals that they knew, we shall not grudge them a place among "the great cloud of witnesses" whose example may help us to "run with patience the race that is set before us."

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REGION OF SAMSON'S EXPLOITS. In the Valley of Sorek was the home of Delilah, Samson's enchantress. In this district he was born, lived, and was captured by the Philistines. It is today known as the Wady el-Surar, and is here viewed from the thick growth of prickly pear which borders Ain Shems, a derelict village marking the site of Beth-shemesh. On the opposite, north side of the valley, Sar'a and Eshoua—Biblical Zorah and Eshtaol—can just be discerned. The Valley opens from the Judean hills about 15 miles west of Jerusalem. By this way the Philistines came to raid Israel.

Photo, W. L. Emmerson

"These things," St. Paul tells us, "are written for our admonition upon whom the ends of the world are come" (I Corinthians x, 11), and "for our learning, that we through patience, and comfort of the scriptures, might have hope" (Romans xv, 4).

This is true even of the Book of Judges; for though its appeal to the conscience is in no way comparable to that which is made by the writings of the prophets, and other portions of the Old Testament are more obviously "profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" (II Timothy iii, 16), nevertheless it has its message of warning and encouragement for the devout reader.

Thus (to mention only two or three examples) behind the legendary, semi-mythological tales of Samson—"the scrapes into which his weakness for women brought him, the way in which he turned the tables on those who thought they had got the best of him, the hard knocks he dealt the uncircumcised, and the practical jokes he played on them" (Moore)—we can detect a warning that neither a pious upbringing, nor consecration to God's service, nor physical strength and courage is of any avail when a man becomes the slave of his passions.

The story of Gideon, with his three hundred picked men, warns us against an excessive worship of numbers, and encourages us to weigh heads rather than count them. What might not be accomplished by a handful of devoted men and women following a divine Leader in a concerted attack against the camps of indifference and sin? We may say that Jephthah's rash vow to offer a human victim to God was misguided, but nothing can detract from the heroism of his virgin daughter. Both acted according to their lights, and we may well ask ourselves whether we have the same devotion to the cause of God as we see it in the light of a fuller revelation.

From these, and indeed from all the heroes of the past, we may derive inspiration to "run with fortitude the race that is set before us"; for if *they* felt the meanness of playing for safety when men ought to be fighting Jehovah's battles, so much the more ought *we*, and if *they* were willing to risk everything for what they believed to be God's cause, how much bolder should be *our* adventure to win the kingdoms of this world for our Lord and His Christ!

What 'Judges' Tells Us of God's Ways with Men

FINALLY, we must not forget that our Book finds its place in the Hebrew Canon of Scripture among the "Former Prophets," because it is history written with a purpose, and that purpose a religious one, in other words, that, as edited by its main redactor, it contains a philosophy of history. "The fact that God deals with nations in accordance with their regard or disregard for His moral laws offers a lesson the emphasizing of which can never become superfluous, especially at such a crisis as that through which the world is passing at the present time."

Dr. Burney wrote these words during the closing days of the Great War, but they are no less applicable to the world as we find it twenty years later. This lesson, that behind the history of nations is the over-ruling Providence of God and that only through righteousness can peace be secured, drawn by the Deuteronomist for the instruction of his own age and fortified by the teaching of the prophets and of our Lord Himself, as well as by the experience of history, has yet to be learned, and not until it has been learned shall we be able to beat our swords into ploughshares and our spears into pruning-hooks.

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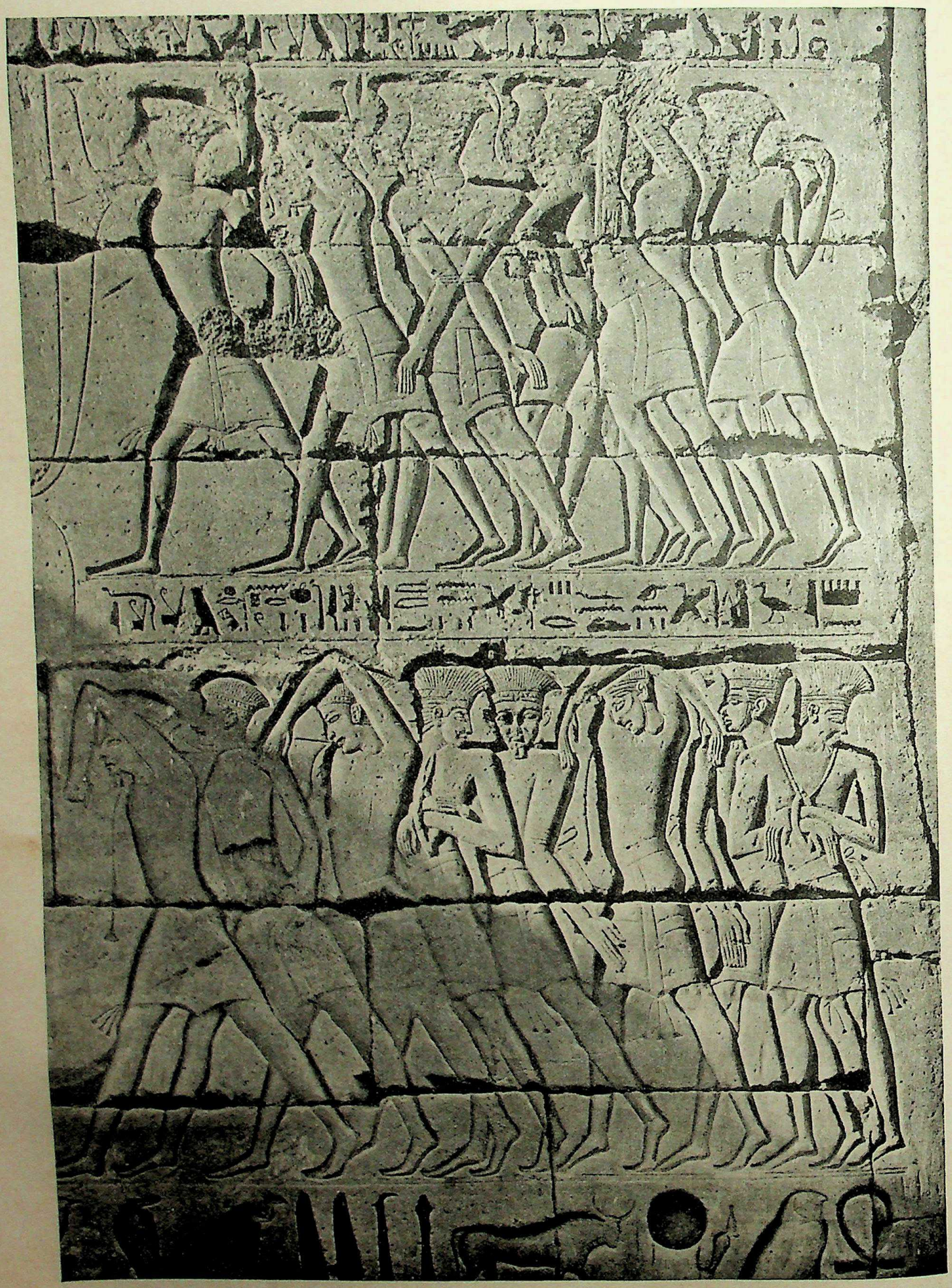

PHILISTINES AS PORTRAYED IN EGYPT. Among the sculptured scenes adorning the funerary temple of Rameses III at Medinet Habu, near Thebes in Upper Egypt, is this bas-relief of Philistine captives. Bands of these warlike immigrants to Egyptian Syria were also employed by the Pharaoh as mercenaries. During his reign, 1198-1167 B.C., he was called upon to resist a northern invasion of his Canaanite territory, and, according to his own record, he established peace. The subsequent rise to supremacy of the Philistines with their federation of five city states, flourishing in Samson's time, may have been originally due to their formal acknowledgment of Egyptian suzerainty. In a century or two their history ceased.

Photo, courtesy of Sir Flinders Petrie

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Judges

III

The Land of the Book

Religion and Ethics in the Days When the Judges Ruled

by REV. J. C. ORMEROD, M.A.

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THERE are certainly other books in the Scriptures which yield more for moral edification, for religious meditation, or for theological speculation, than the Book of Judges will be found to do; but for romantic tales, stirring scenes, and memorable personalities, for its open-air atmosphere, not without a certain broad country humour, and for that tragic power in narrative-writing that here as elsewhere "cleanses the emotions by pity and terror," there is hardly any other book in the Bible quite like this one.

Perhaps in no other Biblical book do we so sharply realize what was one of Israel's most striking distinctions in the history of nations, the unfailing gift with which this people always produced the man for the moment. And the literary genius of the writing in this book is as powerful in making him live before us, as the history was in producing him.

There is Gideon, with his look of "one of the children of a king," the royal air showing itself also in the kingly manner with his troops on the battlefield that recalls Henry the Fifth at Agincourt and his "He that hath no stomach to the fight, let him depart." But for all his mien, the man is a Puritan at heart, a farmer with three hundred Ironsides round him, with their Bibles, as it were, in one hand, and their swords in the other, all hard-living men (vii, 6, cf. viii, 4), all fierce patriots, and with their private battle-cry, "The sword of the Lord, and of Gideon" (vii, 20).

Then there is Jephthah, with the blot on his scutcheon, suave and bland and long of speech, but with a sword in that velvet-gloved hand (xii, 2-4); and his unnamed virgin daughter, the Iphigeneia of the Scriptures, "chivalrous as himself, the sweetest lady in the Old Testament," a veil of mystery (xi, 39) thrown over her end.

Samson's Strength and Weakness

AND there is Samson, the sunny-natured strong man, with a fondness for setting people riddles, and with a trick of capping verses, the man to whom war is a practical joke (xv, 3-5), the first of the exponents of the English theory of war as a game (like Baden-Powell at the Siege of Mafeking); and the story of his great shame wiped out by the story of a greater sacrifice—"more in his death than in his life" (xvi, 30); while all the time, in the background of the story, there is the figure of a mother with the secret vow she made before his birth.

The battle poem in Chapter v is by no means less thrilling than Aeschylus' famous description of the Battle of Salamis in his "Persians." After the apostrophe of praise, Jehovah, from His home in the southern desert—for He still remains at Sinai—comes in person to take command of the Israelite army, marching with a tread that makes earth and mountains and clouds tremble. Then the wretched state of the Israelites comes before us, the people secretly stealing through the country on by-paths, the fighting men without arms. Next the tribes are summoned to rally to Jehovah, and while some hang back, playing their pipes to their flocks in the day of war, or discussing the situation at the fords of the streams, from the others we hear war cries and see their array, people that jeopardized their lives unto the death.

When the Stars Fought against Sisera

NOW the poem tells of the battle itself, of the stars above that fought against Sisera, of the flooded river below that swept away his cavalry, and of his fatal flight to the tent of the savage woman-patriot. And then suddenly, by a master stroke of dramatic contrast unexcelled even in the Bible, the scene shifts to Sisera's palace, and we see the queen-mother surrounded by her ladies-of-the-chamber and hear them chatting about the spoil that surely alone can be delaying his victorious return—while all the time Sisera lies with battered head in the Kenite tent. And so, with a solemn ascribing to Jehovah of power to destroy or to make strong, the incomparable battle-poem ends.

It is necessary to insist here that, as we now have it, the Book of Judges is a unity. Just as in Wagner's operas the drama is preceded by an overture which contains the main musical ideas of the opera, so the Book of Judges may be regarded as an overture to that period of Israel's history contained in the Books of Samuel and Kings; and in this overture we can distinguish what we may call two motifs.

One is, how Israel accomplished the first stage in their civilization, that is, how they passed from shepherding to farming. Before their arrival in Canaan, Israel had been a nomad people, tribes of wandering shepherds, and this had lasted over so long a period that it had left an ineradicable mark on their tradition, for long afterwards, when they went out to war, they still used their ancient nomadic call, "To your *tents*, O Israel."

But now they had come to Canaan, and there was a vast difference between life in Canaan and their old desert life. Here a settled people lived, and instead of tents, the Hebrews started to build houses to live in. They began to learn how to cultivate corn, the olive and the fig and the grape, and how to make wine, all these coming to be regarded by the once desert tribe as no longer luxuries, but the necessaries of life. A picture such as that of Gideon beating out wheat in the wine press (vi, 11), brings vividly before us how the Hebrews had now ceased to be wandering shepherds, and had turned to farming and cultivation of the soil. How did the Israelites accomplish this drastic change in their civilization? It is the answer to that question which is heard in the first motif of the Book of Judges.

But we can distinguish another How did these loosely connected desert tribes become welded into a nation, and arrive at what we would now call "a national self-consciousness"? Before their arrival in Canaan, the Israelite tribes were related to each other by nothing stronger than a mere tradition of racial likeness, and by the genius of Moses in binding them together by his revelation of the religion of Jehovah. But later, when we see them in Samuel and Kings, they have become one nation, and with that most strongly marked individuality which distinguishes them even to this present day. How was this accomplished? That is what we hear in the second motif of the Book of Judges. It is these two motifs that give a unity to all the stories of its heroes.

Overture to the Story of the Kings

SUCH, then, is the Book of Judges, *as we now have it in our Bible*. Beginning by giving a brief résumé of the invasion of south, central and north Palestine, it then proceeds to the heart of its subject by narrating a series of stories about "Judges" who ruled Israel from the time between Joshua's conquest to Samuel's establishment of Saul as king. These Judges are represented as ruling *all* Israel—they are, that is to say, national figures. And they are arranged in a definite and chronological sequence, with, first, an account of the national situation each had to face, a notice of his death and often of the length of his judgeship, and generally concluding with such words as "And the land had rest forty years" (cf.

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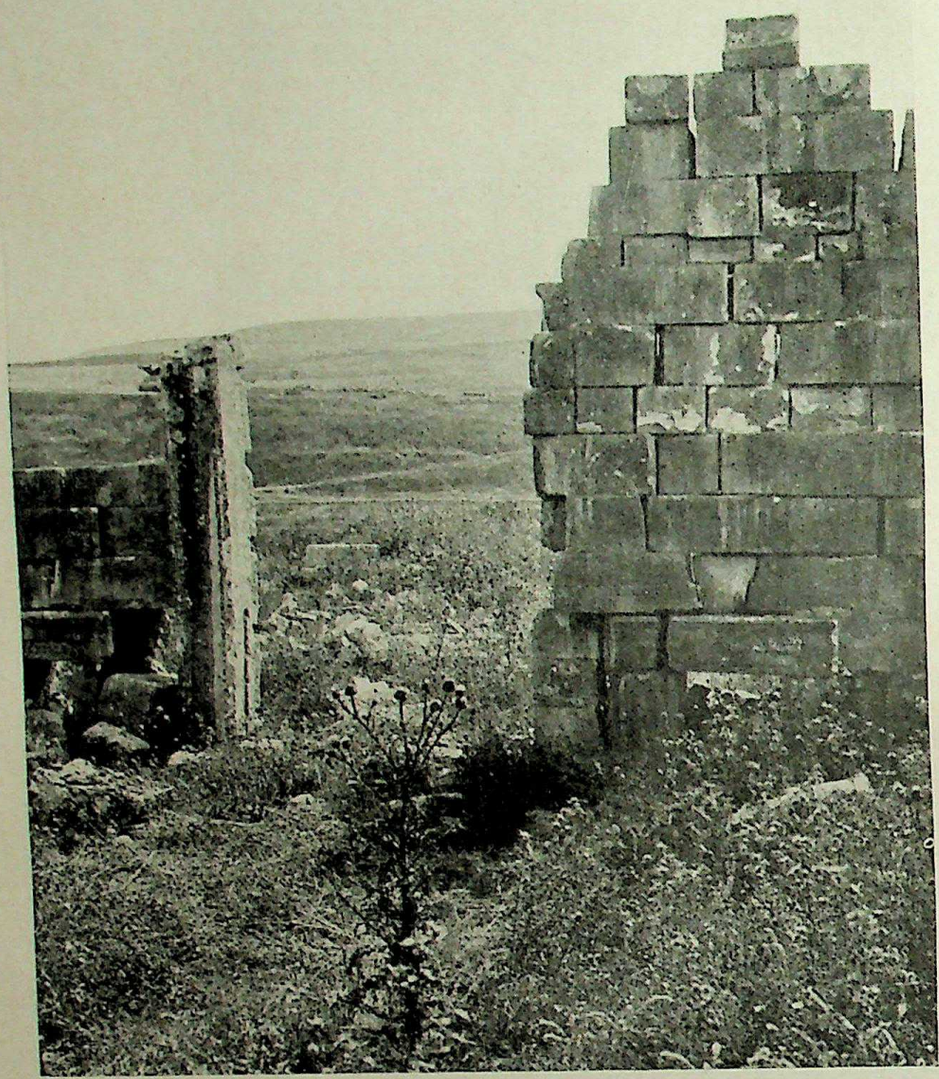

WHERE BARAK WAS SUMMONED TO LEADERSHIP. Viewed here through the ruined portal of what may once have been a Roman temple, is the site of Kedesh-Naphtali. It is a little east of the village of Kades in Upper Galilee. When Deborah the prophetess "arose a mother in Israel" to gather the tribes from north and south against the hosts of Jabin and Sisera, she sent and called her general, Barak, from Kedesh (Judges iv, 6), and together they concentrated their army on the slopes of Tabor before the decisive battle "in Taanach by the waters of Megiddo" (Judges v, 19).

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

iii, 7-11). That is the account of this period preserved in the Book of Judges, *as it now is.*

The geography and topography of this period are fully discussed in the chapter on the background to Joshua (*see* page 253), to which the reader is referred.

In the chapter on the origins of the Book of Judges (*see* page 290) it is shown that the Book contains a number of ancient Hero-stories, which are of first-rate historical value. We now proceed to give a sketch of the history of the period as it has been reconstructed through the researches and discoveries of the archaeologist and comparative historian.

At the beginning of this period, that is, when Joshua's work finished, the only part of Canaan really conquered was the mountainous land, "the hill country of Mount Ephraim," some of the stronger cities even there, such as Jebus and Shechem, being held by the Canaanite inhabitants. "The plain along this coast was hardly touched, and the valley of Jezreel, with its girdle of fortified cities, stretched from Acre to Bethshean . . ." The Israelites must be thought of as separated into three main groups, a northern, occupying the land round the Waters of Merom, a central, on the mountainous land of Ephraim, and a southern, reaching from Hebron.

Thus the Israelite settlements were without any political or geographical unity—they were, in fact, merely little islands of occupation in the Canaanite ocean. There was only one bond that held them together, their common worship of Jehovah. The great question for Israel's future now was, Would that bond hold? Or would their territorial separation prevent the germ of unity their religion had given them from ripening into a full national self-consciousness?

The historical answer to that question is given in the old Hero-stories in our Book of Judges. They show us how the winning of Israel's nationhood began in the north by their resounding victory over the Canaanites at the river Kishon. In an attempt to break these virile invaders, the Canaanites had formed themselves into a hegemony, putting themselves under the leadership of Sisera. The Israelites seemed entirely helpless—"Was there a shield or spear seen, among 40,000 in Israel?"—until Deborah arose. The story of how she and Barak united the tribes and how they conquered, is preserved in the poem already cited; and in Chapter iv is a prose account of the same battle, derived from a tradition different in some of its details (*see* iv, 9, and with iv, 20-21, cf. v, 25-26). A thunderstorm and rain from Jehovah came to help Israel, Sisera fled and met his death in the Kenite tent, and the result was, that the Canaanite from that day never again raised front against Israel. If only for one glorious day, Israel had realized that she was a nation.

Ehud Defeats the Moabite Menace

THE next step in securing the land was Israel's victory over raids made into Palestine from the outside. Attacks on Canaan were made by a number of desert tribes, bent on the same errand that Israel had proved so rewarding. The Hero-story of Ehud the left-handed shows us Moab as the first invader from the south-east aiming at spreading out from the east of the Dead Sea over the Jordan, or, at least, at exacting tribute from Israel. The attempt was broken by Ehud's assassination of Eglon the Moabite king while he was offering him the tribute, and Moab sank back before Benjamin beyond the Jordan.

Perhaps next in historical order, as it indeed is given in Judges, was the Midianite invasion. This appears, however, to have been not for possession of the land but for booty, merely raiding expeditions repeated year by year at the time of the reaping of the crops, and was broken by Gideon, in the spirited account given in vi, 1-viii, 32, in two exploits. That recorded in Chapter viii, a blood-feud against Zebah and Zalmunna, is perhaps prior to the one against Oreb and Zeeb given in Chapter vii. It is of special interest in this story to notice how Gideon's success led to the first attempt at a monarchy in Israel; but Abimelech's story in ix, 1-57 very instructively shows how the nomadic instinct of freedom was yet too strong in the Hebrews for them to bring themselves under the centralized control of a monarch.

Next, another invasion came from the east of Jordan, this time from the Ammonites, who were set on getting a footing in Palestine. The narrative of their defeat by Jephthah in x, 6-xii, 7 is lifted out of the tide of time by the character and fate of his daughter. And lastly come the Hero-stories of Samson. Though there is an historical kernel inside their growth

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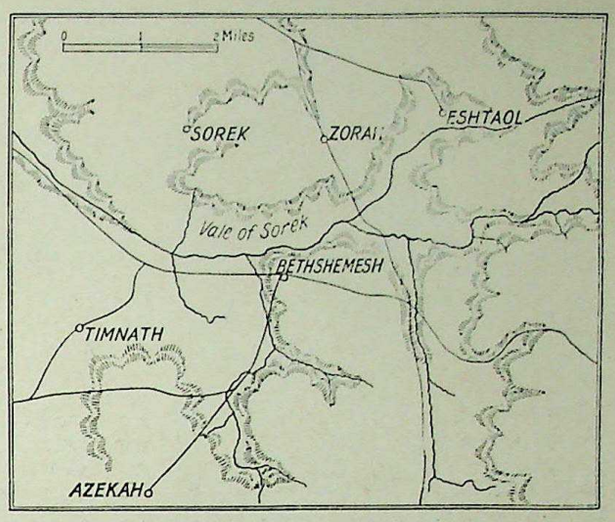
of legend, they are really nothing more than deeds of derring-do, without effect on the Israelite occupation of Canaan. But they are of historical importance as showing us the emergence into the light of day of the Philistines, and the beginning of what was to be the supreme struggle of the Hebrew settlement in Canaan. Samson seems to have belonged to a Danite remnant left from the northward trek of the tribe. (Note that as early as v, 17 Dan is "abiding by his ships"). The story in the Appendix, showing Dan seeking a new home in the north, is historically interesting as revealing how the war with the Philistines, in its beginning, went against Israel (cf. also xv, 11).

WHAT confirmation does this history, contained in the old Hero-stories of the Book of Judges, find from the researches of modern archaeology? It must be admitted that the excavations of the past century, so important for other periods, give us little direct evidence for the events of Israel's settlement in Canaan. As Dr. Garrow Duncan writes, "The early part of the Hebrew period, prior to the founding of the Kingdom under Saul, is practically a blank so far as definite archaeological knowledge of the Hebrew civilization is concerned."

There is enough, however, to prove that the general account contained in the Hero-stories is historical. In 1896 Flinders Petrie discovered a monument erected by Merneptah and dated in the third year of his reign, *i.e.*, 1223 B.C. Here there is mention of an "Ysir'al" people, and this people we must identify with Israel. The inscription reads "Israel is desolate; her seed is not" (*see* illus. page 115).

This, the earliest mention of the name Israel outside the Bible, confirms the fact which underlies all the history of Judges, that Israel was already settled in Palestine, and gives the date as in the thirteenth century. The identification of the "Habiru" with the Hebrews in the Tell el-Amarna tablets (1380-1360 B.C.) concerns rather the Conquest of Palestine (and thus falls to the corresponding chapter in this work on the Book of Joshua), but it may be mentioned here as allowing time for the Hebrew settlement in Canaan by the thirteenth century.

Evidence from Egyptian inscriptions that the Hebrews were in Canaan during the fourteenth century, is insecure, though it is claimed that it is "stronger in its cumulative effect than any individual item." If we could identify those Syrians who, in an Egyptian inscription of 1350-1314 B.C., are mentioned as "begging a home in the domain of Pharaoh," with the Canaanites defeated by the Hebrews, then our period would begin earlier, about 1350 B.C. Again, in another inscription, Seti (1320-1300 B.C.) mentions the Aperiu, which may be an Egyptian attempt at reproducing Habiru, or Hebrew. If so, then Seti's campaigns, which were not in Central Palestine, would give the opportunity for the Hebrews to settle in the thirteenth century in the highlands of Canaan. It has even been conjectured that a period of 80 years of Egyptian peace from 1301-1221 B.C. may be the "fourscore years" when "the land had rest" mentioned in Judges iii, 30. Finally, archaeological excavations have discovered Philistine pottery, weapons and tombs round about the date 1100 B.C., thus proving the close of our period, the Philistine supremacy in Palestine, is historical. (For further details of the archaeological evidences of Judges see Rev. S. R. Caiger's "Bible and Spade").



Homeland of Samson and Delilah

So far we have reconstructed the history of the period of the Hebrew settlement in Canaan. We are now to see what the Book tells us of the condition of Hebrew ethics and religion.

Moral Standards of the Conquerors

THE entire absence even of chivalry in the method of making war, stands out clear in the career of every one of "The Deliverers." Butchery in cold blood, assassination, treachery, are the usual accompaniments of Hebrew warfare at this time; while the elementary moral sense of the period is for all to read in the stories of Samson's amours. But it is in the appendices, drawn from ancient and historically reliable sources, that we find the most startling picture of the moral standard and moral practice of the normal Israelite of these centuries, and in Chapters xvii to xix they stagger us by their unrelieved barbarity. To the Danites, a people "dwelling quiet and secure" is a legitimate occasion for carrying out an unprovoked murderous raid on them (xviii, 7-10), and one of their own countrymen in the course of it may be robbed and threatened in the cause of worship itself (xviii, 11-26).

In Chapter xix especially, the low view regarding women shocks the modern reader. The Levite callously drives out his concubine to satisfy the vile demands of the throng, apparently simply in fulfilment of the law of self-preservation (xix, 25). And it is not the act of corporate lust, but the violation of the law of property in women, and of the obligation of hospitality (xix, 15), that is the ground of punishment; while the measures by which the punishment is inaugurated (xix, 29) horrify us by their savagery.

It was indeed a time when "Every man did that which was right in his own eyes" (xvii, 6, xxi, 25); and in assessing the value of Judges for

PHILISTINE WARE FOUND IN THE VALE OF SOREK. This finely-decorated pottery was excavated at Beth-shemesh. It is not earlier than the 13th century B.C. The painted ornamentation of its Philistine makers is distinctively Aegean with characteristic motives of spirals and symmetrical lines on the bowl, and the bird with reverted head on the water jug. The colours used were red, brown, white and black. Although the settlement of the Philistines in the Maritime Plain popularized these beautiful designs in Canaan, Aegean influence is noticeable in the work of earlier native potters, who imitated from imported ware the better technique of the Aegeans.

Photo, Palestine Exploration Fund

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GOD OF ISRAEL'S IDOLATRY. **Discovered in the mound of Ras Shamra in northern Syria, this stele represents Baal, local nature deity of the Canaanites, for whom the Israelites "forsook the Lord" (Judges ii, 13). The god is shown in destructive mood; in his hands he holds club and thunderbolt.**

religious teaching we have to face the presence of these stories, as well as the heroism and spirit-driven compulsion that moved the Deliverers.

But yet, through all these barbarities, the revealed religion developed, for at the end of the period covered by the Books of Samuel we find that Jehovah is established as the sole object of worship, no longer by nomad tribes, but by a civilized nation in the capital of a powerful kingdom.

WE must remember that the land in which Israel had now settled had its own religion and its own worship. The beings it worshipped were called Baals, a quite different order of being from Jehovah. Jehovah was an El, a being connected with the world of spirits that surrounded men, but not derived from a place. But Baal was a fertilizing spirit attached not to the inhabitants but merely to his own area. He was thus essentially a local, not a tribal power. There was an elaborate cultus of these Baals. The places of worship, generally on hill-tops, were solid buildings; there was a system of sacrifice with its priesthood; and public celebrations were held three times a year at great festivals. But elaborate as this Baal cultus was, it had no relation to morality. Its only obligation was to sacrifice to the Baals, who then vouchsafed fertility; but a man's treatment of his fellow in no way concerned the Baal, and sexual immorality was demanded by the worship.

Now when Israel settled down in Canaan they were ignorant of agriculture. Their God, Jehovah, being an El, was supposed to have no experience of agriculture. As a storm-god he could control storms, could speak and give direction from a mountain; but for success in cultivating corn and wine and oil, the Israelites took for granted that they must turn to other spiritual powers. And what happened was that Israel began to pay to the Baals that worship which had rewarded the Canaanites. They adopted their festivals, their system of sacrifices, and even some of their temple immoralities. Thus the first religious result of the settlement in Canaan was apostasy from Jehovah; and the later historian quite correctly characterized our period when he said of it, "The children of Israel forgat the Lord their God, and served their gods" (iii, 7; and cf. Gideon beginning his deliverance by destroying the Baal's altar; vi, 25-32).

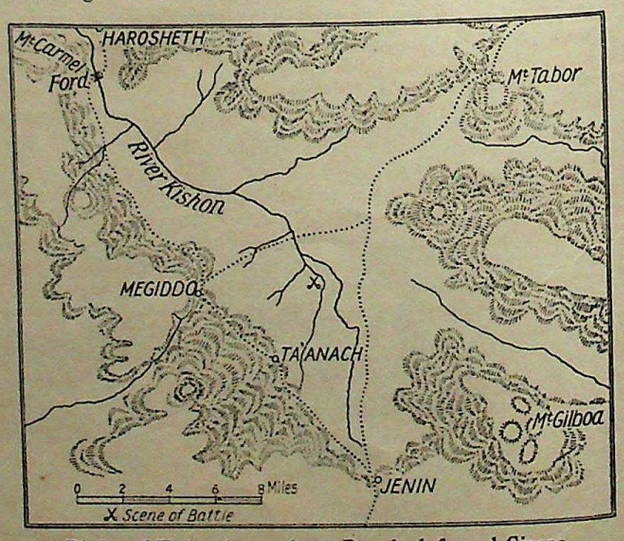
Now there were certain movements within Israel which were protests against this religious landslide. One of these we meet in Judges in the sect called Nazarites. The Nazarites abstained from wine, as we see from the story of Samson (xiii, 7), and as the vine was one of the typical products of agricultural life, the Nazarites' revolt was really against the life which had brought with it Israel's apostasy from Jehovah.

But the effective discrediting of Baal worship came through war. Israel had to war against Canaanites to win land. Now, Baal was of no use to the Israelites for war, for he was a local god who did not co-operate with the gods of other areas. In face of her present situation, what Israel needed was a worship that, instead of further disintegrating her, would unite her tribes into a common purpose. There was only one God that could do this, Jehovah. And it was to this worship of Jehovah that the Deliverers appealed, it was in the name of Jehovah that they drew the tribes together, and it was the prestige that Jehovah won by His victories over the Canaanites that led to the discrediting of Baal worship and the return to the worship of Jehovah, who had proved on the battlefield that He was God of Palestine. Now it is this victory for the beginnings of the world-religion, more important than all its unedifying incidents and characters, that the Book of Judges shows us.

We have seen how essential the Book of Judges is for Israel's history and for the development of religion. But it is not enough to have shown that the Book has a rightful place in the records of Israel. For the Christian Church retains this Book in its inspired Scriptures; and we must, therefore, also show that this Book has a right to its place in the Christian Bible. We have frankly admitted that in Judges we see Israel sharing some of the immoral practices of the nations among which she lived. But we also become aware in this Book that there is a difference in spirit, which contained within itself the power so to change these moral offences that the religion could develop into the moral purity of the prophets. This difference comes before us in a story like that of the sacrifice of the daughter of Jephthah in xi, 30-40.

Jephthah's Daughter, and Agamemnon's

COMPARE this story with another sacrifice of a daughter, as Aeschylus tells it in the Agamemnon. There is in both fathers the same belief that God has pleasure in human sacrifice (xi, 31). But in one scene Iphigenea is gagged so that she might not utter any unpropitious word—an act that Lucretius describes with such moral indignation in his poem on "The Nature of Things," and dismisses with the passionate cry: "To such monstrosities could superstitious religion persuade men." Contrast with that *forced* sacrifice the Biblical heroine's *self*-sacrifice, and her "My father, thou hast opened thy mouth to the Lord. Do unto me according to that which hath proceeded out of thy mouth"—words which in their humble acceptance are not far removed from Mary's "Behold the handmaid of the Lord. Be it unto me according to thy word."



Plain of Esdraelon, where Barak defeated Sisera

Such a story reveals that even while Israel was on a low level of moral practice, there was a principle within her destined to raise her to spiritual heights, of which only the future in Christ could tell the full story.

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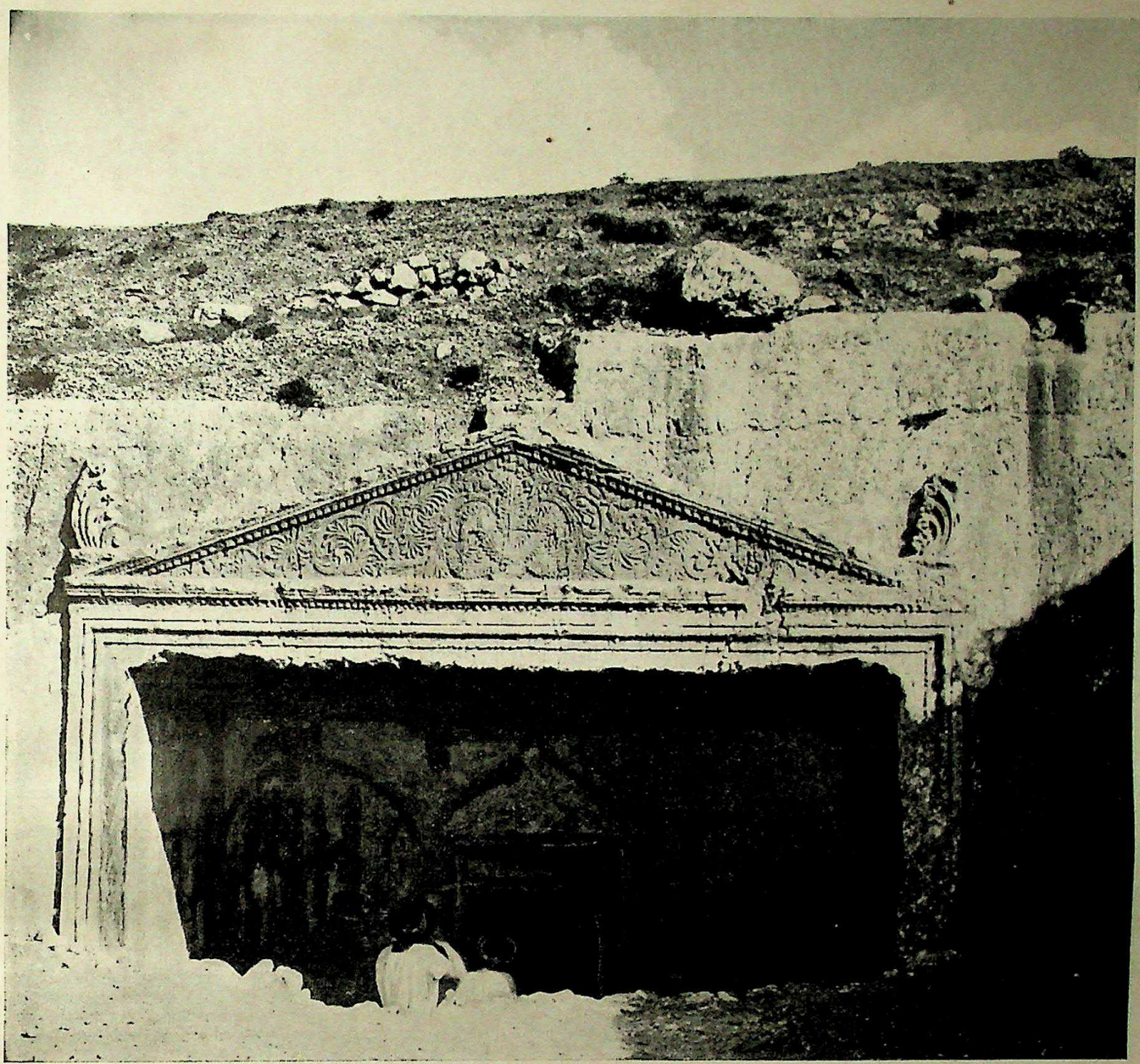

MYTHICALLY-ASCRIBED TOMBS OF THE JUDGES. **There is neither shred of evidence nor old tradition that the Judges of Israel were buried in the rock-hewn sepulchres on the northern outskirts of Jerusalem, which are known today as the Tombs of the Judges. During their era Jebus, or Jerusalem, was not in the possession of Israel. Pictured above is the portico, with pediment ornamented in Greco-Roman style, in the architectural facade. A door in the small forecourt beneath gives access to the tomb chambers, excavated in the limestone. Above the shaft-graves along their sides are shelf-tombs.**

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

This principle, which is behind all the incidents in the acts of the Deliverers, comes to light in what we called the second motif of the book, how Israel arrived at her national self-consciousness. Outwardly, Israel appears in Judges as winning her nationhood by the same means as secular nations won it. Like Rome, Israel first came to national awareness by war. But there is this vital difference. With Israel, religion was felt to be concerned in it. These Deliverers knew themselves called by a Divine Call, and the spirit that filled them was not a resolution to possess political freedom, but a passion for what, however dimly it was discerned, was sensed as some ultimate purpose of God. The historian whose anachronistic method of writing past history according to his own formula we have pointed out, was yet, on the longer view, historically justified. As Professor Oesterley points out very clearly in his valuable "Religion of Israel," the historian's religious insight has pierced to what is the final verdict of history regarding all this period, namely, that it was loyalty to Jehovah that made early Israel strong, and forgetfulness of Jehovah that made her weak.

Permanent Value of 'Judges'

THE Christian Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments together are the record of "the mighty acts of God" in history. The story they tell, from Creation to the coming of the Christian Church, is the story of the Divine Intervention of God in human affairs. In that long process, where does the Book of Judges stand? What, that is, is its permanent religious value for revealed religion?

We must not disguise the plain fact that this book exhibits the Chosen People, in whose hands was the future religion of the world, as making war for the first time an ally of religion; and in so doing they certainly brought into the Christian Church an element that has given to war a religious prestige, and has lengthened the duration of its hold on the loyalty of Christian men.

Yet that idea of a Religious Purpose, lying within war as a seed, is surely the truth that will eventually take away all authority from war for the Christian conscience. Made by the Book of Judges to march hand in hand with religion, the future of our civilization may well convince men's minds that war and religion are incompatible companions. But if war is eventually dismissed, and by the very companion which Israel's religious genius gave to it, we shall be right in acknowledging that even the wars of the Old Testament had yet a necessary historical place in the early stages of the History of the Divine Revelation.

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NATURAL HISTORY OF THE BIBLE. II

Animal Life in the Scriptures

(*Concluded from page* 172)

OF the domesticated animals of the Bible the most important were sheep, goats and cattle. The camel, ass and mule were the chief beasts of burden, and the last two, together with the ox, were also draught animals. The horse, introduced from Egypt, was used only in war or the chase.

The sheep is the first animal to be named in the Bible, and the one to which the largest amount of space is devoted. This is scarcely surprising, for their flocks formed the chief wealth of the wandering tribes. It was, indeed, the necessity of pasturage that enforced a nomadic life, and as soon as the herbage surrounding one encampment was exhausted, the flocks and tents were moved on to another district, until it in turn was abandoned.

SHEEP, goats and cattle were also important in the ritual of the sacrifice. Some of the other Biblical animals are mentioned only in the lists of clean and unclean creatures in Leviticus and Deuteronomy, and it is noteworthy that the abhorrence with which the hog was regarded by the Jew of Mosaic times still obtains today. A degree of antipathy is also displayed towards the domestic dog, a relic of the days when the animal was half savage and acted as a scavenger.

Animal	*Scripture References*	*Notes*
Greyhound	Proverbs xxx, 31	Most probably "war-horse," as suggested in R.V. margin
Hare	Leviticus xi, 6; Deuteronomy xiv, 7	*Lepus syriacus*, animal closely resembling our hare
Hart (Hind)	Deuteronomy xii, 15; xiv, 5; I Kings iv, 23; Proverbs v, 19; Isaiah xxxv, 6, etc.	The red deer or fallow deer. *See* also under Fallow Deer and Roebuck
Hippopotamus. *See* **Behemoth**		
Horse	Exodus xv, 19; Deuteronomy xvii, 16; Esther vi, 8; Job xxxix, 19-23; Psalms xxxiii, 17, etc.	Only mentioned in connexion with war or the chase, and then only in the great plains, as hilly regions were not suitable for cavalry. *See* also under Dromedary
Hyena	Isaiah xiii, 21; xxxiv, 14; Jeremiah xii, 9	The word hyena does not occur in A.V. but is probably referred to under the rendering "wild beasts of the desert" in Isaiah, and is wrongly translated as "speckled bird" in Jeremiah
Jackal. *See* **Fox**		
Leopard	Isaiah xi, 6; Jeremiah v, 6; xiii, 23; Habakkuk i, 8, etc.	Very common in Biblical days and still found in wooded country. Type of cunning. Probably three species are indicated: *Leopardus varius*; *L. uncia*; and the cheetah, *Gueparda jubata*
Lion	Genesis xlix, 9; II Samuel xvii, 10; xxiii, 20; Proverbs xix, 12; xxx, 30; Revelation iv, 7, etc.	Rendering of five Hebrew words. Symbol of strength, dignity, ferocity, power; ensign of the tribe of Judah. Lion-hunting is noted twice only
Lizard. *See* **Ferret**		
Mole	Leviticus xi, 30; Isaiah ii, 20	Two words rendered thus. In Leviticus a lizard is possibly indicated; in Isaiah it is probably the mole-rat. Our mole does not exist in Palestine
Mouse	Leviticus xi, 29; I Samuel vi, 4, 5; Isaiah lxvi, 17	Used generically to include rats, dormice and many other species of rodent. The reference in Samuel is to field-mice
Mule	Genesis xxxvi, 24; II Samuel xiii, 29; xviii, 9; Isaiah lxvi, 20, etc.	The reference in Genesis is doubtful, for mules were not used by the Hebrews until the time of King David. Their breeding was forbidden and they were probably imported from Egypt
Ox. *See* **Cattle**		
Pygarg	Deuteronomy xiv, 5	Probably a gazelle, or the twist-horned addax; an animal of the desert found in Arabia
Roe, Roebuck	Deuteronomy xii, 15; Proverbs v, 19; Song of Solomon ii, 7; viii, 14, etc.	The word translated thus should be gazelle, a small, beautiful and very fleet antelope, still common in Palestine
Seal. *See* **Badger**		
Sheep	Genesis iv, 2; Exodus ix, 3; Leviticus i, 10; Numbers xviii, 17; Deuteronomy vii, 13; Judges vi, 4, etc.	Of great importance in Biblical times. Herds of sheep formed the greater part of the wealth of the Patriarchs. The chief animal of sacrifice, and valued for both milk and wool. Sheepskins were made into rough coats. The horns were used as vessels for carrying liquids, particularly oil
Sheep (wild)	Deuteronomy xiv, 5	The word translated as chamois is the wild sheep or mouflon
Swine	Leviticus xi, 7; Deuteronomy xiv, 8; Proverbs xi, 22; Matthew vii, 6; Luke xv, 15, etc.	Swine were considered the most unclean of all animals, and the herding of swine a most degrading occupation. Rarely found in Palestine today, for the ancient, deep-rooted antipathy to the animal still exists
Unicorn	Deuteronomy xxxiii, 17; Job xxxix, 9; Psalms xxix, 6, etc.	The aurochs, an extinct wild ox, having two horns, as indicated in Deuteronomy. No resemblance to the one-horned unicorn of heraldry
Weasel	Leviticus xi, 29	Probably the mole-rat (*Spalax typhlus*); included in the list of unclean animals
Wolf	Genesis xlix, 27; Isaiah xi, 6; Matthew vii, 15; Luke x, 3, etc.	Mentioned very frequently, although always in a figurative sense, type of ferocity. Still found in most parts of Palestine

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USED IN CANAANITE WORSHIP 3,000 YEARS AGO

During the period of the Judges there was an Amorite palace in Megiddo. One of its princes fought with "the kings of Canaan in Taanach by the waters of Megiddo" (Judges v, 19). Great treasure hoards have been discovered during excavations of the ancient ruins. One of the most interesting objects, found in 1936 by the Megiddo Archaeological Expedition of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, is this pagan Canaanite relic. The illustration is from a drawing by Charles B. Altman, a member of the Expedition; the leader, Mr. Gordon Loud, supplied a note of description. "It is a clay altar or shrine of the 14th-13th century B.C., from the palace of the prince of Megiddo. It was found complete, though in many pieces. The degraded animal designs and stylized palm-tree motive tend to place it in the second part of the Late Bronze period."

By permission of the Director of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago

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"INTREAT ME NOT TO LEAVE THEE"

This well-known picture of Naomi with her daughters-in-law, Ruth and Orpah, is in the Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool. Philip Calderon won a considerable reputation as a painter of Biblical and religious subjects in the 19th century. Here he has faithfully rendered the parting of the ways between Moab and Judah, where Naomi, before passing over Jordan, paused to bid a tender farewell.

"And Orpah kissed her mother in law; but Ruth clave unto her" (Ruth i, 14, 18). Then follows in the Bible story the lovely expression of loyalty and friendship which convinced Naomi that Ruth would not remain in Moab, but "was steadfastly minded to go with her," so they two journeyed on together to Bethlehem.

Philip H. Calderon. 1833-1893

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Alexandre Bida. 1808-1895

"AND THEY CAME UNTO THE COUNTRY OF MOAB"

Charles Gleyre. 1806-1874

"THEN SAID BOAZ UNTO HIS SERVANT, WHOSE DAMSEL IS THIS?"

With graceful detail two French painters have depicted these scenes from the Book of Ruth. Alexandre Bida shows the migrant Bethlehemites, Elimelech and Naomi accompanied by their sons, Mahlon and Chilion—who afterwards became the husbands of Ruth and Orpah—arriving in Moab, having been driven by famine from Judea. Charles Gleyre illustrates the first meeting of Ruth and Boaz in the barley-field at Bethlehem. It was customary in Israel for the stranger and needy to obtain permission to glean, but probably all landowners were not as gracious as Boaz. The paintings in this and the facing page have captured some of the tenderly romantic spirit of this beautiful idyll, antique but ageless in its lessons of tolerance and kindness.

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"LET ME GATHER AFTER THE REAPERS"

Here we see barley-harvesting in April near Bethlehem. So might Ruth have stood among the gleaners to bind a handful of corn when she attracted the attention of Boaz, and he was told: "It is the Moabitish damsel that came back with Naomi out of the country of Moab" (Ruth ii, 2, 6). The barley was ripe for the sickle as the two women arrived in Bethlehem, and to supply their bread the younger went out to the fields "to glean ears of corn after him in whose sight I shall find grace." Then, as now, it was usual for the young men to reap and the women to gather, so Ruth was allowed to glean with the maidens of Boaz throughout the harvest.

Photo. American Colony in Jerusalem

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"WHERE HAST THOU GLEANED TODAY?"

Returning to her home on the outskirts of Bethlehem from the traditional "fields of Boaz," this native woman bears her gleanings like Ruth of old when she "dwelt with her mother in law," Naomi (Ruth ii, 23). Peasant women in Palestine still generally wear these long voluminous dresses of dark blue cotton, girded for strenuous labour with a belt of red or striped cloth. The headdress of large square veil over a close-fitting cap affords protection from sun and wind. More picturesque than comfortable are their huddled dwellings, in this district usually of rough-hewn stone with the narrow, unglazed windows and outside stairways of a bygone age.

Photo. American Colony in Jerusalem

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Frank W. W. Topham (1838-1924)

"AS LONG AS HE LIVETH HE SHALL BE LENT TO THE LORD"

Human interest predominates in this painting by Frank Topham, The Dedication of Samuel. Hannah having brought her firstborn to Eli, the high priest in the Temple at Shiloh, presents him thus: "For this child I prayed; and the Lord hath given me my petition; therefore also I have lent him to the Lord" (I Samuel i, 27, 28). Remaining with Eli to minister in the Temple, Samuel lived in the precincts. There, year by year as he grew to manhood, Hannah visited him, bringing him a vestment, when she and his father made their customary pilgrimages to Shiloh, at that time the central sanctuary in Israel, where religious festivals were held.

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Julius Kronberg (b. 1850)

DAVID HARPING WHEN THE EVIL SPIRIT IS UPON SAUL

The shepherd-musician, youngest son of Jesse, finding at first great favour with Saul, was able to heal the melancholia that intermittently destroyed the king's peace of mind: "David took an harp, and played with his hand: so Saul was refreshed, and was well, and the evil spirit departed from him." The Swedish painter, Julius Kronberg, illustrates in his picture Saul and David (National Museum, Stockholm) the later occasion when the King's jealousy has been aroused (I Samuel xvi, 23; xviii, 10, 11) "and there was a javelin in Saul's hand." Heedless of the music, he broods over the terrible thought of murder: "I will smite David even to the wall."

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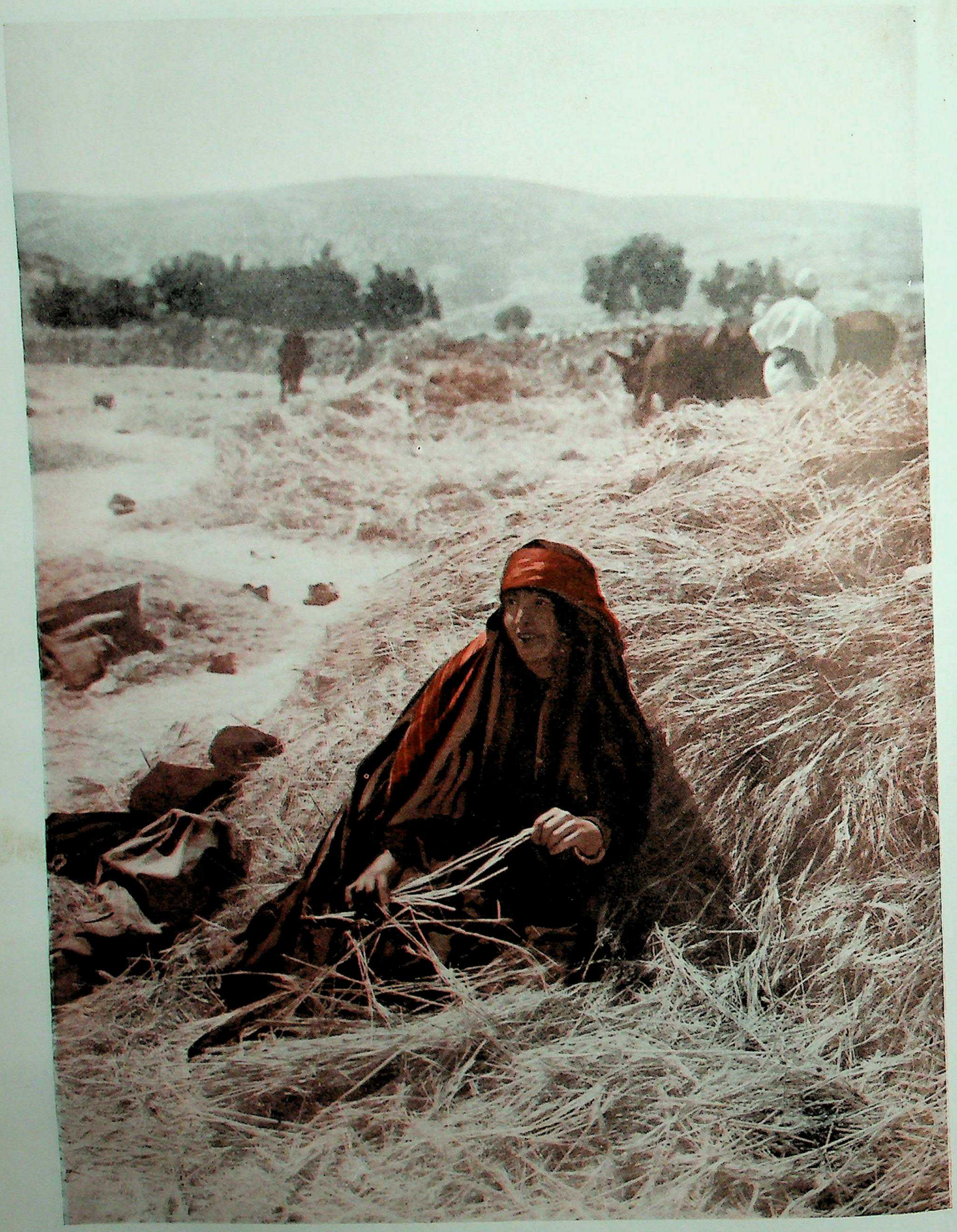

"SHE WENT DOWN UNTO THE THRESHING-FLOOR"

This peasant woman is collecting straw after it has been separated from the grain. It serves as provender for all cattle, now as in Biblical times, after it has been chopped by the threshing-sledge or trampling hoofs of the oxen. Exposed situations must always be chosen for threshing-floors where winnowing is done against the breeze. There was thus reason as well as accepted convention in Ruth's request to Boaz to spread the ample "skirt" of his cloak over her when "she lay at his feet until the morning" (Ruth iii, 6, 14 R.V.) on the "floor." He and his men were sleeping there to guard his winnowed corn from thieves—a necessary precaution.

Photo: American Colony in Jerusalem

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Ruth

The Book and Its Story

An Old-World Pastoral of Undying Loveliness and Charm

by REV. J. R. COATES, M.A.

Professor in Old Testament Language and Literature, Selly Oak Colleges, Birmingham.

FOR Englishmen there can be no better introduction to the old Hebrew book of "Ruth" than remembrance of Keats' "Ode to a Nightingale." Feeling the tears of things, and awakened to nameless longing by the song of the bird, his spirit seeks after one who will understand—and he finds what he wants in Ruth. The fact that the poet names her alone, as having known that song, reveals the depth of the impression made on him by the simple Bible tale—

Perhaps the self-same song that found a path
Through the sad heart of Ruth, when sick for home,
She stood in tears amid the alien corn.

In his survey of Oriental Literature, Goethe speaks of "Ruth" as "the loveliest little thing that has come down to us of all the epics and idylls of the past." "Its irresistible charm," he says, "has awakened in many a breast the vain desire to tell at length the story here presented with the perfection of simplicity." And he goes on to make a general remark about the Bible as a whole—the Book of Books, he calls it—suggesting that, as we read it, we live in a sort of second world, experiencing temptation, sin, illumination and salvation.

The short story is a work of art common to all the known ages of man. If it is a thing of beauty, it is a joy for ever. It unites all races in the same satisfaction. Its characters are guiding stars. In "Ruth" we have, as Professor D. B. Macdonald says in "The Hebrew Literary Genius," "the first true short story, in the exact sense, which literature knows."

Romance in the Fields of Boaz

THE little tale of country life is easily told. Under stress of famine, a Jewish farmer leaves Bethlehem for the fertile plateau across the Dead Sea. After a short time he and his two sons die, and the bereaved mother, Naomi, decides to return to her own country. One of her Moabite daughters-in-law insists on returning with her. This is Ruth, whose loyalty to Naomi is the glory of the first great scene in the book. "Intreat me not to leave thee," she cries, cleaving to her, and they come to Bethlehem in the beginning of barley harvest. The poverty of the two women is such that Ruth must go gleaning after the reapers. This leads to the second scene, in which Naomi's rich relation, Boaz, is introduced. By mere chance Ruth gleans in his field, and he shows her special kindness, so that she has a great heap of barley for Naomi at the end of the day. The romantic scene in the field prepares the way for an adventure in the night, described with unsurpassed delicacy. Ruth offers herself as wife to Boaz, and if it were a modern tale, this would be the end. But now we learn that the hero is moved by a sense of duty as well as by his love. By Hebrew law he stands second among the relatives of Naomi who have the right to marry Ruth, and the last scene shows us how all was settled according to the ancient custom, the one who came first waiving his claim. Only after that can the lovers be united, and when a son is born, he is welcomed by Naomi as the true successor of her husband. It is perhaps a later hand that has added the statement that he was also the great-grandfather of David.

Noble Traits in Ruth's Character

EVERY reader will feel that Keats has given us a picture of the Moabite girl quite different from that presented in the Bible. Not home-sickness, but heroic loyalty, is what the story indicates as her characteristic. So strong is this that it over-rules her love of home, her natural desire for children, and even her religion. She loves Naomi so whole-heartedly that, apart from her, life has no meaning. This does not weaken her, for it is not a form of self-love. On the contrary, it gives her strength. She loves the things Naomi loves, and begins to worship Naomi's God. She trusts the older woman's judgement and accepts her advice. With Ruth, obedience is freedom, because of confidence. Her attitude towards Boaz has the same quality of loyal trust. She is not seeking anything for herself. Conduct which in another might have been shameful, is for Ruth the way of purity because it is the way of duty.

The urge of family life to perpetuate itself is embodied in Naomi, and a principal *motif* of the story finds its culmination when we see the old widow with Ruth's son in her arms. It is possible to connect with this her cleverness in scheming that Boaz shall be drawn along the way of her desire. If it were not for the pure strength of Ruth's own character, and the nature of her attachment to Naomi, it might be suggested that the younger woman was sacrificed on the altar of her mother-in-law's purpose. But Ruth's loyalty vindicates her, and it is made plain that she is as pleased for Ruth's sake as for her own with the way things work out. If there were any doubt about the sincerity of her words to Ruth concerning her future, when proposing the night adventure, it would be dissipated by recalling the pressure which she put upon her to go back to her own people while they were still in the land of Moab. Indeed, as W. H. Halliday

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"WHEN THEY WERE COME TO BETHLEHEM." Hallowed place of time's greatest event, Our Lord's Nativity, Bethlehem is one of the oldest cities in Palestine. To it more than a thousand years earlier came Naomi with Ruth, ancestress of David's royal line. In their time Bethlehem was but a village inhabited by a peaceful agricultural community, headed by Boaz, "a mighty man of wealth of the family of Elimelech," Naomi's husband (Ruth ii, 1). The present prosperous town, here seen in the distance, is built on two ridges. Walled vineyards and olive groves slope to its outskirts. Interests are still mainly agricultural; apart from these there are thriving industries of mother-of-pearl and olive-wood carving for souvenirs.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

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has pointed out, in "Personal Freedom Through Personal Faith," Naomi had already shown her greatness by receiving Ruth into her family. "She was great enough to take this daughter of Moab to her heart for what she was." The fact that Ruth was willing to adopt Naomi's religion may perhaps be added, as indicating the latter's spiritual greatness.

In every speech and act, Naomi's rich kinsman shows himself a gentleman. The way he greets his reapers, and the way they answer him, his courtesy to Ruth, his self-control, his swiftness of action and fairness to a possible rival—all make him stand out as one of the most attractive men in ancient literature. That he has fallen in love with Ruth is clear from his telling the reapers to pull out some of the barley from their bundles, to make her gleaning easy. The honourable nature of his love finds perfect expression in those words spoken in the middle of the night. "Blessed be thou of the Lord, my daughter: for thou hast shewed more kindness in the latter end than at the beginning, inasmuch as thou followedst not young men, whether poor or rich. And now, my daughter, fear not; I will do to thee all that thou requirest: for all the city of my people doth know that thou art a virtuous woman."

The Place of 'Ruth' in the Hebrew Canon

FOLLOWING the pre-Christian Greek translation, the English Bible attaches "Ruth" to "Judges", because of its opening words—"Now it came to pass in the days when the judges ruled"—though these merely mean what we call "the good old times." That it was written long after the time of the Judges is obvious from the reference just given, and also from the interest shown in the ancient custom of drawing off the shoe to confirm a transaction, in days when nothing was given in writing. In the Hebrew Bible of the Jewish Church, the book is placed in the last division, called in the prologue to Ecclesiasticus "the other writings." There it forms one of the Five Rolls, which are read at the principal festivals. The Book of Ruth is the roll for Pentecost, its harvest scenes making it obviously appropriate. Another reason given is that this is the feast which commemorates the giving of the Law, and Ruth is regarded as an example of a stranger embracing Judaism. This last point has led some to regard the book as a counter-blast to the stern measures of Nehemiah and Ezra, by which Moabites were excluded from the people of God.

As to whether the Book should be regarded as having been written in those critical closing years of the 5th century B.C. or not, it seems clear that Ruth's origin must be emphasized as it is in the Book in order to enforce the principle of friendliness towards the Moabites. The prevailing note of the Old Testament in this connexion is one of hostility. Thus the oldest source of the Pentateuch ascribes Moab's origin to the disgraceful conduct of Lot (Genesis xix), and prophetic oracles against her are found in the books of Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Amos, and Zephaniah. In view of the law against admitting a Moabite—"even to the tenth generation"—into the assembly of the Lord,

A WOMAN OF BETHLEHEM. This charming matron with her kindly expression evokes thoughts of Naomi. In features, however, she is a good example of the Western type, frequently to be seen in modern Bethlehem, showing the Crusaders' strain. The city of the Nativity was long in possession of medieval Christendom. The fashion of her local headdress is also a survival of the Plantagenet period.

Photo, Dorien Leigh

which was promulgated in the time of Josiah, B.C. 621, and of the anti-Moabite utterances of Jeremiah and Zephaniah, the view may be hazarded that the Book of Ruth first saw the light in those days. But whatever its date, there is no question about its spirit, which is that of the parable of the Good Samaritan.

THE inclusion of the story in the Canon indicates the broad outlook of the Jewish Church, and the presence within it of that element which found its full expression in Christianity. The narrative owes its unique charm to its naturalness. Unlike other short stories, it is not made sententious with proverbs, or ecclesiastical with psalms. Yet, though it does not preach, the reader receives an impression of the divine ordering of human life—in a word, of Providence. Faith is not enjoined, but exemplified, and it is as much faith in man as faith in God. The Book of Ruth teaches us religion by introducing us to religious people.

NOTE. There are five places where the wording of the Authorized Version may perhaps be improved, as follow:

i, 17: "The LORD do to me what He will: not even death shall divide me from thee."
ii, 7: "Until now, without resting for a moment."
iii, 1: "Shall I not seek a settlement?"
iii, 16: "How hast thou fared, my daughter?"
iv, 5: "Thou must also buy Ruth."

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LITERARY BEAUTY OF THE BIBLE. IX

Ruth: Perfect Idyll in Prose

CONSIDERED by Goethe to be the loveliest little complete idyll that has been preserved to us from antiquity, the Book of Ruth is a masterpiece in the field of short stories—so brief that it is here given in its entirety. Though the record is from the time of the Judges, c. 1100 B.C., and for this reason is placed next in order in the Vulgate and English Versions, the skilfully suggested settings are very different. Instead of struggle and tumult, barbaric wars and cruelty, we have the peaceful, kindly community at Bethlehem, in an atmosphere redolent of the mellow sweetness of a harvest festival. The narrative presents a most attractive picture of pastoral life in ancient Israel. Moving with beautiful simplicity to the happy ending, the directness of its continuity is remarkable. The romance of Boaz and Ruth is charmingly told; their story is developed with lively variety of incident through a succession of open-air scenes. With supreme artistry the actions and colloquy describe the chief characters. There is no superfluous detail or comment.

Of the thousands of lines written in free verse by the joint translators of our English Bible Version few have a more exquisite lyrical appeal, balance and rhythm, than their rendering of the sublime entreaty, addressed by Ruth to Naomi, classic expression of devoted affection. The use of monosyllables, almost equal in weight, giving a fine sense of stability, should be noted in the last line.

NOW it came to pass in the days when the judges ruled, that there was a famine in the land. And a certain man of Beth-lehem-judah went to sojourn in the country of Moab, he, and his wife, and his two sons. And the name of the man was Elimelech, and the name of his wife Naomi, and the name of his two sons Mahlon and Chilion, Ephrathites of Beth-lehem-judah. And they came into the country of Moab, and continued there.

And Elimelech Naomi's husband died; and she was left, and her two sons. And they took them wives of the women of Moab; the name of the one was Orpah, and the name of the other Ruth: and they dwelled there about ten years. And Mahlon and Chilion died also both of them; and the woman was left of her two sons and her husband.

Then she arose with her daughters in law, that she might return from the country of Moab; for she had heard in the country of Moab how that the LORD had visited his people in giving them bread. Wherefore she went forth out of the place where she was, and her two daughters in law with her; and they went on the way to return unto the land of Judah.

And Naomi said unto her two daughters in law, Go, return each to her mother's house: the LORD deal kindly with you, as ye have dealt with the dead, and with me. The LORD grant you that ye may find rest, each of you in the house of her husband. Then she kissed them; and they lifted up their voice, and wept. And they said unto her, Surely we will return with thee unto thy people.

AND Naomi said, Turn again, my daughters: why will ye go with me? are there yet any more sons in my womb, that they may be your husbands? Turn again, my daughters, go your way; for I am too old to have an husband. If I should say, I have hope, if I should have an husband also to night, and should also bear sons; would ye tarry for them till they were grown? would ye stay for them from having husbands? nay, my daughters; for it grieveth me much for your sakes that the hand of the LORD is gone out against me.

And they lifted up their voice, and wept again: and Orpah kissed her mother in law; but Ruth clave unto her. And she said, Behold, thy sister in law is gone back unto her people, and unto her gods: return thou after thy sister in law. And Ruth said,

Intreat me not to leave thee,
Or to return from following after thee:
For whither thou goest, I will go;
And where thou lodgest, I will lodge:
Thy people shall be my people,
And thy God my God:
Where thou diest, will I die,
And there will I be buried:
The Lord do so to me, and more also,
If ought but death part thee and me.

When she saw that she was stedfastly minded to go with her, then she left speaking unto her.

SO they two went until they came to Beth-lehem. And it came to pass, when they were come to Beth-lehem, that all the city was moved about them, and they said, Is this Naomi?

And she said unto them, Call me not Naomi, call me Mara: for the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me. I went out full, and the LORD hath brought me home again empty: why then call ye me Naomi, seeing the LORD hath testified against me, and the Almighty hath afflicted me?

So Naomi returned, and Ruth the Moabitess, her daughter in law, with her, which returned out of the country of Moab: and they came to Beth-lehem in the beginning of barley harvest.

And Naomi had a kinsman of her husband's, a mighty man of wealth, of the family of Elimelech; and his name was Boaz. And Ruth the Moabitess said unto Naomi, Let me now go to the field, and glean ears of corn after him in whose sight I shall find grace. And she said unto her, Go, my daughter.

AND she went, and came, and gleaned in the field after the reapers: and her hap was to light on a part of the field belonging unto Boaz, who was of the kindred of Elimelech.

And, behold, Boaz came from Beth-lehem, and said unto the reapers, The LORD be with you. And they answered him, The LORD bless thee. Then said Boaz unto his servant that was set over the reapers, Whose damsel is this? And the servant that was set over the reapers answered and said, It is the Moabitish damsel that came back with Naomi out of the country of Moab: And she said, I pray you, let me glean and gather after the reapers among the sheaves: so she came, and hath continued even from the morning until now, that she tarried a little in the house.

Then said Boaz unto Ruth, Hearest thou not, my daughter? Go not to glean in another field, neither go from hence, but abide here fast by my maidens: Let thine eyes be on the field that they do reap, and go thou after them: have I not charged the young men that they shall not touch thee? and when thou art athirst, go unto the vessels, and drink of that which the young men have drawn.

THEN she fell on her face, and bowed herself to the ground, and said unto him, Why have I found grace in thine eyes, that thou shouldst take knowledge of me, seeing I am a stranger?

And Boaz answered and said unto her, It hath fully been shewed me, all that thou hast done unto thy mother in law since the death of thine husband: and how thou hast left thy father and thy mother, and the land of thy nativity, and art come unto a people which thou knewest not heretofore. The LORD recompense thy work, and a full reward be given thee of the LORD God of Israel, under whose wings thou art come to trust.

Then she said, Let me find favour in thy sight, my lord; for that thou hast comforted me, and for that

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thou hast spoken friendly unto thine handmaid, though I be not like unto one of thine handmaidens. And Boaz said unto her, At mealtime come thou hither, and eat of the bread, and dip thy morsel in the vinegar. And she sat beside the reapers: and he reached her parched corn, and she did eat, and was sufficed, and left.

AND when she was risen up to glean, Boaz commanded his young men, saying, Let her glean even among the sheaves, and reproach her not. And let fall also some of the handfuls of purpose for her, and leave them, that she may glean them, and rebuke her not. So she gleaned in the field until even, and beat out that she had gleaned: and it was about an ephah of barley.

And she took it up, and went into the city: and her mother in law saw what she had gleaned: and she brought forth, and gave to her that she had reserved after she was sufficed.

And her mother in law said unto her, Where hast thou gleaned to day? and where wroughtest thou? blessed be he that did take knowledge of thee. And she shewed her mother in law with whom she had wrought, and said, The man's name with whom I wrought to day is Boaz. And Naomi said unto her daughter in law, Blessed be he of the LORD, who hath not left off his kindness to the living and to the dead. And Naomi said unto her, The man is near of kin unto us, one of our next kinsmen. And Ruth the Moabitess said, He said unto me also, Thou shalt keep fast by my young men, until they have ended all my harvest. And Naomi said unto Ruth her daughter in law, It is good, my daughter, that thou go out with his maidens, that they meet thee not in any other field. So she kept fast by the maidens of Boaz to glean unto the end of barley harvest and of wheat harvest; and dwelt with her mother in law.

THEN Naomi her mother in law said unto her, My daughter, shall I not seek rest for thee, that it may be well with thee? And now is not Boaz of our kindred, with whose maidens thou wast? Behold, he winnoweth barley to night in the threshingfloor. Wash thyself therefore, and anoint thee, and put thy raiment upon thee, and get thee down to the floor: but make not thyself known unto the man, until he shall have done eating and drinking. And it shall be, when he lieth down, that thou shalt mark the place where he shall lie, and thou shalt go in, and uncover his feet, and lay thee down; and he will tell thee what thou shalt do. And she said unto her, All that thou sayest unto me I will do.

And she went down unto the floor, and did according to all that her mother in law bade her. And when Boaz had eaten and drunk, and his heart was merry, he went to lie down at the end of the heap of corn: and she came softly, and uncovered his feet, and laid her down.

And it came to pass at midnight, that the man was afraid, and turned himself: and behold, a woman lay at his feet. And he said, Who art thou? And she answered, I am Ruth thine handmaid: spread therefore thy skirt over thine handmaid; for thou art a near kinsman. And he said, Blessed be thou of the LORD, my daughter: for thou hast shewed more kindness in the latter end than at the beginning, inasmuch as thou followedst not young men, whether poor or rich. And now, my daughter, fear not; I will do to thee all that thou requirest: for all the city of my people doth know that thou art a virtuous woman. And now it is true that I am thy near kinsman: howbeit there is a kinsman nearer than I.

Tarry this night, and it shall be in the morning, that if he will perform unto thee the part of a kinsman, well; let him do the kinsman's part: but if he will not do the part of a kinsman to thee, then will I do the part of a kinsman to thee, as the LORD liveth: lie down until the morning.

AND she lay at his feet until the morning: and she rose up before one could know another. And he said, Let it not be known that a woman came into the floor. Also he said, Bring the vail that thou hast upon thee, and hold it. And when she held it, he measured six measures of barley, and laid it on her: and she went into the city. And when she came to her mother in law, she said, Who art thou, my daughter? And she told her all that the man had done to her. And she said, These six measures of barley gave he me; for he said to me, Go not empty unto thy mother in law.

Then said she, Sit still, my daughter, until thou know how the matter will fall: for the man will not be in rest, until he have finished the thing this day. Then went Boaz up to the gate, and sat him down there: and behold, the kinsman of whom Boaz spake came by; unto whom he said, Ho, such a one! turn aside, sit down here. And he turned aside, and sat down. And he took ten men of the elders of the city, and said, Sit ye down here. And they sat down.

And he said unto the kinsman, Naomi, that is come again out of the country of Moab, selleth a parcel of land, which was our brother Elimelech's: And I thought to advertise thee, saying, Buy it before the inhabitants, and before the elders of my people. If thou wilt redeem it, redeem it: but if thou wilt not redeem it, then tell me, that I may know: for there is none to redeem it beside thee; and I am after thee. And he said, I will redeem it.

THEN said Boaz, What day thou buyest the field of the hand of Naomi, thou must buy it also of Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of the dead, to raise up the name of the dead upon his inheritance. And the kinsman said, I cannot redeem it for myself, lest I mar mine own inheritance: redeem thou my right to thyself; for I cannot redeem it.

Now this was the manner in former time in Israel concerning redeeming and concerning changing, for to confirm all things; a man plucked off his shoe, and gave it to his neighbour: and this was a testimony in Israel. Therefore the kinsman said unto Boaz, Buy it for thee. So he drew off his shoe.

And Boaz said unto the elders, and unto all the people, Ye are witnesses this day, that I have bought all that was Elimelech's, and all that was Chilion's and Mahlon's, of the hand of Naomi. Moreover Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of Mahlon, have I purchased to be my wife, to raise up the name of the dead upon his inheritance, that the name of the dead be not cut off from among his brethren, and from the gate of his place: ye are witnesses this day.

And all the people that were in the gate, and the elders, said, We are witnesses. The LORD make the woman that is come into thine house like Rachel and like Leah, which two did build the house of Israel: and do thou worthily in Ephratah, and be famous in Beth-lehem: And let thy house be like the house of Pharez, whom Tamar bare unto Judah, of the seed which the LORD shall give thee of this young woman.

SO Boaz took Ruth, and she was his wife: and when he went in unto her, the LORD gave her conception, and she bare a son. And the women said unto Naomi, Blessed be the LORD, which hath not left thee this day without a kinsman, that his name may be famous in Israel. And he shall be unto thee a restorer of thy life, and a nourisher of thine old age: for thy daughter in law, which loveth thee, which is better to thee than seven sons, hath born him.

And Naomi took the child, and laid it in her bosom, and became nurse unto it. And the women her neighbours gave it a name, saying, There is a son born to Naomi; and they called his name Obed: he is the father of Jesse, the father of David.

Now these are the generations of Pharez: Pharez begat Hezron, and Hezron begat Ram, and Ram begat Amminadab, and Amminadab begat Nahshon, and Nahshon begat Salmon, and Salmon begat Boaz, and Boaz begat Obed, and Obed begat Jesse, and Jesse begat David.

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I. Samuel

I

The Book in Outline

Samuel and Saul: the Story of a Clash of Personalities

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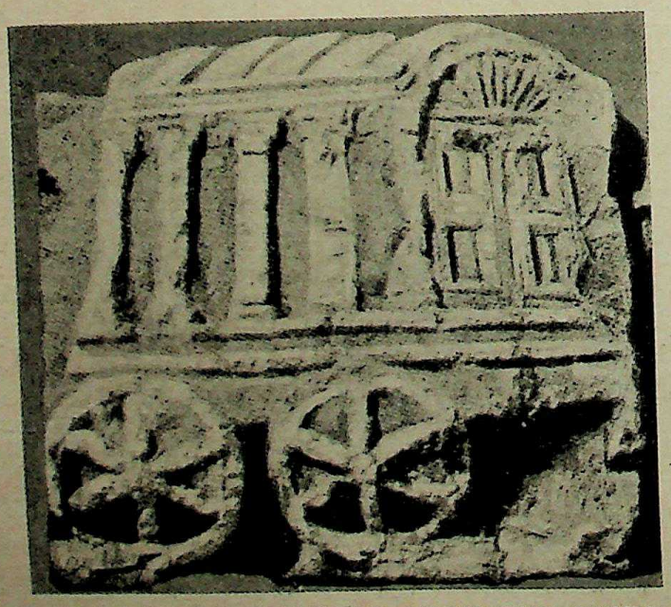
THIS book is called the "first Book of Samuel," not because Samuel wrote it, but because Samuel plays so large a part in the story which the Book tells.

Modern biographers usually commence by saying something about the parentage and even the remoter ancestry of the person whose life-story they proceed to tell. They do so because of the belief that a man's heredity has considerable influence upon his character and achievement. We understand a man better when we know something about the stock from which he has sprung. This book, which tells Samuel's story, begins in much the same way, for the first chapter introduces us to his parents and his home.

Samuel's father was an Ephraimite, Elkanah by name; his mother's name was Hannah. We know very little about Elkanah. There are little points in the story which seem to suggest that he was a fairly prosperous man, and also a religious man of the conventional type, for every year he took up his family "to worship and to sacrifice to the Lord of Hosts at Shiloh." But the really formative influence in Samuel's life was not Elkanah his father, but Hannah, his mother. Hannah was one of the women saints of the Old Testament. She is to be ranked with Jochebed the mother of Moses and with New Testament mothers like Elizabeth, the mother of John the Baptist, and Eunice the mother of Timothy, and Mary, the mother of Jesus. Samuel was given in answer to his mother's prayers, and was made what he became by his mother's teaching and example.

ELKANAH'S home was situated in Ramah "in the highlands of Ephraim," and in later years Ramah became Samuel's home town. The home was, as has been suggested, a moderately prosperous home, and—at any rate in a conventional sense—a religious home. But it could scarcely be called a happy home. And the secret of its unhappiness was this—Elkanah had married two wives. It may be that Peninnah was a kind of secondary or subordinate wife. It is quite clear that Hannah was at any rate the favourite wife. But the fact that Elkanah had two wives poisoned and embittered the life of the home. For Peninnah was jealous of Hannah because she came first in the affections of Elkanah; and Hannah was envious of Peninnah for Peninnah had children while she had none. For it must be remembered that, amongst the Hebrews, children were counted as the heritage of the Lord. They were the signs and proofs of the Divine favour. Childlessness, on the other hand, was considered to be a reproach and a stigma. "Give me children," cried Rachel, "or I die" Hannah was in the same pitiable plight with Rachel—she was a married woman without a child. And Peninnah continually taunted her with her childlessness. "She provoked her sore for to make her fret" (i, 6).



"THE ARK OF THE LORD UPON THE CART." Though no trace of the Ark of the Covenant remains, it is memorialized by this sculptured block from a synagogue of Greco-Roman times at Capernaum. The Ark is represented on a cart as it was sent away in fear by the plague-smitten Philistines. Through the Vale of Sorek the harnessed kine took it to Beth-shemesh within Israel's borders.

Photo, Department of Antiquities, Jerusalem

Samuel the Answer to Hannah's Prayer

ONE year when the household had gone up to Shiloh to sacrifice and when, perhaps, Peninnah's taunts had been more than usually biting, Hannah went into the tabernacle in great bitterness of soul, and prayed to God to take away her reproach. As she prayed, her lips moved, though no sound issued from them, and the tears coursed down her cheeks. The old High Priest Eli, observing her, thought she was drunk and spoke roughly to her. But when Hannah protested she was not drunk but had been pouring out her soul before the Lord, the old priest gave her his blessing, and prayed that God would grant her petition. God heard Hannah's prayer and in process of time a little son was born to her to whom she gave the name of Samuel, because she said "I have asked him of the Lord."

In her prayer for a son, Hannah had promised that if a son were given to her she would look upon him as consecrated to God from his birth. The story tells us how scrupulously and faithfully she fulfilled her vow. She kept Samuel with her until he was weaned—probably until he was about

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WITHIN THE CIRCUIT OF SAMUEL. From the height of Nebi Samwil, on which is a site identified with Mizpeh of Benjamin, this view extends north over the hill of Gibeon to the region of Ramallah and Bethel. It was at Mizpeh that Samuel, last of the Judges in Israel, assembled the people before the defeat of the Philistines and near it set up the memorial stone, Ebenezer. At Mizpeh he proclaimed Saul king. El Jib, the village seen on the left of the terraced hill, is on the site of Gibeon. Through this country (I Samuel vii, 16) Samuel "went from year to year in circuit" from Ramah, his home.

Photo, W. F. Taylor

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three years old—and then she dedicated him to God's service. She "brought him unto the house of the Lord in Shiloh and the child was young. And the child did minister unto the Lord before Eli the priest" (I Samuel, i, 24; ii, 11.).

Eli, the high priest, was a pious but a weak man. At the time when the child Samuel came to share in the service of the Temple, Eli was old and getting blind. In consequence of his age and increasing blindness, he was compelled to delegate some of his functions to his sons Hophni and Phinehas. But if the father was weak, the sons were wicked. Priests though they were, the story stigmatizes them as "sons of Belial who knew not the Lord." They were avaricious, grasping and vicious men and by their conduct they made men "abhor the offering of the Lord"; they brought religion into disrepute and contempt. Reports of their doings came into their father's ears and he feebly remonstrated with them, but they disregarded their father's entreaties and went on with their wicked ways. A man of God came to Eli with a solemn warning that the wickedness of his sons would end in their death and the taking away of the priesthood from his family—but even this stern warning failed to alter things (ii, 27-36).

Such was the religious condition of affairs when Samuel was brought as a little child to minister to the Lord before Eli. It is to be noticed that he did not belong to the priestly family. He was of the tribe of Ephraim, not of Levi. What exactly his duties in the tabernacle were we are not told. Perhaps he attended personally on Eli himself. It was a dangerous environment for a child to be in. But Hannah still exercised watchful care over him, for we read that each year when she came up to Shiloh for the feast she brought with her a little robe for the growing boy, and it is safe to assume that during these annual visits this godly mother did more than care for her boy's outward appearance, she also watched for his soul.

It was during these years of Samuel's childhood, when he was engaged in the Temple service, that that incident occurred which is perhaps the best known, because popularized by a familiar hymn. The boy had laid himself down to sleep when he heard a voice calling "Samuel." Thinking it was Eli who called, Samuel got up and ran to him, for Eli by this time was old and nearly blind. "Here I am, for thou calledst me," said the lad. But Eli answered: "I called not, my son: lie down again." Once again the voice called "Samuel." Once again Samuel ran to the old and feeble priest, and once again Eli denied that he had called him at all. A third time the voice cried "Samuel." When the lad presented himself for the third time before Eli, the truth dawned upon the old priest. It was God who was calling Samuel. So he bade the boy go and lie down again and if the voice called him once more he was to reply: "Speak, Lord; for thy servant heareth." Samuel did as he was bidden and the Lord told him of the doom that was about to fall upon the house of Eli. When morning came Eli called for Samuel and asked him what the message was that God had communicated to him. The boy may well have hesitated about telling Eli because of the pain it would give him. But when Eli solemnly charged him to keep back nothing of what God had said, the boy told him "every whit and hid nothing from him." Even the announcement of the impending doom did not stir Eli to activity. He made no attempt to restrain the wickedness of his sons. With a feeble submissiveness he said, "It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good" (iii, 1-18).

THIS incident had more significance for Samuel than it had for Eli. For the first time Samuel realized that God had spoken to him. For the first time he realized he had been in direct and immediate communion with God. From this time forth we can believe that Samuel kept his ears open for every accent of the Divine voice. And he did not listen in vain. "Samuel grew," we read, "and the Lord was with him, and did let none of his words fall to the ground." And it was not long before all Israel knew that in Samuel they had a man in close touch with God. As the sacred writer puts it, "Samuel was established to be a prophet of the Lord."

I. SAMUEL: A SYNOPSIS

Eli and Samuel

	Chapters
Birth, Dedication and Call of Samuel	i—iii
Philistine Invasion, Capture and Return of the Ark	iv—vii, 1
Samuel as Ruler and Judge ...	vii, 3-17

Introduction of the Monarchy

Israel demands a King	viii
Saul anointed by Samuel and elected King	ix—x
Saul delivers Jabesh-gilead and is made King at Gilgal	xi
Samuel's Farewell	xii
Saul's first Campaign against the Philistines	xiii—xiv

Saul and David

Saul's Encounter with Amalek ...	xv, 1-9
Rejection of Saul for disobedience	xv, 10-31
David anointed by Samuel and brought to Saul	xvi
David and Goliath	xvii
Saul's Jealousy	xviii—xix
David and Jonathan	xx
David's Flight from Court ...	xxi

David the Outlaw

David's Adventures and Saul's Pursuit	xxii—xxvi
David at Gath	xxvii
Saul and the Witch of Endor ...	xxviii, 3-25
Philistine Invasion of Israel ...	xxix
The Amalekites Spoil Ziklag ...	xxx
Death of Saul and his Sons ...	xxxi

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"MAIDENS GOING OUT TO DRAW WATER." These women of the Judean moorland are going down to the well for their evening supply of water. A procession such as this was encountered by Saul and his servant on the hill outside the city of Ramah, where Samuel dwelt. The girls directed the young men to the Prophet, returned that day to his home (I Samuel ix, 10-13). The object of the visit was to seek guidance from the seer that would help them to find a lost herd of asses, but the meeting proved a momentous one for Saul. While he was being entertained he was told of his destined kingship.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

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WHERE THE PHILISTINES TOOK THE ARK OF GOD. South of Jaffa and not far north of Askelon is the village of Ashdod, about three miles from the Mediterranean. The name survives to mark the approximate site of the once great coastal city of the Philistines. There they took the Ark of the Covenant, captured from the Israelites, and "brought it into the house of Dagon" (I Samuel v, 2). Virtual destruction of the idol and an outbreak of plague determined the people of Ashdod to send the Ark to Gath, inland city of Philistia.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

Next we see how God's announcement of doom was fulfilled in the fate that overtook Eli and his sons.

We must remember that the people of Israel did not enjoy anything like peaceful possession of Canaan. The original inhabitants of the country resented the presence of the invaders and ever and again made war upon them. The situation in Palestine in Samuel's day was curiously like the situation in Palestine today, where the original Arab inhabitants of the country fiercely resent the presence of the intruding Jew. In the days with which the Book of Samuel deals, the people who gave the Israelites most trouble were the Philistines—a people who occupied the sea coast on the south-west of Canaan. It happened that the hostility between Philistine and Hebrew flamed out into war in the latter days of Eli and in a battle fought near Aphek the people of Israel were badly beaten. After the defeat, a council of war was held and it was determined to send for the ark of the Lord from Shiloh. They imagined that the presence of the ark would command the presence and aid of God Himself.

There were great rejoicings in the camp of the Israelites when the ark arrived. There were corresponding fears in the camp of the Philistines, for they shared in the superstition that the ark ensured God's presence and they remembered how God had smitten the Egyptians with all manner of plagues. It was with light hearts that the Israelites resumed the fight, but the Philistines fought with the courage of something like despair. The upshot was that the defeat of one day became the rout and slaughter of the next, for thirty thousand footmen, we are told, fell on the field. Hophni and Phinehas were themselves killed, and—worst calamity of all—the ark of God was taken.

Eli seems to have been sitting by the gate of the city of Shiloh, waiting for news of the result of the fighting. When a young man of the tribe of Benjamin who had managed to escape reached Shiloh and told the tragic news to Eli, the old man—ninety-eight years old by this time and stone blind—fell backward off his seat and broke his neck and died. When Phinehas' wife heard that she was widowed, she gave her newborn child the name of Ichabod—she felt the glory had departed from Israel (Chapter iv).

The culminating point of the tragedy—so far, at any rate, as Eli and the wife of Phinehas were concerned—was the taking of the ark of God. The old man had stood up to the shock of defeat, and even to the announcement of the death of his two sons—it was the news that the ark of God had been taken that killed him. And so, according to the word of the Lord, the doom that had been pronounced on the house of Eli found its fulfilment.

BUT if its loss was a tragedy to the Israelites, its capture brought no blessing to the Philistines. In seven months they were glad to get rid of it. For when after the battle, they carried it off and brought it to Ashdod and set it in the house of Dagon, next morning when they came to worship they found the image of Dagon on its face before the ark. The following morning something worse still had happened, not only had the image of Dagon fallen, but his head and hands were cut off so that only the stump was left. And it was not simply that these mysterious disasters befel their fish-god. The people of Ashdod themselves began to suffer. A plague of boils broke out, and the people said it was all due to the presence of the ark. So they hastily sent the ark off to Gath. But the same thing

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happened in Gath, the people both small and great were smitten, and tumours broke out upon them. The people of Gath were only too glad to pass the ark on to the people of Ekron. The Ekronites, who had heard of the plagues that had fallen on the people of Ashdod and Gath, did not want to receive it, but apparently they were allowed no option, and the same results followed so that "the cry of the city went up to heaven."

The Ark's Return from Captivity

AT last the lords of the Philistines gathered together in council and came to the conclusion that the only thing to do with the Ark was to send it back again with an offering of jewels of gold which they hoped would turn away God's wrath from them. So they laid the Ark upon a new cart and allowed the two milch kine that were harnessed to it to choose their own way. The kine chose the way that led to Beth-shemesh. But it wasn't there it found its resting-place. The irreverence of the men of Beth-shemesh brought trouble upon them. So ultimately the ark found its resting-place in the home of Abinadab in the hill and his son Eleazar was sanctified to keep the Ark of the Lord. And there it remained until, twenty years later, it was brought with rejoicing into the city of David.

The victory of the Philistines seems to have been followed by the overthrow of the sanctuary at Shiloh and the subjugation of the people of Israel. "And the time was long," says the narrative, and during this long time we hear little or nothing about Samuel. That is to say, of the interval between boyhood and manhood we know practically nothing—except that we may gather from the twentieth verse in Chapter iii, that his reputation as a man in touch with God must gradually have spread until all Israel from Dan to Beer-sheba "knew that Samuel was established to be a prophet of the Lord."

The next time Samuel is specifically referred to he appears before us as the acknowledged leader of Israel. Apparently the disasters they had suffered had moved the people to something like penitence. They "lamented after the Lord," we are told. To a people in this mood a man of God could speak effectively. And Samuel did so speak. He told the people if they would only put away their false gods and repent them of their apostasies and really return to God, God would give them deliverance from Philistine oppression. So the people put away the Baalim and Ashtaroth and served the Lord only.

Samuel then bade the people come together to Mizpeh. The object was to observe a day of national repentance. The Philistines, hearing of this great assembly, concluded that the Israelites meant to rebel against their rule. So they prepared for war. The Israelites fell into something like panic, but, encouraged by Samuel's exhortations and prayers, they prepared to meet the Philistine attack. But the Lord thundered with a great thunder that day upon the Philistines and discomfited them. The result was they were smitten down before Israel, and Samuel, to commemorate the great deliverance, set up a stone and called it "Eben-ezer," saying "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us." This battle is the only military achievement associated with the name of Samuel, but so far as its effects were concerned, it was a decisive battle, for the

"TO BE COOKS AND TO BE BAKERS." When Samuel told the Israelites that their wished-for king would be a tyrant, making the people serve him instead of improving their lot, he stressed as an ill the removal of their daughters to be cooks in the royal palaces (I Samuel viii, 13). Then, as now, it was no hardship to prepare the family food in their own tents. These Beduin women are cooking the chief meal of the day, taken at sunset. In the foreground one is kneading the bread to be baked over the ashes on an iron plate. Kitchen utensils are primitive as ever.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

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Philistines were subdued and "they came no more within the border of Israel . . . all the days of Samuel."

Dean Stanley thinks that it was this battle that established Samuel as "Judge" in Israel. He had been recognized as a prophet before; now he became the real ruler of Israel. He continued to live at Ramah, his home town. But periodically he went on circuit to Beth-el and Gilgal and Mizpeh and he "judged Israel in all those places" (vii, 16).

Again there follows an interval of silence in Samuel's personal history. If the old saying is true that "blessed is the nation that has no history," we may conclude that the years of Samuel's judgeship were good days for Israel. They were days of peace abroad and strict justice at home. But we hear nothing definite and specific about Samuel until he is an old man. In his age, the burden of rule grew heavy and he brought in his two sons to assist him. But the sons did not follow in their father's steps. "They turned aside after lucre and took bribes and perverted judgement." It was the decrepitude of Samuel and the misconduct of his sons that gave rise to the demand for a king which now made itself heard in Israel. The elders of the people came to Samuel in Ramah and told him that the people desired to have a king as other nations had. Their demand hurt Samuel. The thing "displeased" him. But after praying to the Lord, he acceded to the demand, after solemnly warning them of the things they were to expect once a kingship was established. From this point onwards, the Book is mainly concerned with the history of the kingship, and the two chief actors in the story which it tells are Saul and David.

Saul Becomes the Lord's Anointed

SAMUEL, however, had still his part to play. It was by him that both Saul and David were anointed king and in Saul's case he continued to be the king's counsellor and adviser. Chapters ix and x describe the events which culminated in Saul's election to the throne. They open with a curious story about Saul, accompanied by one of his father's servants, being sent in search of certain asses which had strayed. They searched through the country of the tribe of Ephraim and then through that of Benjamin, but all in vain. At a certain point Saul suggested they should give up the search lest his father, Kish, should cease to worry about his lost asses and begin to worry about them.

They happened to be near Ramah, Samuel's home, and the servant suggested that before abandoning the

"THERE THEY MADE SAUL KING." On the west of Jordan, near Jericho, once stood Gilgal. All that marks its location today is a mass of broken stones by this immense tree. First camping-place of the Israelites in Canaan and Joshua's headquarters, Gilgal was an important city in the time of Samuel, the eastern limit of his circuit when he judged Israel. After Saul had been chosen and proclaimed king at Mizpeh, the prophet said, "Come and let us go to Gilgal and renew the kingdom there" (I Samuel xi, 14, 15). Accordingly the people re-assembled; "and all the men of Israel rejoiced greatly."

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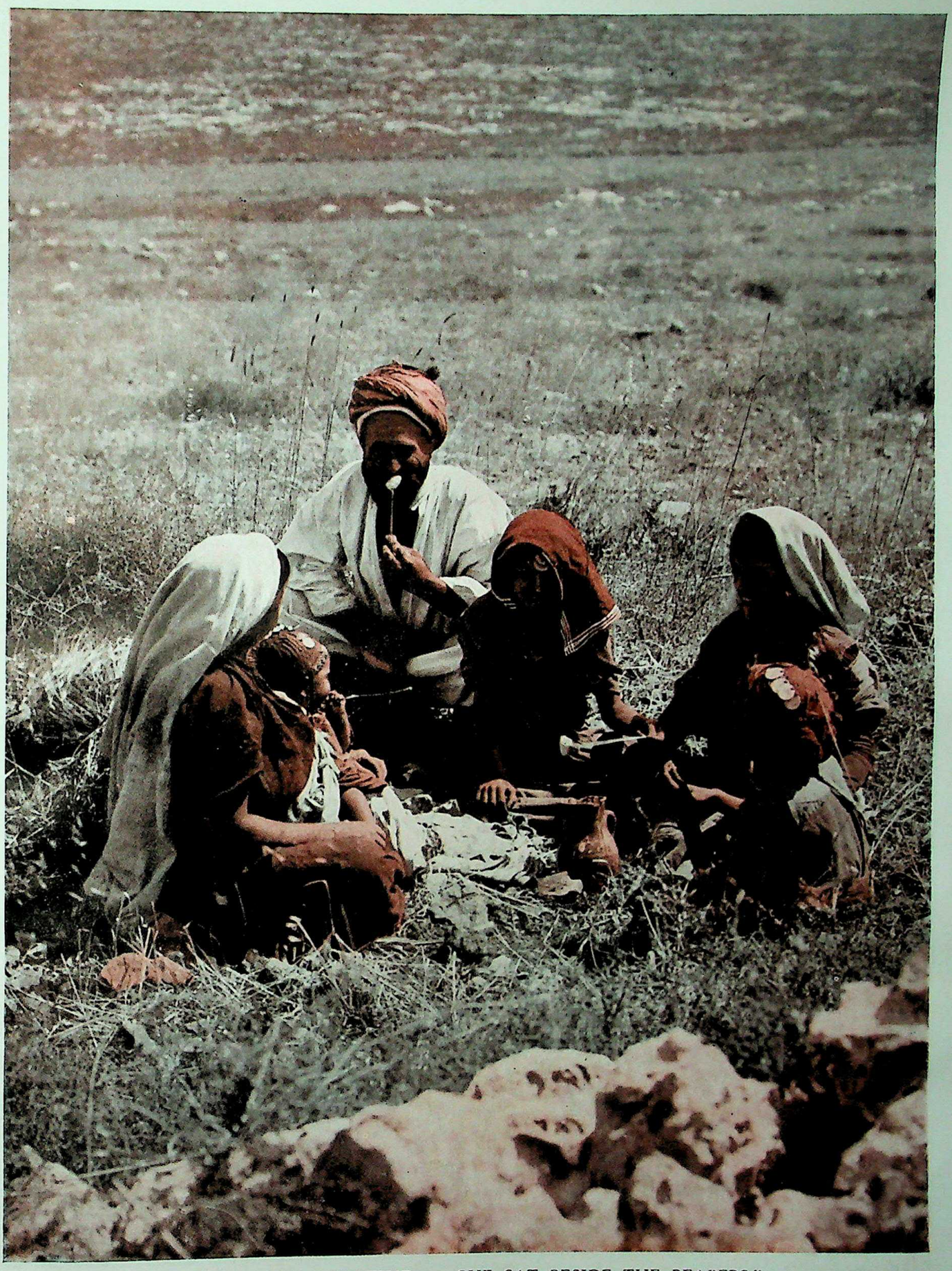

"AT MEALTIME . . . SHE SAT BESIDE THE REAPERS"

It was to such a simple meal in the harvest field as this that Ruth was invited by Boaz. "Eat of the bread, and dip thy morsel in the vinegar" (Ruth ii, 14). The parched corn which he handed to her was barley roasted whole, still a favourite cereal; vinegar was a usual condiment. Boaz showed rare charity and tolerance, when, as an orthodox Israelite of high standing, he invited a woman of Moab, land of false gods, to eat with himself and his people. He acknowledged her as a believer in the Lord God of Israel, under whose wings she had found refuge. He thus put the religious spirit above the conventional letter of the Law, which would have kept her apart as a heathen.

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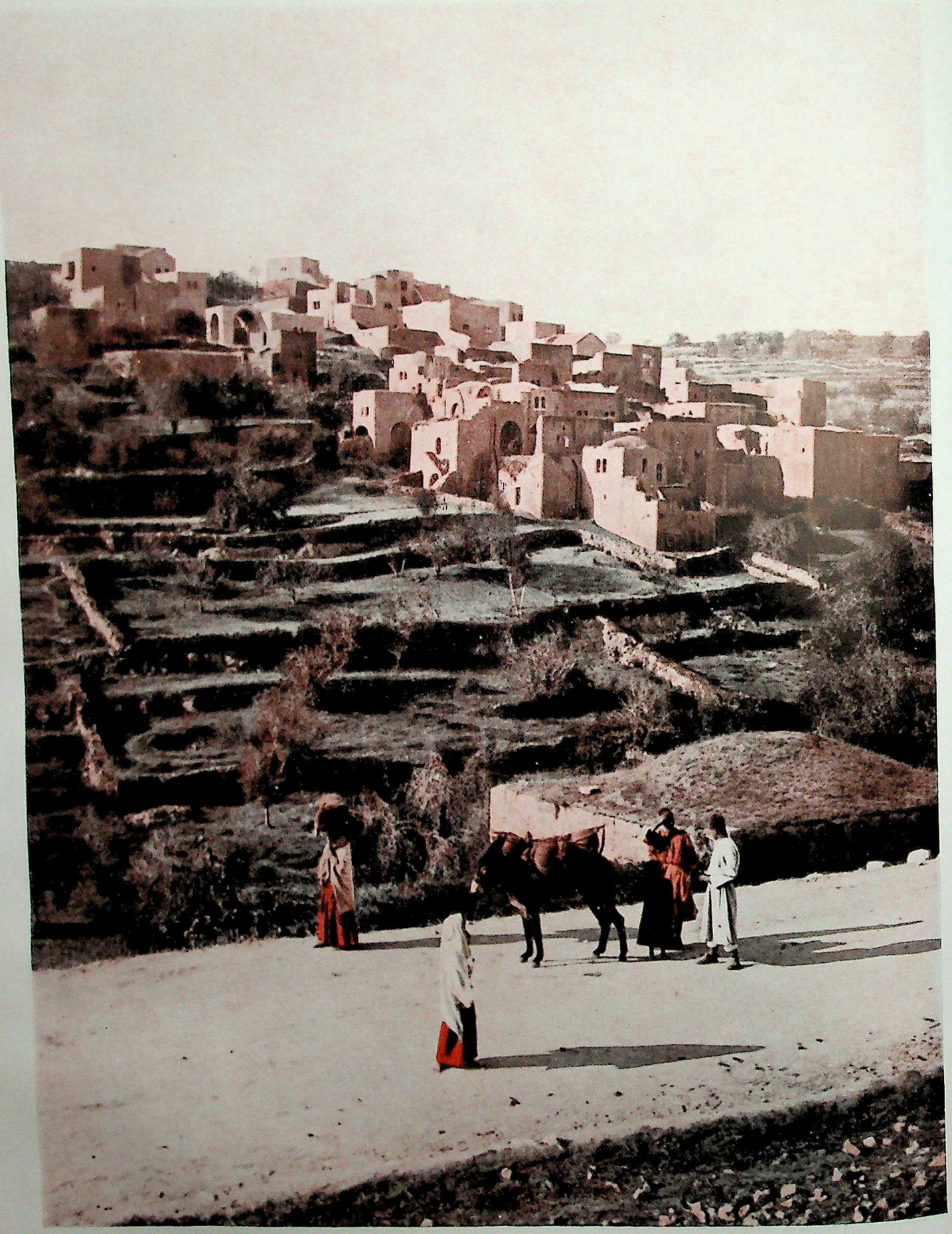

WHERE THE ARK ABODE IN THE HOUSE OF ABINADAB

Kirjath-Jearim, "city of forests," sanctuary and frontier town of Judah—where "the Ark of the Lord" was taken after it had been returned by the Philistines in the time of Samuel—has been located at the village of Abu Ghosh about nine miles from Jerusalem on the Jaffa road. Seen in the centre of the skyline is the church which was built by the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem in the 12th century, during the period of the Crusades, to mark the supposed site of "the house of Abinadab in the hill" (I Samuel vii, 1). From that house, after twenty years, David brought up the Ark to Zion with thanksgiving and rejoicing and set it in the tabernacle.

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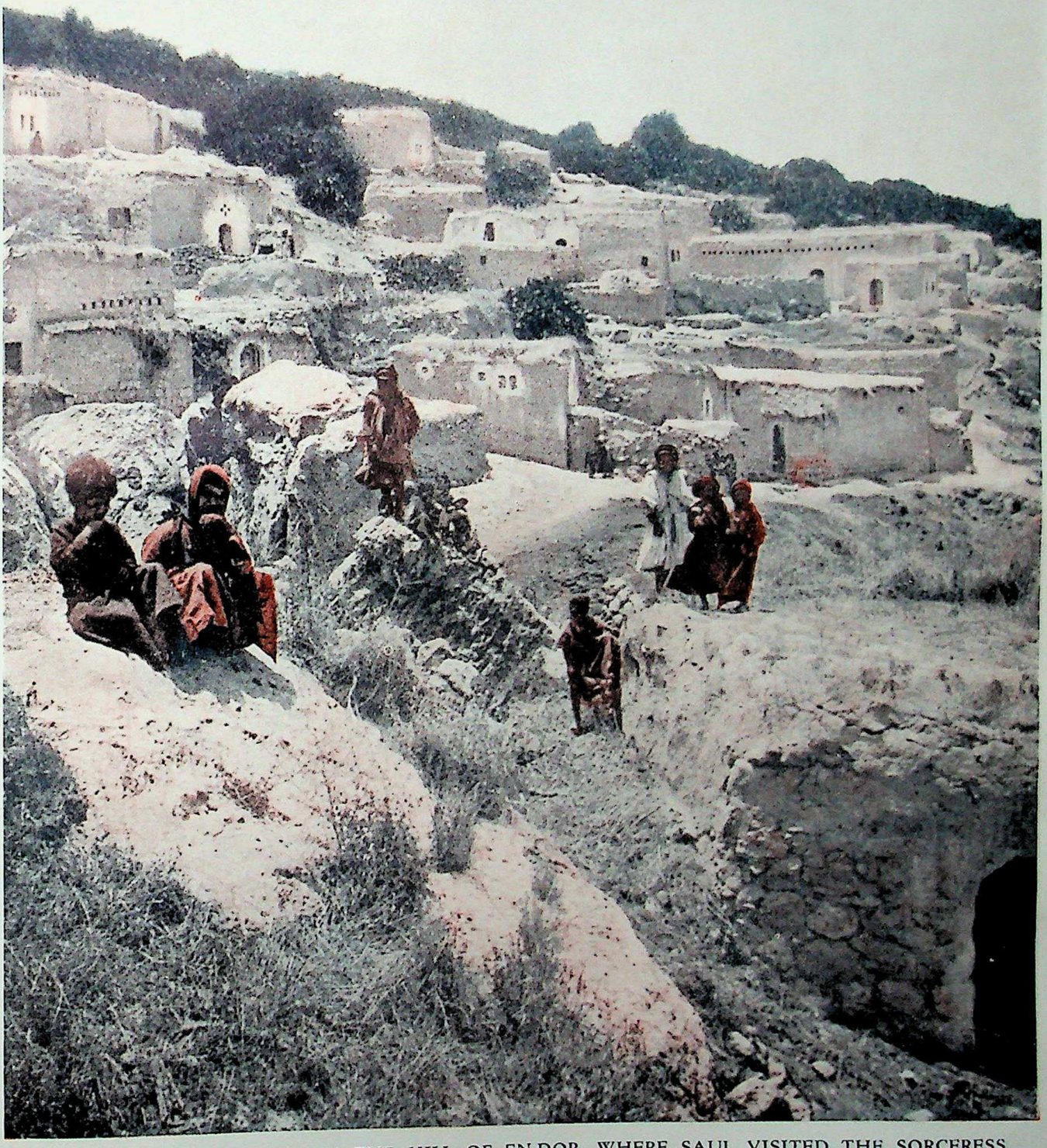

ON THE HILL OF EN-DOR, WHERE SAUL VISITED THE SORCERESS

A few miles south of Mount Tabor and east of the Plain of Esdraelon is the village of En-dor. It consists of squalid clay huts and a few caverns. One of the latter might be associated with the scene on the eve of the disastrous battle of Gilboa when Saul inquired of his fate from the ghost of Samuel raised by the woman possessed with a familiar spirit (I. Samuel xxviii, 7-20). Though sorcery was prohibited by the Deuteronomic code and Saul himself had put away necromancers and "wizards out of the land," then, even as now, there was superstitious belief and desire for divination by magical power, or medium, before some critical event.

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"GO FORTH, O YE DAUGHTERS OF ZION"

The evening sunshine sharply defines the south-east angle of the Temple Area and casts long shadows behind the sombrely-clad women striding down the hill towards their homes on the outskirts of Jerusalem. This view, with its city of domes and minarets, is utterly changed from that which King David saw when he rode up part of this same approach with his men to take "the stronghold of Zion" (II. Samuel v, 7) from the Jebusites; but fundamentally changeless in habit and outlook are these market-sellers, who in the morning brought in their fruit and vegetables and now return with empty baskets slung from head or shoulders.

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search they should consult the man of God. Saul at first hesitated, because he did not think he had a present worthy to offer to the seer. But his scruples were overcome and he agreed to consult Samuel. It happened that there was a sacrificial feast that day and Samuel was at home. So Saul and Samuel met. But it was no accidental meeting, for it had been revealed to Samuel that he would meet with a Benjamite stranger, and this stranger was the man God had chosen to be king over Israel.

THE first thing Samuel did was to set Saul's mind at rest about the lost asses. They had been found. Then he brought Saul into the festal chamber and set him in the "chiefest place." Nothing seems to have been said by Samuel to Saul that day. But early in the morning of the next day, Samuel told him privately of the high destiny God had in store for him. "Is it not," he said, "that the Lord hath anointed thee to be prince over his inheritance?" Whereupon Samuel anointed him with oil and kissed him. Saul was incredulous that such a high destiny should really be his, so Samuel gave him three signs to prove that his words were true. All three signs were fulfilled that day, the concluding and most convincing sign being that, on meeting a band of prophets, the spirit of God came mightily upon Saul and he prophesied with them.

CRAFTSMEN PROHIBITED BY THE PHILISTINES IN ISRAEL. With primitive tools these swordmakers of Jerusalem turn out blades of first-class quality. During Saul's kingship, when the Israelites fought Philistine supremacy, no smith was allowed in their land. "For the Philistines said, Lest the Hebrews make them swords or spears: So it came to pass in the day of battle that there was neither sword nor spear found in the hand of any of the people" (I. Samuel xiii, 19, 22). Their available arms were metal-tipped goads and axes, slings and arrows.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

This first designation to the kingship was secret. Seven days later however Samuel summoned the people together before the Lord to Mizpeh and there they cast lots to discover who the Lord's chosen might be.

All the People shouted 'God Save the King!'

OUT of the tribes, the tribe of Benjamin was taken; out of the tribe of Benjamin the family of the Matri was taken; out of the family of the Matri, Saul the son of Kish was taken. At first, Saul could not be found, for shrinking from the burden of the office, he had hidden himself "among the stuff." When, however, he was discovered and brought forward, he looked every inch a king, for he was a goodly young man and from his shoulders and upward he was higher than the rest of the people, and all the people shouted and said: "God save the king" (x, 24).

But Saul had still to prove his mettle. The opportunity was not long in coming. Nahash the Ammonite made an attack on the people of Jabesh-Gilead. He announced his intention, once he had got possession of the city, of putting out the eyes of its inhabitants. The people of Jabesh-Gilead sent out a cry for help, which came unto the ears of Saul. He sent out a call to the people of Israel to follow him to the rescue of the beleaguered people. He divided his extemporized army into three companies and fell upon the Ammonites and scattered them. There were no longer any hesitations about his right to rule. The people went to Gilgal and there they renewed their vows of allegiance. Without dissentient, the people made Saul king before the Lord in Gilgal.

Having seen Saul firmly seated upon his throne, Samuel made his farewell speech to the people over whom he had ruled so long. He called them to witness that he had ruled justly, that he had wronged nobody, that he had defrauded nobody, that he had oppressed nobody, that he had taken a bribe from nobody. And the people bore witness that all the old prophet said was true. There was not a blot upon his

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escutcheon. Then the old man charged them to be true to Jehovah. All would go well with them if only they faithfully obeyed their God. As for himself, although he would no longer be their ruler, he would not cease to pray for them, but would continue to instruct them in the good and right way.

CENTURIES later, Josiah Quincy, when laying down his office as Mayor of Boston, made the same kind of challenge to the people of that American city that Samuel made to the people of Israel. "Here I stand," said he. "Witness against me today. Whose ox have I taken or whose ass have I taken? Whom have I defrauded? Whom have I oppressed? At whose hands have I received a bribe to blind mine eyes therewith?" And the people replied: "Thou hast not defrauded us, nor oppressed us, nor taken aught of any man." Happy the man who when laying down his work and looking back has a conscience void of offence toward God and man.

The early days of Saul's reign promised well. The people flattered themselves that they had done well in asking for a king to rule over them. For, quite early in his reign, he inflicted a heavy defeat upon the Philistines, Israel's hereditary foes. The Philistines had reduced Israel to a sore and pitiable plight. They had disarmed the people and, to make re-armament impossible, no smith was allowed to carry on his trade in Israel. Only a few possessed arms. The rest possessed nothing except the instruments they used to cultivate the ground. To attempt under those circumstances to break the yoke of the Philistines seemed a mad and hopeless enterprise. Only some six hundred men rallied to Saul's banner. The great majority of the people refused to have anything to do with the business, but hid themselves in caves and thickets and amongst the rocks. But there is no restraint with God to save by many or by few.

"POMEGRANATES WITH PLEASANT FRUITS." Mellowing at the time of vintage in Palestine, the fruit of the pomegranate presents a decorative appearance amidst its dark-green leaves. It was naturally chosen as a model for architectural ornamentation from early Biblical times. Usually of small growth, the tree occasionally attains a size comparable with the one which was evidently a landmark in Gibeah under which Saul encamped (I. Samuel xiv, 2), while waiting to give battle to the Philistines early in the campaign.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

It was by a daring exploit carried out by Jonathan (Saul's son) and his armour-bearer that the victory was made possible. They stole out of the camp secretly and unobserved and took by surprise one of the Philistine garrisons. The capture of this post caused confusion amongst the Philistines, and Saul, taking advantage of the confusion, fell upon them with his six hundred men. Seeing that the Philistines were being defeated, the Hebrews who were arrayed with them changed sides, other people who had hidden themselves came out of their hiding-places and joined in the pursuit. It was a great victory and brought relief to Israel—though it did not succeed in breaking the power of the Philistines (Chapter xiv).

First Indication of Saul's Inadequacy

BUT two things happened in connexion with this first clash with the Philistines which illustrate a certain weakness in Saul's character. The first was this. Samuel had arranged to meet him at Gilgal in order to offer sacrifice to God. Because Samuel did not come quite as soon as he expected, Saul became impatient and offered the sacrifices himself. He had no sooner finished than Samuel himself appeared. In Saul's impatience and impetuosity, Samuel saw proof that the kingdom would not finally remain with Saul and his family.

And the second was this. Saul was so anxious to turn the defeat into a rout that he laid under a curse any man who should stop from the pursuit in order to take food. It was a foolish and shortsighted command in any case, for the people became too faint to take real advantage of their victory. But it so happened that Jonathan, the king's son, to whose adventurous daring the victory was really due, had not heard of his father's command. So, seeing some wild honey, "he put forth the end of the rod that was in his hand and dipped it in an honeycomb and put his hand to his mouth; and his eyes were enlightened." This inadvertent disobedience of Jonathan would have resulted in his death had it not been for the intervention of the people. Just as Jepthah, because of his rash and foolish vow, felt constrained to sacrifice his daughter, so Saul, because of his rash and foolish oath, felt he must slay Jonathan his son. But the people rose in revolt against such wickedness. "There shall not one hair of his head fall to the ground," they said, "for he hath wrought with God this day."

Taking advantage of the respite this victory brought from the Philistine menace, Saul fought against the

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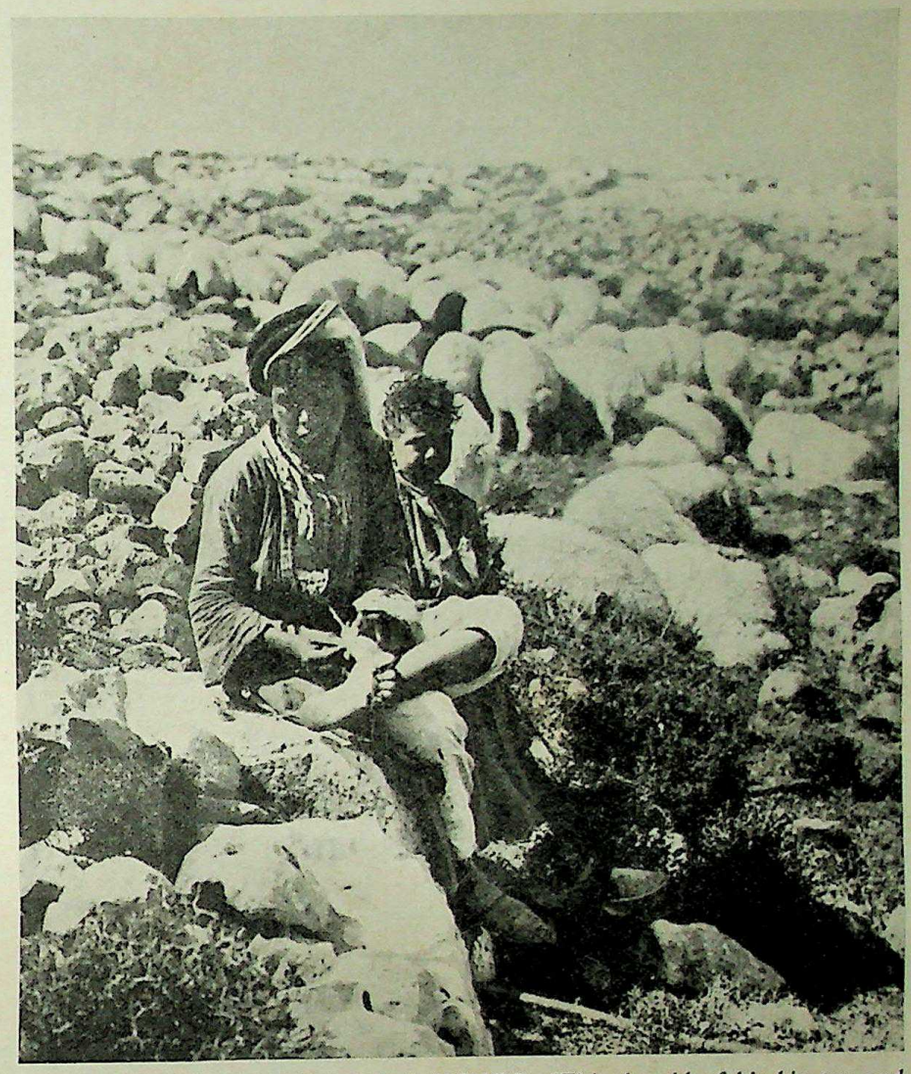
enemies of Israel on every side—against Moab and against the children of Ammon and against Edom, and in every case with success. But this constant fighting entailed its price. What Samuel had predicted took place. There was something like conscription in Israel, for "when Saul saw any mighty man, or any valiant man, he took him."

Then came a campaign which finally proved Saul's unfitness to rule. Samuel commanded him to undertake a campaign against Amalek. It was to be a campaign of punishment for what Amalek did to the Hebrew people during their passage through the wilderness. And it was to be a campaign of extermination. We need not regard Samuel's order "to destroy utterly," and "to slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass" as representing the will of God. We know that the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ could never issue such a command. But Samuel did not live in the light of the knowledge of the glory of God which has been revealed to us in the face of Jesus Christ. Samuel's ideas of God were crude and primitive. A bloody revenge did not seem inconsistent with the character of God as he thought of Him. What we have in this command is not God's will, but Samuel's very mistaken conception of it.



MAKING "THE HOLLOW OF A SLING." With the aid of his big toe and a smooth stone this boy is converting some fleece-yarn into a sling. In David's time this device was a military weapon as well as a shepherd's defence from prowling beasts, and a means for recalling straying sheep by dropping stones in front of them. The pad which holds the missile being netted or woven in concave shape was called "the hollow" (I. Samuel xxv, 29 R.V.). Loops for the fingers terminate the strings.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

But to return to the story itself. Saul having heard Samuel's command attacked the Amalekites and won a complete and overwhelming victory. He took Agag the king prisoner, and though he destroyed the people with the edge of the sword, he kept the best of the sheep and the oxen and the fatlings and the lambs. When he returned home bringing all this spoil along with him, Samuel asked what the bleating of the sheep and the lowing of the oxen meant.

'To Obey is Better than Sacrifice'

IN reply Saul took refuge in evasions. He said the sheep and the oxen had only been saved for sacrifice. He threw the blame upon the people; he said it was the people who "took of the spoil, sheep and oxen, the chief of the devoted things." Samuel cut his excuses short by giving utterance to an eternal truth: "Behold," he said, "to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams." And having said that he proceeded to pronounce Saul's doom "Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, he hath also rejected thee from being king." Upon that Samuel turned away, but as he turned Saul clutched at his robe and rent it. But in answer to Saul's earnest entreaty he consented to stand by him while he worshipped so that he might retain the honour of the elders of Israel. The chapter ends with the slaughter of Agag by the stern old prophet's own hands and the sad sentence "Samuel came no more to see Saul until the day of his death" (Chapter xv).

It is at this point that David comes into the story. One day, as Samuel mourned for Saul, the Lord's voice came to him bidding him fill his horn with oil and go to the house of Jesse the Bethlehemite, for in one of Jesse's sons God had found the "man after His own heart"—the man who was to succeed Saul in the throne of Israel. The story of what followed is one of the most familiar in the whole Book. One after the other, seven of Jesse's sons passed before the prophet. When Eliab the eldest appeared—a fine figure of a man—Samuel thought he need not look any further. But the voice of the Lord came to him saying "No, for

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the Lord seeth not as man seeth, for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart." And it was "no" again when Abinadab, the second son, appeared, and "no" for Shammah, the third, and still "no" for each one of the seven who paraded before the prophet. "Are here all thy children?" asked Samuel of Jesse. "No" was the reply, "there remaineth yet one, the youngest." Jesse hadn't thought it worth while to summon David. He had been left in the fields tending the sheep. At Samuel's command, however, he was sent for. And as soon as ever David appeared, the voice said: "Arise, anoint him: for this is he." And then and there Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brethren. This choice of David as successor to King Saul was kept as secret as Saul's first anointing by Samuel had been (xvi, 1-13).

THEN comes the story of David's first introduction to Saul's notice. Hostilities had once again broken out between Israel and the Philistines. Eliab and his two next brothers had been summoned to join the Israelitish army. Once again a kind of panic had seized the Israelites. It was caused this time by a champion of the Philistines named Goliath who, morning by morning, challenged the Israelites to send forth a champion to fight with him. There was no need for the two armies to fight, he said, let the issue be settled by a fight between the two champions. But no one offered to act as champion for the Israelites, and the reason was obvious. Goliath was a giant, ten feet in height, with a mighty spear whose staff was like a weaver's beam, the head of which weighed six hundred shekels of iron. Dr. Moffatt renders it "the head of his iron spear weighed twenty-five pounds." The very sight of the man struck terror into the hearts of the Israelites. "They were dismayed and greatly afraid" (xvii, 11).

One day Jesse sent David from Bethlehem to the valley where the Israelites were encamped—it was only a few hours' walk from Bethlehem—to take provisions to his three brothers who were in Saul's army, and to find out how they were faring. When he came to the camp he found the armies confronting one another in battle array as they had been doing for forty days. While he was talking to his brothers out again came Goliath and flung his insulting challenge at the Israelites. "And all the men of Israel, when they saw the man, fled from him and were sore afraid" (xvii, 24).

BENEATH A TAMARISK SAUL'S BONES WERE BURIED. Very ornamental with its feathery tiny-leafed branches, the tamarisk tree is common in the coastal districts of Palestine, and is mentioned three times in the Old Testament (R.V.)—twice with definitely sacred connexion. Abraham planted a tamarisk in Beer-sheba after making his covenant about the wells (Genesis xxi, 33); and under the consecrated tamarisk in Jabesh-Gilead the valiant men of the place buried the bones of Saul and his three sons, slain in the Battle of Gilboa (I. Samuel xxxi, 13).
Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

DAVID asked what it all meant. The soldiers were ready enough to tell him, and they told him too of the rich reward King Saul was offering to the man who should accept Goliath's challenge and conquer him. He there and then determined to accept the challenge. His eldest brother Eliab was angry. He was vexed that a slip of a boy should think of taking a risk which he—great fellow as he was—hadn't the courage to take. The soldiers, however, were delighted with David's daring, and the news was soon carried to Saul that, at last, someone had come into the camp who was willing to fight the boastful Philistine giant.

Soon David was brought into the king's presence, but when he saw him Saul came to the decision that he was no fit antagonist to fight Goliath. David however told the king that though he was young and only a shepherd, in his work as shepherd he had to face danger. He had had to fight with lion and with bear in defence of his flock.

The God who had delivered him out of the paw of the lion and the

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HOME OF THE LINE OF DAVID. A corner of the Square at Bethlehem is here depicted. On market days Beduin cattle breeders and Arab smallholders come from outlying districts to sell their produce. Bethlehem means the "house of meat"—or "bread"—and the name is indicative of its surroundings, fertile now as in the days of Boaz and Jesse. The native inhabitants of the town are noted for the healthy good looks which distinguished David (I. Samuel xvi, 12, 13), "ruddy, and withal of a beautiful countenance," when Samuel there anointed him King "in the midst of his brethren."

Photo, Wide World

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bear would deliver him also out of the hands of the Philistine giant. His confidence overcame Saul's hesitations. He agreed to let David champion the Israelitish cause. But before sending him out to face Goliath, David had to be properly equipped. So Saul clothed him in his own armour. But armour to David was only an encumbrance. "I cannot go with these," he said, and put Saul's armour off again. He preferred to meet Goliath as a shepherd lad using the weapons with which as a shepherd he was familiar. He picked five smooth stones out of the brook and with these and his shepherd's sling he faced Goliath.

Goliath Slain by the Boy David

GOLIATH was insulted that the Israelites should send a mere boy as their champion, and that the boy should come without sword and spear. David's reply was that he came not with sword or spear but in the name of the Lord of Hosts. When the giant hurried forward to deal with this insolent boy, David took one of his smooth stones and slung it and hit Goliath full in the forehead. The stone sunk in, so that the giant fell on his face. David seized his opportunity, rushed up to the prostrate figure, drew Goliath's sword, cut off his head and carried the gory trophy back into the Israelitish camp. The slaughter of their champion struck terror into the hearts of the Philistines and they broke and fled. The Israelites pursued the fleeing army right up to the gates of Ekron and won a famous victory that day.

Apparently the day when he fought Goliath was not the first time David had been brought into King Saul's presence—though the narrative suggests that when he offered himself as Israel's champion, Saul did not know who he was. But previous to that great day, David had been introduced into Saul's court as a skilful harpist. It appears that Saul was troubled with certain black moods. "An evil spirit from the Lord troubled him" is the way the narrative puts it. It may be that he became the victim of melancholy and depression in consequence of what Samuel had said to him. Anyhow his friends had discovered that music did more than anything else to dispel these black moods, so ever and again David was sent for to play before the king. But it is quite possible that Saul had not taken much notice of the lad who played to him when depression seized him, so that when David was brought to him as one who was willing to go forth and fight Goliath, he did not recognize him.

After that great victory, however, David became a permanent member of Saul's court. Saul put him in command of a regiment and gave him—though perhaps unwillingly—his younger daughter Michal in marriage. The price the king demanded for his daughter's hand was proof that David had killed a hundred Philistines. But the relations between Saul and David were never completely happy. The king grew jealous of David's growing popularity. When the armies returned from the defeat of the Philistines, the women who went out to meet them sang "Saul hath slain his thousands, David his ten thousands." That song awoke in Saul's breast a fierce jealousy of David. He knew nothing of the anointing by Samuel in Bethlehem—but from this time on he saw in David a possible rival for the throne. Saul eyed David from that day and forward (xviii).

The rest of the book is taken up with an account of David's adventures as an outlaw. For outlaw he became, pursued everywhere by a half frenzied Saul intent upon his murder. Saul's first attempt at murder was made while one of his black moods was upon him. David as usual was trying by his music to charm away his gloom when Saul cast his spear at him and tried to pin him to the wall. Twice he did this, and twice David managed to evade the thrust. Failing to effect David's murder with his own hands, Saul, driven by his fierce and almost insane jealousy, tried to bring about David's death by stratagem. It was in the hope that David might be killed that he made it a condition of his marriage with Michal that he should produce visible evidence that he had killed a hundred Philistines. Foiled in that hope, he tried to murder David in his own house. But Michal was too quick witted for him. She put an idol in David's bed and told Saul's emissaries that it was her husband too sick to rise. The ruse succeeded. Next morning Saul ordered David to be brought to him in his bed if need be. But Michal had made good use of the night's respite. She had let down David through her window and he had got safely away under cover of the darkness.

While these attempts were being made on his life, David still maintained some sort of connexion with Saul's court. When it was safe for him to do so, he sat at the king's table. He continued to be an officer in the king's army. He was incessantly engaged in the border warfare which from time to time died down, but which never died out. And as a military leader he was consistently successful. "He acted more skilfully and successfully than all the officers of Saul, so that his reputation stood high." It was this growing popularity of his that at length made it unsafe for him to come near the king's court and drove him to live the life of an outlaw in the wilderness.

'He Loved Him as His own Soul'

THERE is only one bright spot in the story of David's connexion with Saul's court and that is the story of the friendship which sprang up between Jonathan (Saul's eldest son) and himself. The friendship of David and Jonathan has become one of the classic friendships of human history. Once at least Jonathan managed to patch up a reconciliation between his father and David. Once at least he saved David's life by giving him information as to the mood that Saul was in at the time.

There was a certain occasion when David was expected to sit at the king's table. David meant to absent himself on the plea that it was a special day of sacrifice at Bethlehem, and he wanted to share in it with the other members of his family. The way in which Saul would take his absence would be a pretty sure indication of his feelings. If he should say "It is well," David would have peace; but if he was

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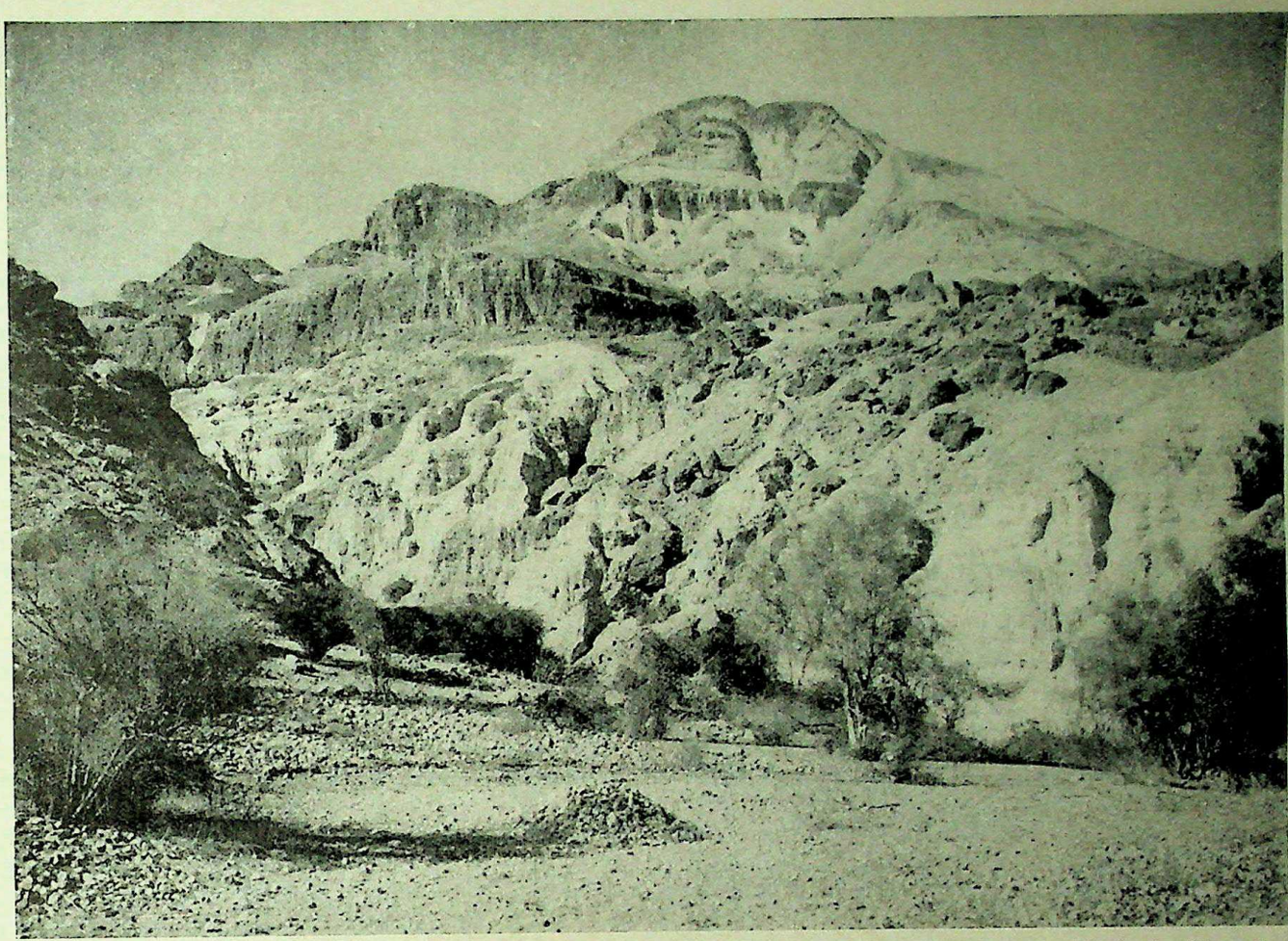

"DAVID DWELT IN STRONG HOLDS AT EN-GEDI." When outlawed by Saul, David and his followers went to the wilderness of En-gedi, near the western shore of the Dead Sea, and took shelter for a time in caves "upon the rocks of the wild goats" (I. Samuel xxiv, 2, 17). Thither came Saul with three thousand men in pursuit. While the king slept, David cut off part of his robe in proof that he could have killed him had his intention been evil. Then Saul said, "Thou art more righteous than I: for thou hast rewarded me good, whereas I have rewarded thee evil," and departed in peace.

Photo, Mondiale

wroth David would know that Saul was intent on doing him a mischief. Jonathan and David arranged between them a sign by which David would know whether it was peace or peril for him. In the upshot it was peril. Saul was so vexed at David's absence that he even threw his spear at Jonathan who made his excuse for him. There was no option for David except flight.

The last interview he had with Jonathan was a moving one. The two friends pledged faithfulness to one another. Jonathan, by this, seems to have realized that the throne would probably pass to David. That did not sour or embitter him. All he asked was that David when he came to the throne would be kind to the members of his household. Then they kissed one another and wept with one another until Jonathan tore himself from his friend's embrace, saying: "Go in peace, the Lord shall be between me and thee and between my seed and thy seed for ever." And with that David turned away to live the life of an outlaw, while Jonathan went back into the city to his father's court. But David never forgot his friend—for he loved him as he loved his own soul.

From this time on to the end of Saul's reign, David led a Robin Hood kind of life. He found himself at the head of a band of followers. Many, no doubt, of the men of his regiment followed him into exile. Others of his own clan probably joined him. In command of these men, David wandered over the country, spending most of his time in the Negeb, the wilderness south of Jerusalem. Perhaps he had, as one writer suggests, an intention of founding an independent principality on the borders of Philistia. But wherever he went, he was pursued by the unrelenting hostility of Saul. He was hunted out from place to place. No sooner had he thought he had gained a safe place of refuge, than down upon him came Saul with his soldiers. Saul's hatred vented itself not only on David but also on all who showed kindness to him.

Saul Takes Vengeance on the Priests

DAVID and his men were at starvation point one day when he went to Ahimelech the priest and begged for help. Ahimelech had no bread to give him, but the shew-bread, the sacred bread. In his pity for David's plight he let him have the sacred loaves. A certain Edomite named Doeg told Saul what had been done—whereupon Saul summoned Ahimelech and all the other priests to appear before him. After accusing them of helping David in his rebellion, Saul ordered his guard to fall upon the priests and kill them. The soldiers, however, shrank from using violence upon the priests of the Lord. So Saul bade Doeg—who as an

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Edomite had no such scruples—do the work of executioner. "And Doeg the Edomite turned, and he fell upon the priests, and slew on that day fourscore and five persons that did wear a linen ephod." Only one man escaped, Abiathar, and he fled for refuge to David. And Saul's vengeance was not satisfied even with the slaughter of the priests. He destroyed Nob, the city of the priests, and put all its inhabitants to the sword (xxii, 19).

Desperate Men in the Cave of Adullam

THAT incident serves to illustrate the deadly hatred with which Saul regarded David. He hunted him like a partridge on the mountains. So desperate was David's plight that at one point he had to take refuge with Achish, the Philistine king of Gath. The king's servants were for killing David—for they remembered his exploits in battle. David only escaped out of their hands by feigning madness. Then for a time he had his hiding-place in the cave of Adullam. His own clan rallied to him there, and also all those who were discontented and in debt, so that David found himself in command of a band of four hundred men. From the cave of Adullam he moved to the forest of Hareth. While there, he heard that the Philistines were fighting against Keilah. David marched against them and defeated them and made the town he had thus saved his headquarters. When Saul heard he had settled at Keilah, he thought he had him in his power. But before Saul could invest the town, David, with his little army which now amounted to six hundred men, contrived to escape.

From Keilah, he made his way to the wilderness of Ziph, and took refuge in a place called Maon. The Ziphites, to curry favour with Saul, told him where David was hiding, and it would have gone hardly with David then, had not Saul been called away from the pursuit to repel a raid of the Philistines (Chapter xxiii).

David took advantage of the respite to escape to the wilderness of Engedi. As soon as the Philistine raid had been repelled, Saul, with three thousand picked men, resumed the pursuit. Then happened one of the two incidents in which David showed his magnanimity—by sparing Saul's life. In the course of the pursuit Saul retired into a sheep-cote in a cave. There he lay down and slept, little thinking that in the inner recesses of the cave David and some of his men lay hidden. David's men, when they saw the sleeping king, said this was his opportunity, and urged him to take Saul's life. David however refused to lift a hand against the Lord's anointed. All he did was to cut off the skirt of Saul's robe Later when Saul had finished his sleep and had resumed his march, David, too, came out and shouted to him and showed him the skirt of his robe which he had cut off, and declared he had never been anything but loyal to the Lord's anointed. Saul, for the moment, was touched, and after exacting a promise from David that he would not destroy his descendants when he came to the throne, desisted from the pursuit and went home.

David however does not seem to have been sure of Saul, and remained in his fastness. Naturally and inevitably he and his men were often short of food, and like other outlaws had to put rich people under contribution. David found himself one day in the neighbourhood of a rich farmer named Nabal. It was the time of sheep shearing—and sheep shearing time amongst farmers was and is a time when victuals are more than usually abundant. David sent ten of his young men to ask Nabal to send him a portion of the feast. He felt he had a right to ask for such a contribution, for his men had defended Nabal's shepherds when they fed their flocks at Carmel.

Nabal was a boor and a miser, and not only refused the request, but also insulted David by speaking of him as a runaway slave. David, in his anger, vowed vengeance and at the head of four hundred men prepared to swoop down on Nabal's farm. Now Abigail, Nabal's wife, was a shrewd and kindly woman. She heard of Nabal's boorish answer, and knew that trouble might result. So to placate David's wrath, and to avert disaster, she loaded up her asses with a rich supply of food—loaves and roasted sheep, bunches of raisins and fig cakes. She found she was not a

WHAT FAMOUS POETS HAVE SAID ABOUT THE BIBLE

Richard Crashaw (c. 1613-1649).

It is an armoury of light;
Let constant use but keep it bright,
You'll find it yields
To holy hands and humble hearts,
More swords and shields
Than sin hath snares, or hell hath darts.

John Dryden (1631-1700).

Whence but from Heaven, could men unskill'd in arts,
In several ages born, in several parts,
Weave such agreeing truths, or how, or why
Should all conspire to cheat us with a lie?

Jean Racine (1639-1699). How admirable and beautiful is the simplicity of the Evangelists! They never speak injuriously of the enemies of Jesus Christ, of His judges, nor of His executioners. They report the facts without a single reflection. They comment neither on their Master's mildness when He was smitten, nor on His constancy in the hour of His ignominious death, which they thus describe: "And they crucified Jesus."

Alexander Pope (1688-1744). The pure and noble, the graceful and dignified, simplicity of language is nowhere in such perfection as in the Scriptures and Homer. The whole book of Job, with regard both to sublimity of thought and morality, exceeds, beyond all comparison, the most noble parts of Homer.

William Cowper (1731-1800).

A glory gilds the sacred page,
Majestic like the sun,
It gives a light to ev'ry age,
It gives but borrows none.

Sir Walter Scott (1771-1832).

Within this ample volume lies
The mystery of mysteries:
Happiest they of human race
To whom their God has given grace,
To read, to fear, to hope, to pray,
To lift the latch, to force the way;
And better had they ne'er been born
That read to doubt, or read to scorn.

Heinrich Heine (1797-1856). It is a plain old book, modest as nature itself, and as simple, too; a book of an unpretending work-day appearance, like the sun that warms or the bread that nourishes us . . And the name of this book is simply—the Bible.

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moment too soon, for she met David and his men on their way to chastise Nabal. Abigail's entreaty, together with the present she brought, quickly assuaged David's wrath. They parted with mutual expressions of esteem and blessing. When she got back to her farm Abigail told Nabal what she had done, and how narrowly he had escaped ruin. The news gave Nabal a shock, and ten days later he died. The story has a romantic end, for David, captivated by Abigail's beauty and charmed by her tact, married her.

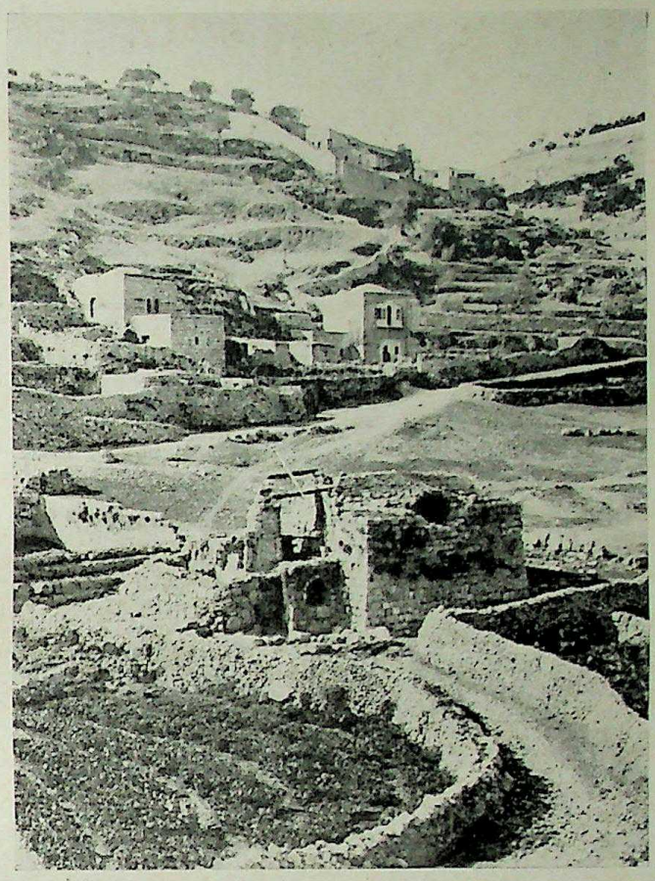
Saul's reconciliation to David did not last very long. Once again the Ziphites sent word as to David's whereabouts, and once again Saul set off in pursuit. While Saul and his men lay in camp one night, David, along with Abishai, crept quietly into it. They came to the place where Saul slept behind a barricade of wagons. Once again David had the chance of getting rid of his pursuer and winning the kingdom for himself. Abishai begged permission to kill Saul, but again David refused to allow a hand to be lifted against the Lord's anointed. All he did was to take away Saul's spear and the cruse of water that was by his head. Then in the morning, from a crag on the other side of the valley, David showed Saul his spear and his cruse of water, and once again Saul was made to realize he owed his very life to David's magnanimity. For the moment Saul realized his sin and his folly in pursuing one who had so signally shown his reverence for him, and there was once again a temporary reconciliation.

But this again did not last. David, at a certain juncture, found himself in such desperate straits that the only way of escape seemed to be to take service—he and his men—with Achish the king of Gath. Achish gave him and his people the town of Ziklag as a dwelling-place. From Ziklag David made raids upon the Geshurites and the Amalekites, the ancient enemies of Israel—though he deceived Achish into believing he was making attacks upon Israel itself.

Once again the Philistines mobilized themselves to make war upon Israel. Saul mustered his troops, but he was afraid and his heart trembled greatly. There was no longer any Samuel to consult as to what God's will might be, while as for Saul himself, the Lord answered him not, neither by dreams nor by Urim, nor by prophets. In his panic Saul disguised himself and consulted the witch of En-dor. He asked her to bring up Samuel for him. And Samuel came—but he had no good news, only an announcement of doom.

Last Exploit of David the Outlaw

DAVID and his men were in the Philistine army. It is evident that the Philistine princes doubted his loyalty and feared lest in the height of the battle he should transfer his forces to the other side and fight against them. They blamed Achish for bringing him and they insisted that he and his men should return to Ziklag. Very likely David and his men were glad to be delivered from the necessity of fighting against their own countrymen. So back to Ziklag they marched, only to find that in their absence the Amalekites had made a raid upon the city, burned it to the ground, and



REPUTED HIDING-PLACE OF DAVID'S SPIES. In the foreground is seen the rough edifice of Joab's Well, situated at the junction of the Kidron and Hinnom Valleys. It has been thought to be En-rogel (II. Samuel xvii, 17), identified with the well in which Ahimaaz and Jonathan, on their way from Jerusalem to inform David of Absalom's movements, were hidden by a woman from the rebels.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

carried off the women and the children—including David's two wives. Led by a fugitive Egyptian, David overtook the Amalekites when lying at ease after feasting and drinking, slew all of them except four hundred young men who escaped on swift camels, recovered unhurt all the women and children, and in addition took as spoil all the flocks and herds which the Amalekites had collected in the course of their raid.

And with this exploit the adventures and the wanderings of David really came to an end. The last chapter in the Book tells us of the death of Saul. When the issue was joined between the Philistines and the Israelites in Mount Gilboa, defeat and disaster fell upon the Israelites. Saul seems to have seen with his own eyes three of his sons killed. He himself, sore distressed, had strength enough to fall upon his own sword. There were dark and ugly elements in Saul's nature, but obviously there was also something in him that inspired loyalty and love. For his armour-bearer refused to survive his master, and fell upon his sword by Saul's side. The Philistines cut off Saul's head and stripped him of his armour, and hung his body in the square of Beth-shan. News of this indignity reached those people of Jabesh Gilead, whom he had rescued in the beginning of his reign. In loving gratitude the men of Jabesh crossed the Jordan, travelled all night, and rescued the bodies of Saul and his sons, and buried the prince on the site of his first victory.

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II. Samuel

I

The Book in Outline

Triumph and Tragedy in the Reign of David, the Psalmist-King

by REV. JAMES REID, M.A., D.D.

Minister of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Eastbourne;
Former President, National Free Church Council of England and Wales.

THE Second Book of Samuel tells the main story of the career of David after his succession to the throne. It falls into two parts. The first part describes how David came to the throne and established himself as king of Israel and Judah. The other tells of his court life and the family frictions that made havoc of his happiness.

As the Book opens we find David, in exile, receiving the tragic news of the deaths of Saul and Jonathan, his son, who was David's bosom friend.

One might have thought that the news of Saul's death would have been a relief. For years his jealousy had hung around David's life like an evil mist. He had never been safe from Saul's recurrent fits of madness. Yet he had never forgotten that Saul was "God s anointed." But it must have been a strain.

The man who brought him the news ran swiftly, hoping for a good reward. He told how Saul, at bay, had tried to take his own life but had failed, and how he had been asked to give the king and his son their death-blow and had done it. He may have embroidered the story. Had his eyes been keen he might have seen a look in David's face that would have made him hesitate. But he was blind to the nobleness of David.

As the story was unfolded David's heart was filled with tragic sorrow. It burst forth first in anger on the man who had done this deed; then in uncontrollable grief. He had lost a master who, with all his faults, had a streak of greatness, and who was more to be pitied than hated. It would have been so different had Saul been humble enough to make David his friend. Now, however, only the kindnesses Saul had done him came back to David's mind. Worst of all, Jonathan was dead. Together they had played, hunted, plotted to help the king and foil his madness. There was fine quality in Jonathan. He might easily have taken Saul's part. Yet no shadow ever rose between him and David. Theirs was an ideal friendship.

David was overwhelmed with the weight of this double grief. He broke into a lament which is one of the most poignant things in the poetry of pain. It is also the oldest surviving specimen of early Hebrew poetry.

> How are the mighty fallen!
> Saul and Jonathan were lovely and pleasant in their lives,
> And in their death they were not divided;
> I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan:
> Thy love to me was wonderful,
> Passing the love of women.
> How are the mighty fallen!

The way to the throne was now open to David. Acting on guidance from the oracle he went to Hebron with his warriors and his household and was crowned king over Judah. Meantime Abner, Saul's leading captain, put Saul's son, Ish-bosheth, on the throne of Israel, the northern province. There were thus two centres of loyalty among the Jewish tribesmen.

This divided state could not continue. Joab, David's chief captain, a hot-headed and imperious man, though a staunch friend of David, was restless and dissatisfied. Abner and he met for a talk at the pool of Gibeon, about six miles north-west of Jerusalem. Each suspected the other.

As they sat on either side of the pool, it was proposed that the young men, in pairs, should give a display of mimic warfare. It was a risky proposal. As they met, each man plunged his sword into the heart of his opponent—whereupon, of course, there was a general fight in which Abner's band was routed and fled. Not content with this victory Asahel, who was Joab's brother and a brilliant runner, pursued Abner, who tried in vain to persuade the rash young man to try his strength on someone more equal to his skill. But Asahel was determined to get at Abner, who then let him come on, struck back at him and killed him. Joab was following and at last reached a hillside from which he could look down on Abner and his routed band. Then Abner appealed to him for a truce, pointing out that nothing but bitterness could come of this war between tribesmen, and both parties thereupon made for home.

Rivalry of David and Saul's Surviving Son

A STRUGGLE followed in which David grew steadily stronger. Ish-bosheth was only a puppet king. Abner held the strings of power. He was also a statesman and saw clearly that there must be a union under the rule of David. A clash between Abner and his master gave him his chance to make a break. He made overtures to David, with the weak consent of Ish-bosheth who had to bow to the inevitable. David made a condition that Michal, Saul's daughter who had been betrothed to him, should be restored; and though she was now the wife of another, she was taken by force and sent to David, her husband following with tears and unavailing protests. It was a rude age, and women were merely chattels for the most part. But David, by this demand, was confirming his right to be accepted by the people as Saul's successor.

Abner had still to win over the northern sheikhs. He pointed out to them their need of David's help in dealing with the Philistines who were always raiding the country; and how they had always looked on David as God's appointed successor to Saul. Their

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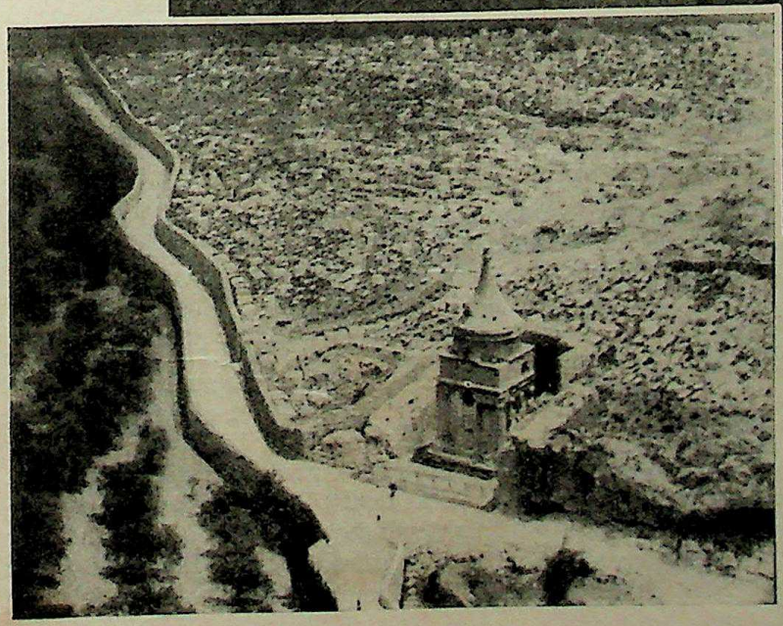

MEMORIAL TO DAVID'S REBEL SON. An impressive funeral monument in the Valley of Kidron—Jerusalem's necropolis in Biblical times—is known as Absalom's Pillar. The smaller photograph shows the exterior, a rock-hewn squared base, 21 feet high, surmounted by a funnel-shaped spire of finely-worked stone. Excavation uncovered the entrance to the steps by which the interior of the memorial is ascended. Dating from the time of Herod, it was associated with Absalom only in the 16th century. Possibly it is near the spot (II. Samuel xviii, 18) where "Absalom in his lifetime had taken and reared up for himself a pillar, which is in the king's dale."

Photos, American Colony in Jerusalem and, left, Press Topics

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consent was obtained, and Abner set off for the court of David to make a treaty and unite the two kingdoms. David was delighted, and Abner was sent home to put the matter finally through.

But Joab had still to be reckoned with. While David was conferring with Abner he had been off on a raid. When he returned and learned what had been going on, he was furious. He was jealous of Abner as a possible rival and he owed him a deep grudge for the death of Asahel, his brother. In blazing words he denounced the whole business, suggesting to David that he was only being deceived by a cunning plotter, though there is no ground for this slander of a man who was a real statesman. Then, he left the house and sent a party to ask Abner to return. Suspecting nothing, Abner came back, and when he reached the city Joab took him aside into a quiet corner as if for a little private talk and there assassinated him. David was stung to the quick. His sense of honour was outraged by this treachery. It had also endangered the kingdom and put David's good faith with all the sheikhs around in peril. At Abner's grave he showed his grief and sorrow and called on the people to realize that "a prince and great man" had fallen.

Abner's death broke the pillar to which, like a frail vine, the life of Ish-bosheth clung. Two of his officers, with that contempt for weak things which is the mark of savage natures, slew Ish-bosheth and brought his head to David in the hope of a reward. They ought to have known better, for they paid the penalty of their treachery with their lives. All the same, the death of the puppet king removed the last barrier in the way of the union of the two kingdoms. The northern chiefs came to David, offering him their homage, and in no grudging spirit. For David had a personal magnetism that had made many people his friends. Then they brought him to Hebron and here he was now crowned king of Israel also. So the two kingdoms became one.

It was David's great hour, though his success had cost him much in peril and pain. But now at last he had come to his own; in the words of our own Coronation service, "their undoubted king."

A capital had still to be found for the united kingdom. The city which David coveted for this purpose was Jerusalem, then in the hands of the Jebusites. It stood on two hills that rose from the plain on the dividing line between Israel and Judah. It seemed the very place for the purpose. It was not easy to win. The fortress, known as Zion, was so strong that its defenders shouted from the walls that even the blind and the lame could hold it. But it could not stand against David now in the full confidence of his position, and very soon it fell and the city was in his hands. There David set up his court. He built a splendid palace with the help of foreign craftsmen who came bringing fine timbers as gifts from their king; and David settled down to consolidate his kingdom.

There was still a good deal to do. For his old enemies the Philistines were stirred into action by his success. They had a garrison at Bethlehem and had adopted the rôle of overlords. Like a nest of angry wasps they came swarming over the country to dispute David's claims. David left Jerusalem when the news of their activity was brought to him, and made for his old stronghold of Adullam, where he could be hidden and could sally out at any moment. He was weary, however, after the long strain, and this fresh threat to his position set him longing for the old days when he was a shepherd lad among the hills round Bethlehem. He thought of the old well by the city gate where he had often sat and listened to the tales of warriors and shepherds. The peace of it all came flooding into his mind and set him sighing for its return. "O that one would give me drink of the water of the well of Bethlehem which is by the gate!"

David's men were not poets but simple men of the desert used to taking their chief's desires in a very literal way. So three of them at once set off for Bethlehem. It was a perilous journey. They had to feel their way through a land filled with strong, cunning foes. But they got through, no doubt hiding by day and making their way by night, till they came to the city, and then creeping, perhaps disguised, through the gates. Soon they returned in triumph bringing the water from

II. SAMUEL: A SYNOPSIS

David, King of Judah

	Chapters
David Hears of Saul's Death ...	i, 1-16
David's Lament over Saul and Jonathan	i, 17-27
David Anointed King over Judah	ii, 1-7
War between David and Ish-bosheth	ii, 8—iii, 5
Abner and Ishbaal	iii, 6—iv, 12

Israel and Judah United

David Anointed King over Israel	v, 1-5
The Capture of Jerusalem ...	v, 6-12
Victories over the Philistines ...	v, 17-25
The Ark brought to Jerusalem ...	vi
David Proposes to Build a Temple	vii
Further Victories of David ...	viii

Memoirs of David's Court

David's kindness to Mephibosheth	ix
War with the Ammonites and Syrians	x
The Affair of Bath-sheba ...	xi-xii
Ammon and Absalom	xiii-xiv
The Story of Absalom's Rebellion	xv-xix
The Revolt of Sheba	xx

Miscellaneous Appendix

The Story of Rizpah	xxi, 1-14
Exploits of David's Paladins ...	xxi, 15-22; xxiii, 8-39
David's Thanksgiving Hymn ...	xxii, 1-51
The Last Words of David ...	xxiii, 1-7
The Taking of the Census ...	xxiv

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"HIS SLING WAS IN HIS HAND"

Sure and purposeful is the pose of this modern David, probably as expert in marksmanship as the men of Benjamin, every one of whom " could sling stones at a hair breadth and not miss". In addition to his staff a useful weapon of the shepherd boy in Palestine is a sling, for which he may choose " smooth stones out of the brook " (I. Samuel xvii, 40) even as David did before he drew near to fight the Philistine, Goliath of Gath. He was far better equipped with this tried weapon than if there had been a sword in his hand. A stone cast at close quarters in such a manner by an expert slinger could stun even a giant.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

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TRIUMPH OF DAVID

In the grand manner Nicolas Poussin, greatest exponent of the French neo-classical school of the 17th century, composed his picture of David returning to Jerusalem after his victory over Goliath (I. Samuel xvii, 54, 57), to go "before Saul with the head of the Philistine in his hand."

The painting (in the Dulwich Art Gallery, London) shows in marked degree the Italian influence naturally apparent to some extent in Poussin's art, since much of his working life was spent in Rome. Nearly all his Biblical pictures, of which there are many, were painted in Italy.

Nicolas Poussin, 1594-1665

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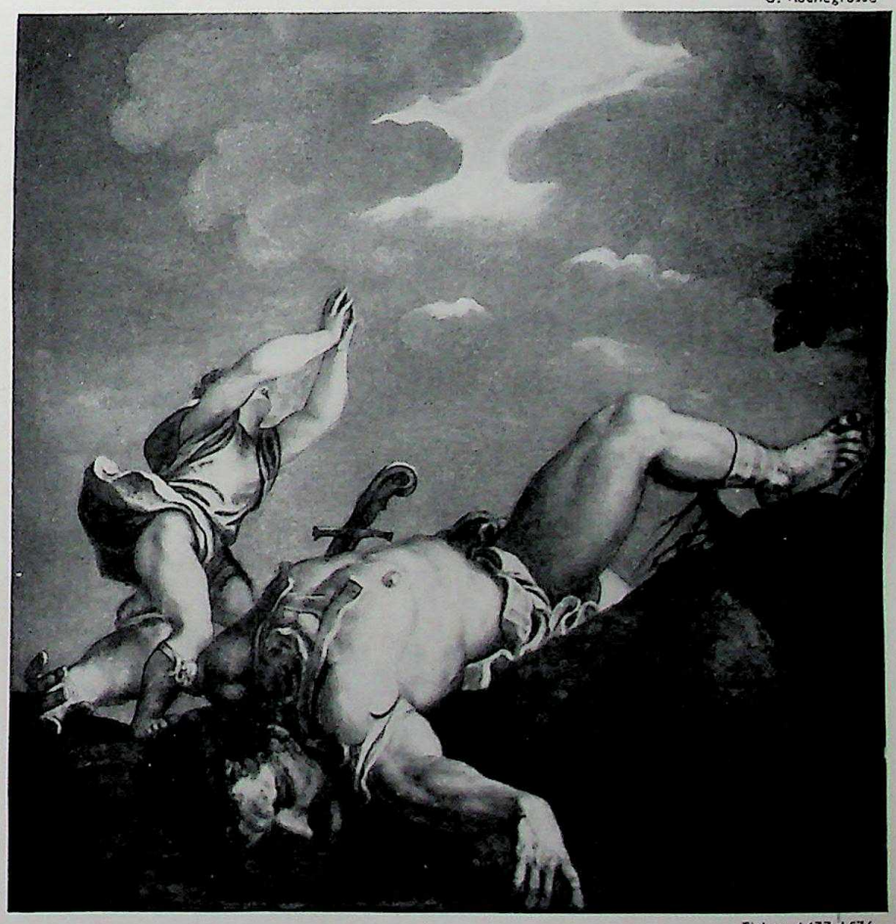
G. Rochegrosse

"HE IS FLED OUT OF THE LAND FOR ABSALOM"

Scenes of David's life, of aged sorrow and youthful victory, are depicted here. Above, a Biblical illustrator, G. Rochegrosse, has shown the stricken king passing over Jordan with the loyal Israelites after he had been driven from Jerusalem by the unfilial Absalom and was seeking refuge in Mahanaim.

Titian, greatest of all the Venetian masters, stresses the extreme youth of the boy David in this painting of the end of the combat with the Philistine giant. Decapitation of the dead enemy was customary, not bloodthirsty in that era. The future Psalmist of Israel gives thanks to God. Already the words were in his heart: (II. Samuel xxii, 40) "For thou hast girded me with strength to battle."



Titian, 1477-1576

DAVID TOOK GOLIATH'S SWORD "AND CUT OFF HIS HEAD THEREWITH"

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BY DAVID'S POOL IN HEBRON

Water-carriers and hawkers have come to the Pool of David to fill their goat-skin "bottles." The modern Arab town of Hebron, famed for the Mosque of Machpelah, its glass-blowing and tanning industries, is a picturesque huddle of narrow streets with storied houses and vaulted bazaars. But the Hebron from which David ruled Judah already possessed a long history—it is one of the world's oldest cities of continued habitation. There he had his court for seven years while Ish-bosheth, Saul's fourth son, contested the throne until treacherously killed. The murderers "brought the head of Ish-bosheth unto David" (II. Samuel iv, 8, 12) expecting reward, but he sternly condemned them "and hanged them up over the pool in Hebron."

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

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"DRINK OF THE WATER OF THE WELL OF BETHLEHEM"

Just outside Bethlehem is the Well of David. To this traditional spot came the three mighty men of his bodyguard, who had heard their aged king express a longing for a drink from his native spring. They "brake through the host of the Philistines and drew water out of the well of Bethlehem, that was by the gate, and took it and brought it to David" (II. Samuel xxiii, 13-17) in the cavern-stronghold of Adullam, where he had taken refuge. Supremely moved by their devotion and the great danger they had incurred during their raid of the enemy's camp to gratify his desire, David would not drink the water but poured it out on the ground as an offering to God, saying: "Is not this the blood of the men that went in jeopardy of their lives?"

Photo. Keystone

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Benjamin West. 1738-1820

"NATHAN SAID TO DAVID, THOU ART THE MAN"

The dramatic moment when the meaning of Nathan's parable of the "one little ewe lamb" dawned upon David, bringing home to him his guilt concerning Uriah and Bath-sheba, is represented in Benjamin West's picture. This painter, though American born, was an original member of the Royal Academy and the first to introduce correct costumes into historical pictures.

James Tissot's Biblical illustration shows Michal, looking through the open lattice at her husband, King David, dancing before the Ark of the Covenant when he brought it to Jerusalem. Such exuberance appearing undignified to her, "she despised him in her heart" (II. Samuel vi, 16). Her rebuke caused their permanent estrangement.

James J. Tissot, 1836-1902

"MICHAL SAUL'S DAUGHTER LOOKED THROUGH A WINDOW, AND SAW KING DAVID"

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Salvator Rosa, 1615-1673

"TOMORROW SHALT THOU AND THY SONS BE WITH ME"

Saul and his followers are here shown bowed to the ground in terror before the wraith of Samuel conjured up by the Witch of En-dor on the eve of the battle of Gilboa. In answer to the King's appeal: "I have called thee, that thou mayest make known unto me what I shall do," the dread apparition prophesies his death and adds "the Lord also shall deliver the host of Israel into the hand of the Philistines" (I. Samuel xxviii, 15, 19). The Neapolitan Salvator Rosa, painter of this imaginative picture, was the famed exponent of the sublime and terrible, forerunner of a grandiose style which became popular for the pictorial treatment of religious subjects in the 18th century.

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THRESHING SLEDGE SUCH AS DAVID KINDLED FOR A SACRIFICE

Interceding to stop the plague brought about by his disobedience to a then accepted rule that numbering the people was sinful without divine authority, David built an altar on the threshing-floor of Araunah, the Jebusite, and bought from him oxen and wooden "threshing instruments" in order to offer up sacrifice: "so the Lord was intreated for the land and the plague was stayed from Israel" (II. Samuel xxiv, 22, 25). One of the type of threshing instruments referred to is seen above raised on end for replacement of missing "teeth." Made of logs, it has sharp flints stuck in the under surface. When the oxen drag the sledge over corn on the threshing-floor these stones cut the grain from the ears and chop the straw.

Photo, Newtonian Press Service

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the well. David was deeply touched. But he refused to drink it. It was more than water he saw in that leather bottle. It was the courage of three men who had risked their lives. "Is not this," he said, "the blood of men who went in jeopardy of their lives?" It would have been sacrilege to use for selfish uses what had cost so much. And David poured it out before the Lord. In this symbolic act he consecrated the courage and loyalty of the men who had done this deed. Not for his own greatness or pride would he henceforth use this loyalty, but for the service of that will of God which he and they would fulfil together.

Was it this incident that made him take new heart? In any case, he came out against the Philistines and they fled. So badly were they routed that they left their sacred images on the field. In a second battle they were finally driven from the land. Another stage in the security of the kingdom was reached.

Jerusalem Made the Centre of Hebrew Worship

BUT one thing remained to be done if Jerusalem were to be the living centre of the people's loyalty. It must be made the centre of their religion. The ark of God, as it was called, must be settled there. This ark was a wooden box in which God's presence was supposed to be enshrined. It was their most sacred possession. Years before, it had been lost in battle to the Philistines, but all kinds of trouble had come to its captors which they put down to this dangerous object. So they had sent it away, and for years it had lain in a private house.

David resolved to have it brought up to the capital, and he himself went to fetch it. As they drew it along on a new cart they danced in a frenzy of happiness, for it was a source of unbounded satisfaction to them to think that God should come to dwell among them.

Their joy was dashed for the moment by a strange incident. The ark was taboo, which means that being sacred it must not be touched by ordinary men. But as it jolted on the rough road a man put out his hand to steady it and at once fell dead. It may have been sudden sickness, a coincidence. Or it may have been that the horror of what he had done had so wrought upon a suggestible mind that it killed him. But they all took it for granted that God had done it and, in haste, the journey was abandoned and the ark laid up again in the house of one Obed-edom. At the end of three months, however, when David learned that all was well with this man, he and his people returned and with the same music and ritual dancing brought the ark into the capital. There it was lodged in a special tent prepared for it, and all the people were sent home with a gift.

David could not be long content with this rude tent for the ark. The contrast between it and his fine cedar palace was too great for his sensitive conscience. He made up his mind to build a temple for it and told Nathan, the prophet, whom he consulted about most things. Nathan bade him carry out his plan, but later it came to Nathan that this should not be, and that the work was to be left for David's successor. He assured David, as from God, that he and his family would be established in the land he had won and freed, and that the kingly line would continue through him and his descendants. David took this disappointment very well. For he had been very eager to build this temple. He went into the tent where the ark was kept and there, in a prayer of deep adoration and gratitude, he opened his heart to God. There never was any conceit in David. It was always the marvel of life to him that this high position should be his. In this humility lay much of his simple strength.

David had never been happy in his mind about the series of tragedies through which his kingdom had come to him. Now that he was firmly settled in Jerusalem he determined to find out any of Saul's family who remained, and show them kindness. He made inquiries and discovered a son of his old friend Jonathan, by name Mephibosheth. He was a pathetic figure, lame in both his feet, for in infancy he had been dropped by his nurse while she was fleeing from the battlefield where his father lay dead. He had been living in obscurity, perhaps because of his infirmity, perhaps afraid that he might be done to death by one of David's men to get rid of a possible rival to the throne. David brought this cripple from his distant home, gave him back the estates of Saul and a place at his own table.

David's kind heart, in the suspicious atmosphere of tribal enmities, was always getting him into trouble. One such case is put on record. Nahash, king of the Ammonites, had died, and David sent a deputation with a message of sympathy to his son Hanun. But the suspicious tribesmen whispered to Hanun that this was a group of spies. So in a fit of insolent humour Hanun arrested David's men, shaved off half their beards, cut their flowing robes short at the waist and sent them home. But hearing later how his silly jest had raised a storm at Jerusalem, he began to prepare for war, hiring bands of Syrians and other mercenaries to help him. He was right, for down came Joab and Abishai with picked troops to wipe out the insult. The Syrians, who were the better soldiers, broke and fled; and, seeing this, the Ammonites turned tail and made for their city of Rabbah.

Crushing Defeat of the Syrian Power

THE Syrians could not accept this defeat without some attempt to restore their prestige. So Hadarezer, their king, who had old grudges against David to work off, took the field himself. David came out to meet them, and they were beaten, leaving their general dead on the field. This crushing victory brought David a wider peace, for some of the lesser sheikhs who had waited to see which way the wind would blow came and offered submission. Rabbah does not seem to have fallen in this campaign, for we learn later on that in the following year Joab set out to take it. He got possession of the city's water supply and with great magnanimity sent for David to take the city and so get the prestige of its capture. There was a fine strain of loyalty in Joab, for all his unruly spirit. David

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followed his suggestion and captured the city with all its wealth, setting its men to various forms of hard labour. Then he returned and settled down in Jerusalem.

The Bible never attempts to gloss over the weaknesses of its heroes. David's success brought its inevitable temptations, and he fell. He coveted and stole the wife of another. Had this been all, it would have left a stain on his memory. But worse was to follow. To secure the woman for himself, he plotted the death of her husband.

HER name was Bath-sheba, and she was the wife of Uriah, the Hittite. Her husband loved her. She seems to have been his only wife. With a low cunning, David sent orders to Joab who was engaged in a war, to put Uriah in the front line, where he could hardly escape being slain. The ugly plot succeeded and Uriah fell.

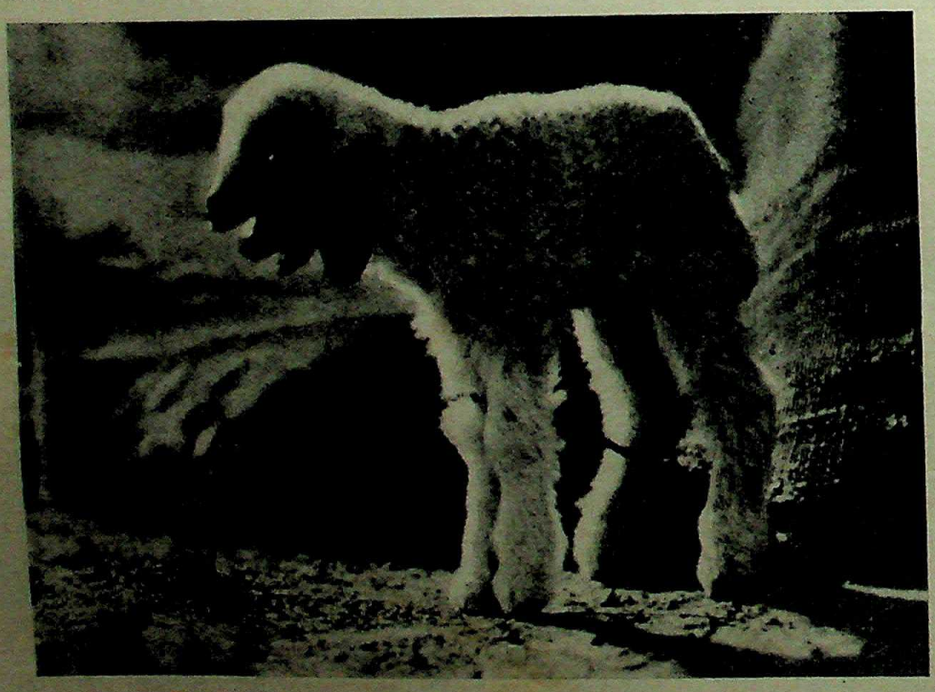
But the incident was not closed. The story came to the ears of Nathan the prophet, who was a man of sturdy integrity and without fear. David must be faced up with his crime. It was no easy task, for times were rough and tempers uncertain. It is one thing, also, to tell a man the truth about himself, and another thing to bring it home to his conscience. Nathan set himself to convict David through his own sense of right. He told the king a story of two men, one of them rich with many flocks and herds, the other poor with but one ewe lamb which had all the affection of his heart. He described how this rich man, wishing to entertain a friend, left his own flocks untouched, but took by force the poor man's one ewe lamb to make a dinner for his guest. David's quick anger rose to a flame. He demanded to know the name of this churl that he might give him his deserts. Then with a swift, dramatic phrase, Nathan struck home. "Thou art the man." There was no escape for David. He was convicted by his own conscience. The sword of his just anger had been turned to his own breast. He stood stricken and ashamed. He had not only wronged Uriah; he had sinned against God, and he had brought his religion into contempt. The fifty-first Psalm is thought to be the cry of his soul in this hour of remorse. "Cast me not away from Thy presence. Take not Thy Holy Spirit from me. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me."

Sorrow followed quick on the heels of this moral disaster. The prophet told him that it would be so. He forecast much trouble ahead as the fruit of David's sin. We cannot now accept his view that all the calamities that visited David's home from this time on were the direct consequences of his crime. But it was not to be expected that the king could play fast and loose with evil without the foundations of his home being shaken. The first sorrow that came was the death of Bath-sheba's child. For a week it lay between life and death, while David, racked with the anxiety of a genuine love for this infant, refused to take food or hold speech with anyone. When at length it died, David accepted the sorrow as from God, and came back to normal life.

Father and Son in Tragic Conflict

ONE incident followed another in a chain of events which ended in the rebellion and death of his favourite son Absalom. The trouble began with a lustful passion which his eldest son Amnon had for Tamar, his half-sister, who was full sister to Absalom. In a frenzy, Amnon satisfied his passion for Tamar by force. It was a vile deed, and David should have taken some strong measure. But where his children were concerned his love made him weak when he should have been strong, and hard when he should have been considerate. This unwise love was his greatest failing. The affair seemed to have been buried, but Absalom did not forget. Two years later he invited all his brothers to a sheep shearing at some distance from the city and bade his young men fall on Amnon and kill him. A panic ensued in which all the king's sons took horse and made for home. The king was distraught with grief and anger, and Absalom fled to his uncle at Geshur, where he was to remain for three years an exile.

But there was no more happiness for David. His mind was divided between his anger with Absalom and his love for him. He went about with an absent look in his eye.



"ONE LITTLE EWE LAMB." Belonging to the child of a Beduin Sheikh, this pet lamb, tethered to the tent-post, figuratively illustrates the parable told by Nathan to David of the rich man "with exceeding many flocks and herds," who stole from a poor neighbour the one cherished lamb "that grew up . . . with his children" (II. Samuel xii, 1-4). Not realizing that the story referred to his taking Bath-sheba from her husband, his loyal warrior, Uriah the Hittite, David pronounced the judgement on the thief which elicited Nathan's famous reply "Thou art the man."

Photo, Mondiale

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"RABBAH, THE CITY OF WATERS." Capital of Transjordan and a thriving commercial centre, the Arab town of Amman is on the site of Biblical Rabbah or Rabbath-Ammon. It lies in a narrow valley through which runs a tributary of the River Jabbok. It was here that David perfidiously sent Uriah to his death during the siege of the Ammonites' city by Joab, Israel's generalissimo. David himself arrived to complete the capture and receive the spoil. In Transjordan he triumphed and in Transjordan he was humbled. There he fled a fugitive from Absalom and there he bewailed Absalom's death.

Photo, G.P.A.

The trouble was evidently eating into his heart. Again the redoubtable Joab took things in hand. He devised a plan for breaking down this barrier and inducing the king to bring the scapegrace home. He sent a wise woman to the king with a story of how one of her own two sons had killed the other. The life of the culprit was being demanded by those whose duty it was in those days to avenge the blood of one who had been slain. As Joab expected, David was touched. He assured the woman that her son would be protected, though this promise was made in defiance of a very sacred tribal law.

THEN the woman broke in with a speech which Joab had prepared for her. The king himself, she said, was doing the very thing which the avengers of blood were threatening to do to her son. He was refusing to forgive. Life is short and uncertain, she told him. "For we must needs die, and are as water spilt on the ground which cannot be gathered up again. God will not take away the life of one who deviseth means that His banished be not exiled from Him." It was a most adroit and moving appeal. It touched the king both in his love and his religion. He was quick to see the hand of Joab in this artful speech. But his anger was so far overcome that he bade him bring Absalom back. He refused to have him in the palace, however. For two years more the estrangement continued, till Absalom, growing weary of it, forced Joab to plead for a reconciliation and the breach was apparently healed. But it was only so on the surface. There was a hidden rift between the two which had not been mended. David was largely to blame. He had not used imagination, or he would have realized the danger of leaving Absalom so long an outcast. For away from home, pride and ambition began to fester in his mind. Doubtless the friends he made there fanned his vanity and deepened the enmity between him and his father.

No sooner was Absalom back in the palace than he began to give himself airs. He set up a chariot and horsemen of his own. He was a dashing fellow, handsome in looks, with an easy manner that made him a favourite, and he used all the arts at his command to win the crowd. He stooped at last to stealthy ways of detaching the loyalty of the people. He would stand in the gate and buttonhole those who came for justice, whispering to them that it was such a pity that no one had been appointed to deal with their case, and that if only he had the power all would be well.

Four years of this trickery and then he struck. He rode out to Hebron, the old capital, raised the standard of revolt, and was joined by a big proportion of the people. David was completely taken by surprise. Brooding on his own thoughts, he had not noticed what was going on. He had never dreamed of such treachery, and panic seized him. Within the hour he had left his palace, empty except for a dozen women. His trusted men went with him. On the way he was immediately joined by groups of others, among them Ittai, the chief of a foreign clan, who had such friendship for David that he was willing to stand by him in what must have looked like a losing cause.

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Zadok and Abiathar, the priests, came also from Jerusalem, bringing the Ark of God, which was in their charge. But David sent them back with the Ark saying that if the time had come when God meant to supplant him by another, he would accept his dismissal, but if not, then God's help was not dependent on the presence of the Ark. Hushai, an old friend, came also to be with him, but David sent him back to the city as a secret agent. It was a sad procession, however, that passed up the Mount of Olives, along the road that led to the Jordan. Barefooted, and with covered heads like men at a funeral, David and his company wended their way along the slopes. The spirit seemed to have gone out of them. When Shimei, an old enemy, ran along the hillside just above them, shouting rude insults and flinging stones and dust at David, he would not let his men deal with him, saying, "Let him alone, and let him curse; for the Lord hath bidden him."

Meantime, Absalom, hearing that the city was deserted, came back there with his men and took up his abode at the palace. Ahithophel, Bath-sheba's grandfather, a wily old sheikh, who had old scores against David, had joined Absalom to act as his adviser. He strongly urged that ten thousand men should be sent at once to fall upon David.

Tragic Close of Absalom's Career

ABSALOM had evidently lost all sense of decent feeling, for he was ready to adopt this plan. But before he did so, he consulted Hushai. This wise diplomat, to gain time for David, made various objections to the plan. He drew a vivid picture of what might happen. David's veterans would probably begin by defeating the front line of Absalom's raw levies, when the rest would lose heart and flee. It would be wiser to wait till Absalom had gathered a great force, and if it were led by Absalom himself, victory would be assured. Absalom was impressed by this advice. It was a shrewd appeal to his vanity and he accepted it. Whereupon Ahithophel in high dudgeon set out for home and there hanged himself.

The delay gave David time. He was joined by various tribesmen who had once been his foes. He organized his forces in three divisions, led by Joab, Abishai and Ittai, and made the town of Mahanaim his headquarters. At length news came that Absalom and his army were on the way. David's men issued from the town to which they had gone, while he, who was not going with them, sat in the gate to watch them march past. As the chiefs went by, he had only one word to whisper in their ears. It was to see that no harm came to Absalom. The combat was soon over. The rebels fled before David's trained and angry legions. Absalom himself, fleeing on muleback, was entangled in the branches of a tree. It is said his long hair, in which he took such pride, was his undoing. The mule went on leaving him suspended. Someone ran to Joab and told him. Curtly demanding why the man had not killed the rebel, Joab made his way to the spot and drove his weapons into Absalom's heart.

All day David had sat at the gate waiting for news, while a watchman on the roof kept his eye on the road. At length he shouted that he saw a man running, followed at some distance by another. The first was Ahimaaz, son of Zadok. Breathless, he told his great news of the victory. But David's lips trembled with one question, "Is the young man Absalom safe?" Ahimaaz evaded the question. He said he had seen a large crowd gathered but could not see what had happened. At that moment the second runner, a negro slave, came up panting. To him also David put the question, and he told him in an eastern phrase what he wanted to know. "The enemies of my lord the king be as that young man is."

David was heartbroken. He was bound up in his scapegrace son. Without further words he stole away to his room moaning as he went, "O Absalom my son, would God I had died for thee. Absalom my son, my son." The heart of the father refused to be comforted by the triumph of the king. Gloom fell on the city. The men returning from the battle crept in as if they had been the vanquished instead of the victors till Joab arrived and learned what was going on. Rushing into the king's room, he rated him soundly for this churlish reception of men who had risked their lives for him. He pointed out, with pardonable exaggeration, that the temper of the men was such that this coldness might strain their loyalty to breaking-point. David admitted the justice of this plea, and came down to the gate to greet the warriors with some fitting show of gratitude.

Nothing now remained but to go back to Jerusalem. David would not return, however, without invitation. Those who had fought against him were too ashamed to make the first move. His own sheikhs hesitated lest they should stir up jealousy in the men of the north. The invitation hung fire till David sent to the city to reprove the loyalists for this delay. The invitation then came and he set out for home. One by one, those who had turned against him made submission, the first being Shimei who had insulted him as he went out a fugitive. David, with his great heart, forgave him without reserve. Meantime, Amasa was made commander-in-chief in place of Joab, whose slaughter of Absalom David could not yet forgive.

Sheba's Revolt Stamped out by Joab

THE trouble was not yet quite over. The men of the south had been right in their fears. When the two sections met to welcome David, it was found that the southerners outnumbered the northerners by three to one. The latter protested they had not had fair notice. Bitter words broke out on both sides, and Sheba, a man from Bichri, took advantage of the growing friction to raise a revolt. David bade Amasa call up the levies and report in three days. The three days passed and he had not returned. Speed was everything, so Joab and Abishai set off post haste to deal with Sheba.

Six miles from the city they met Amasa coming back with his levies, and Joab once more gave way to his jealousy in a savage deed. He was wearing his full war-kit, but in addition to the sword which hung from his

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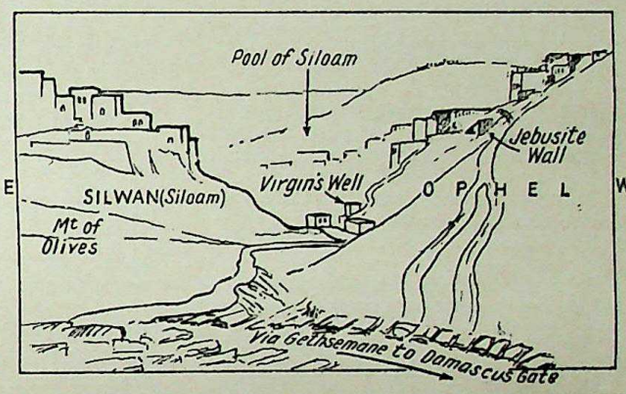
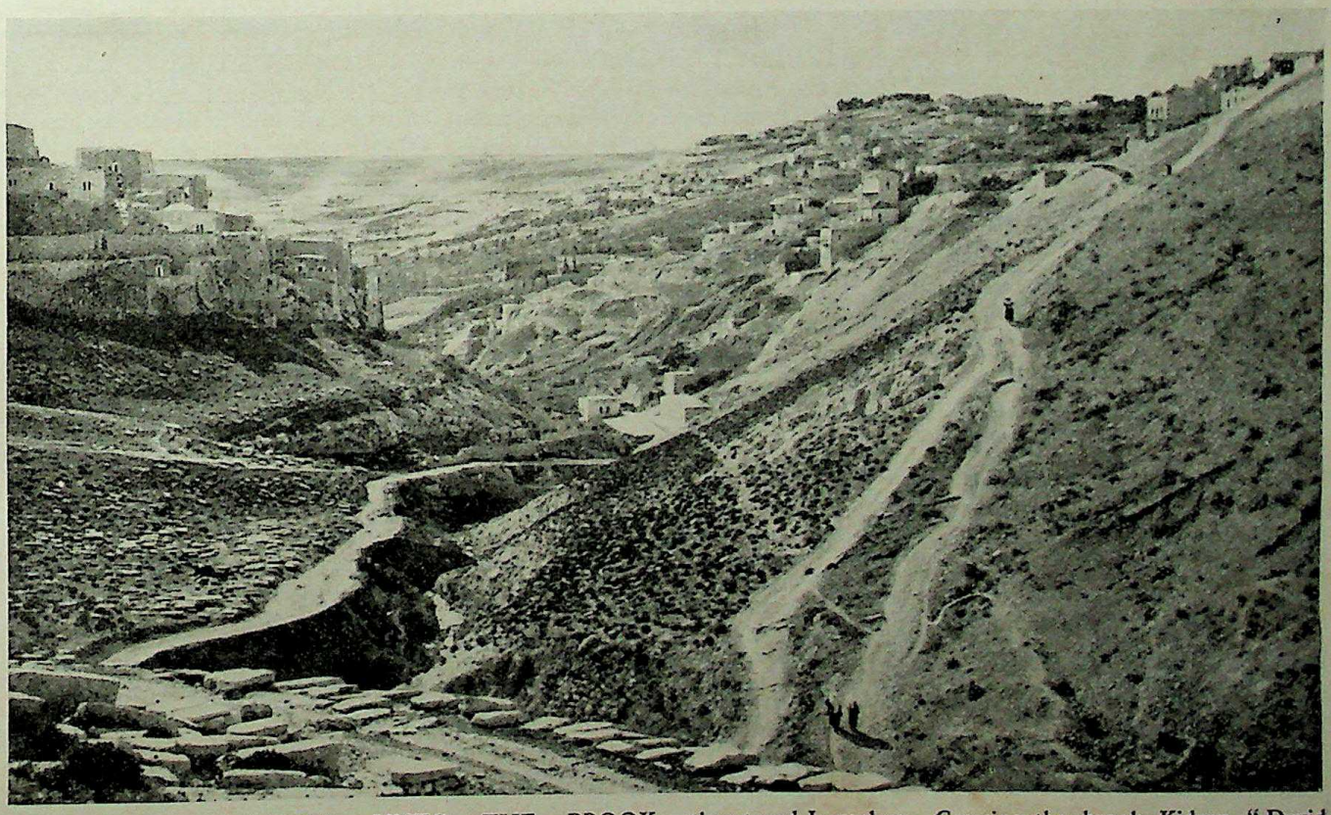
girdle, he concealed another in his left hand beneath his military cloak. When Amasa came to greet him, he caught him by his beard with his right hand and stabbed him with his left. Then the army moved on.

Sheba had fared rather badly in his effort to rouse the north, and with a band of his own tribe he occupied a town called Abel and prepared to defend it. Joab threw up a mound towards the ramparts, in order to batter them down. But before he could begin a woman appeared on the wall asking to speak with him. She made appeal to him not to destroy a town that was famed for its culture and influence. Joab promised to spare it on condition that the head of Sheba was flung over the battlements. The woman promised, returned to the city, and in a short time the rebel leader's head came hurtling over the wall. So ended the rebellion.

HERE the story of David's career, as given in this Book, ends. We get a glimpse of him as an old man too weary and worn for further struggle. A few chapters also are added containing one or two well-known stories, of which one has been related in the foregoing account. Another is the poignant story of Rizpah, whose sons were executed by the Gibeonites in revenge for some treachery of Saul long before. This woman settled down on the rock where the bodies of her sons hung in chains. For six months she kept watch, driving off the vultures by day and the wild beasts by night. When David heard of her devotion he sent and gave the bodies decent burial, thus assuring them, according to the ideas of the time, of a place in the underworld.

In the appendix also, there appears a long thanksgiving song said to have been sung by David to celebrate his victories. The book ends with the story of how David made a sacrifice to stay the plague which had come on the people, because of his sin in taking a census. We cannot now understand why this should be considered wrong. But we can all appreciate the sense of honour which made David refuse to take for nothing the things with which to make this sacrifice. He insisted on paying for them all. His final word sounds a note which is characteristic of his life of service to his people and to God. "Shall I offer unto the Lord my God of that which doth cost me nothing?" Could anything better illustrate the spirit of a man who, with all his failings, was described as "a man after God's own heart"?





"WITHOUT JERUSALEM, UNTO THE BROOK KIDRON." On the right of this view down the valley of the Kidron is Ophel, south-eastern hill of Jerusalem on which excavation has established the site of the City of David. The track running up the slope passes, near the top, the remains of a Jebusite rampart, unearthed in 1924. Down this hill David fled with his loyal subjects when Absalom and his rebels threatened Jerusalem. Crossing the brook Kidron "David went up by the ascent of mount Olivet" (II. Samuel xv, 30), here seen on the left. The houses shown on this mount belong to Siloam. From this village the inhabitants have always gone for water to the Virgin's Well by the white area, centre of the picture. This well or fountain is identified with Gihon spring. A key plan of the valley is given above.

Photo, Emmerson

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LITERARY BEAUTY OF THE BIBLE. X

Passages from First Samuel

THE Books of Samuel are not so entitled because the prophet was their author, but because he was the instrument of the establishment of the kingdom of Israel. In the new era soon appears a new form of literature. Annals were begun under the monarchy. Biblical history is not always history in the modern sense of the word. Poetry and tradition find a place in it; also lofty passages of praise and the high art of story-weaving. The Hebrew historians belonged to priestly and prophetic groups who pondered devoutly over their work, compiling records for edification and instruction. Their inspiration was a practical faith in God which made it impossible for them to separate conduct from religion. This spiritual consciousness is the literary genius of their writings and informs all their historical narratives. Compiled to be read publicly as well as privately, they are rendered more effective by a certain use of repeated formulas, play upon words, and an oratorical style.

PORTRAYALS of three great and widely contrasted characters, Samuel, the hero-prophet, Saul the king, and David, shepherd boy and outlaw, are the outstanding features of this Book, which begins with the birth of the prophet. The song of praise of his mother Hannah may well be interestingly compared with the thanksgiving of Zacharias, father of John the Baptist (Luke ii, 68-79). The tragedy of Saul is developed from two narratives blended in the account of his rise to kingship and his decline. A masterly impression emerges of the sombre king afflicted by the evil spirit of jealousy. Browning's poem "Saul" may be read correlatively; it will enhance appreciation of the concise Biblical characterization.

THANKSGIVING
ii, 1—7, 9, 10

MY heart rejoiceth in the Lord,
Mine horn is exalted in the Lord;
My mouth is enlarged over mine enemies;
Because I rejoice in thy salvation.
There is none holy as the Lord:
For there is none beside thee:
Neither is there any rock like our God.

Talk no more so exceeding proudly;
Let not arrogancy come out of your mouth:
For the Lord is a God of Knowledge,
And by him actions are weighed.
The bows of the mighty men are broken,
And they that stumbled are girded with strength.
They that were full have hired out themselves for bread;
And they that were hungry ceased:
So that the barren hath born seven;
And she that hath many children is waxed feeble.

The Lord killeth, and maketh alive;
He bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up.
The Lord maketh poor, and maketh rich:
He bringeth low, and lifteth up.

He will keep the feet of his saints,
And the wicked shall be silent in darkness;
For by strength shall no man prevail.
The Lord shall judge the ends of the earth;
And he shall give strength unto his king,
And exalt the horn of his anointed.

SAUL AND DAVID
xviii, 6—8, 10, 11

AND it came to pass as they came, when David was returned from the slaughter of the Philistine, that the women came out of all cities of Israel, singing and dancing, to meet king Saul, with tabrets, with joy, and with instruments of musick. And the women answered one another as they played, and said,

Saul hath slain his thousands,
And David his ten thousands.

And Saul was very wroth, and the saying displeased him; and he said, They have ascribed unto David ten thousands, and to me they have ascribed but thousands: and what can he have more but the kingdom?

And it came to pass on the morrow, that the evil spirit from God came upon Saul, and he prophesied in the midst of the house: and David played with his hand, as at other times: and there was a javelin in Saul's hand. And Saul, cast the javelin; for he said, I will smite David even to the wall with it. And David avoided out of his presence twice.

WITCH OF EN-DOR
xxviii, 7, 8, 11—20

THEN said Saul unto his servants, Seek me a woman that hath a familiar spirit, that I may go to her, and enquire of her. And his servants said to him, Behold, there is a woman that hath a familiar spirit at En-dor. And Saul disguised himself, and put on other raiment, and he went, and two men with him, and they came to the woman by night: and he said, I pray thee, divine unto me by the familiar spirit, and bring me him up, whom I shall name unto thee.

Then said the woman, Whom shall I bring up unto thee? And he said, Bring me up Samuel.

And when the woman saw Samuel, she cried with a loud voice: and the woman spake to Saul, saying, Why hast thou deceived me? for thou art Saul. And the king said unto her, Be not afraid: for what sawest thou? . . . . And she said, An old man cometh up; and he is covered with a mantle. And Saul perceived that it was Samuel, and he stooped with his face to the ground and bowed himself.

And Samuel said to Saul, Why hast thou disquieted me, to bring me up? And Saul answered, I am sore distressed; for the Philistines make war against me, and God is departed from me, and answereth me no more, neither by prophets, nor by dreams: therefore I have called thee, that thou mayest make known unto me what I shall do.

Then said Samuel, Wherefore then dost thou ask of me, seeing the Lord is departed from thee, and is become thine enemy? . . . . for the Lord hath rent the kingdom out of thine hand, and given it to thy neighbour, even to David: because thou obeyedst not the voice of the Lord, nor executedst his fierce wrath upon Amalek, therefore hath the Lord done this thing unto thee this day. Moreover the Lord will also deliver Israel with thee into the hand of the Philistines: and to morrow shalt thou and thy sons be with me: the Lord also shall deliver the host of Israel into the hand of the Philistines.

Then Saul fell straightway all along on the earth, and was sore afraid, because of the words of Samuel: and there was no strength in him.

KING SAUL'S DEATH
xxxi, 1—6

NOW the Philistines fought against Israel: and the men of Israel fled from before the Philistines, and fell down slain in Mount Gilboa. And the Philistines followed hard upon Saul and upon his sons; and the Philistines slew Jonathan, and Abinadab, and Melchi-shua, Saul's sons. And the battle went sore against Saul, and the archers hit him; and he was sore wounded of the archers.

Then said Saul unto his armour-bearer, Draw thy sword, and thrust me through therewith: lest these uncircumcised come and thrust me through, and abuse me. But his armourbearer would not; for he was sore afraid. Therefore Saul took a sword, and fell upon it. And when his armourbearer saw that Saul was dead, he fell likewise upon his sword, and died with him. So Saul died, and his three sons, and his armourbearer, and all his men, that same day together.

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Samuel I. & II.

II. The Story of the Books

How a Gallery of Inimitable Portraits Came into Being

by REV. A. R. S. KENNEDY, D.D., LL.D.

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THE Books which bear the name of First and Second Samuel are really one book, the Book of Samuel, and are found as such in Hebrew manuscripts and in the first printed editions of the Hebrew Bible. This name was doubtless suggested by the prominent part played by Samuel, the seer of Ramah, in the early chapters of the narrative. The division of the Book into two parts—this applies also to the Book of Kings—is due to the Jews of Alexandria who translated these books into Greek about the middle of the third century before our era. Jerome, in his Latin translation known as the Vulgate (A.D. 400), followed the example of the Alexandrians, but gave to the books in question the titles First, Second, Third, Fourth Book of Kings. These are given as alternative titles in our Authorized Version (A.V.), but have been dropped in the Revised Version (R.V.).

The theme of the Book(s) of Samuel is, in brief, the introduction of the monarchy in Israel, and the fortunes of the first two Hebrew kings, Saul and David. To this is prefixed an account of the early years of Samuel, the king-maker. The presence of three summaries at well-marked stages in the history, viz., I. Samuel xiv, 47-51; II. Samuel viii, 1-18, and xx, 23-26 shows that the final editor of Samuel intended to divide his book into four divisions as follows:

Firstly, I. Samuel i-xiv—Samuel and Saul;
Secondly, I. Samuel xv-II. Samuel viii—Saul and David;
Thirdly, II. Samuel ix-xx—Memoirs of David's Court (continued in I. Kings i-ii);
and finally, II. Samuel xxi-xxiv—An Appendix of Various Contents.

Underlying Purpose of the Books of Samuel

IN approaching the study of the origin and literary history of Samuel, as of the other historical books of the Old Testament, in the light of modern research, two considerations of a general nature must be kept in mind. These concern the aim or purpose of the compilers of these Books, and the method of composition which they adopted. As regards the former consideration it was not the primary aim of these unknown compilers to provide their readers with history in the strict sense of the word, that is with an objective presentation in proper sequence of the outstanding events of a given period. Such narrative histories had already been written and were accessible to all, as we see from the references to certain of them by the compiler of Kings (*see* I. Kings xi, 41; xiv, 19, etc.).

On the contrary, the authors or compilers of Judges, Samuel, and Kings belong to the so-called pragmatic school of historians which "treated the facts of history with reference to their practical lessons" ("Concise Oxford Dictionary"). Their aim, in short, was the interpretation of the history of Israel on a moral and religious basis. They sought from the standpoint of their own religious beliefs—from their religious philosophy of history, so to say—to interpret to their contemporaries God's discipline in history of His chosen people. They would have agreed with Lord Acton that "the great achievement of history is to develop and perfect and arm conscience."

It was this belief and this purpose that determined the selection of their material from the fuller sources at their command. Hence, for example, the meagre account of David's wars and of his internal administration in the Book of Samuel, and the many regrettable omissions in the political history of North Israel in the Book of Kings.

In this connexion it may be mentioned that in the Hebrew Bible the four historical books, Joshua to Kings, bear the title "the Former Prophets," and are followed by "the Latter Prophets," Isaiah to Malachi, as if to indicate that these Books contain the prophetic interpretation of Israel's history. Their authors were regarded as in their measure prophets, for they were in a very real sense God's "interpreters" (Isaiah xliii, 27 R.V.), men in whom God had put His Spirit as a spirit of interpretation.

History Compiled from Several Sources

SO much for the first of the two considerations above referred to. The second concerns the method of composition adopted by these interpreters, of which numerous illustrations will meet us as we proceed with our study of the literary history of Samuel. It will suffice here to say that it is now universally recognized that none of the historical books above named is throughout the product of a single pen, marked by a homogeneous style and a consistent standpoint, as in the case of a typical modern history. Like other early historians, and like the monastic chroniclers of the Middle Ages, the Hebrew pragmatic historian was content with reproducing the very words of his documentary sources. (The compiler of Chronicles does the same with his sources, our Books of Samuel and Kings). These extracts he wove into a connected narrative, supplying only the necessary connecting links, and in some cases—by no means all, as we shall see—harmonizing the more glaring inconsistencies to be found therein. This procedure explains why modern scholars prefer to speak of the compilers, rather than of the authors, of the Books in question.

Passing now from these considerations applicable to all the historical books of the Old Testament to the particular case of the Book of Samuel, let us take note of one of the most evident and convincing proofs that it is not a homogeneous narrative by a single writer, but derives its material from more than one older documentary source. This proof is supplied by the repeated occurrence of so-called doublets. By this term is meant parallel but divergent, and in some cases contradictory, accounts of one and the same historical incident. Thus, to give only one or two examples, we have two inconsistent accounts of the origin of the popular saying: "Is Saul also among the prophets?" (I. Samuel x, 11, 12, and xix, 18-24). The two irreconcilable accounts of David's

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introduction to Saul in I. Samuel xvi, 14-23 and xvii, 55-58, are familiar to every reader of Samuel. Again, the story of the two occasions on which David spared the life of Saul in I. Samuel xxiv and xxvi bears all the marks of traditional variants of a single incident.

The most convincing evidence, however, that the compiler has incorporated earlier conflicting documents in his narrative is afforded by the detailed account of the introduction of the monarchy in Chapters viii to xii of I. Samuel. A cursory reading of these five chapters conveys the impression that the dominant note is one of hostility to the monarchy as something contrary to the will of God for His people. But a closer examination reveals the fact that this attitude is not maintained throughout, but is confined to certain sections of the narrative. In other sections the monarchy is represented as the gracious gift of God, who has seen the oppression of His people at the hands of the Philistines (ix, 16).

Political Clues in Literary Detection

WITHOUT going into further details, it will be found that the passages hostile to the monarchy are these: viii, 1-22 (to which vii is the introduction), x, 17-27; xii, 1-25. The sections favourable to the monarchy are: ix, 1-x, 16; xi, 1-11, 15 (continued in most of chapters xiii and xiv). In Moffatt's translation the two sets of passages are printed separately. (In his Commentary in the Century Bible the present writer has used the symbols M for the document favourable and—for reasons to be immediately given—D, for that unfavourable to the monarchy, and it will be convenient to retain these symbols here.)

Further, there is a marked difference in the two documents in their representation of Samuel. In D he is represented as judge of all Israel, as in a sense God's vice-regent. In M, on the other hand, he is a local seer, honoured indeed in his own village, but unknown even by name to Saul, whose home was only a few miles away.

Finally there is the remarkable contrast in the description of the condition of the nation at this crisis in its history. In D we have an ideal state of peace under the judgeship of Samuel (vii, 13f.); in M the Hebrews are groaning beneath the heavy yoke of the Philistines. To sum up, in D the request for a king is represented as *an act of treason to God, the only king in Israel* (viii, 7 and more explicitly xii, 12b.); in M a king, implying leadership in war, has become a national necessity. *God himself takes the initiative and provides the king.* The hand of the editor can be seen in such harmonizing additions as x, 8 and xi, 12-14.

The respective dates of the two documents which the foregoing analysis has brought to light cannot be fixed with absolute certainty. On one point, at least, there is widespread agreement, namely that in M we have one of the oldest historical documents in the Old Testament, composed almost certainly in the reign of Solomon, *circa* 970-940 B.C. Regarding D, opinions differ, although here again it is agreed that, since it presupposes a long and unhappy experience of monarchical government, it cannot be dated earlier than the time of Hosea, *circa* 750 B.C. It was this prophet apparently who first expressed the opinion that the monarchy was not in the line of God's will (*see* Hosea xiii, 11). Accordingly some scholars place its origin in the 8th century, although they admit that it has received some additions of a later date. Others, on the ground of its affinity with Deuteronomy (*see e.g.*, xii, 14f.), and of apparent points of contact with prophets later than Hosea, would place its composition later, say round about 600 B.C., a view reflected in the use of the symbol D (Deuteronomic school).

Of the relative value of the two documents as sources for the history of the period there can be no question. The situation as depicted in M alone accords with what is known, or can be clearly inferred, regarding the conditions prevailing in the period of the introduction of the monarchy. In D, on the other hand, we have history as idealized by the piety of a much later age.

Of the rest of the first division of our Book it must suffice to say that in the first three chapters we have a fragment of a biography of Samuel, of which xv, 1–xvi, 13 may once have formed part. It cannot be so old as M, for it describes Samuel as "a *prophet* of the LORD" (iii, 20), not as in the older document a *seer* (ix, 9, 11). It may perhaps be assigned to the period of the later monarchy (*see* "Century Bible", page 18 and references there).

Chapters iv-vi, on the other hand, the story of the capture of the Ark of God by the Philistines, with no mention of Samuel, bears all the marks of a more primitive stage in the religious history of Israel. As originally composed it most probably went on to tell of the destruction of Shiloh by the Philistines, and of the Philistine conquest of central Palestine (cf. xiii, 3). It is not improbable that the author of the 10th century document M adopted these chapters as a suitable introduction to his narrative of the Philistine oppression and its outcome.

The closing verses of this division, xiv, 47-51, give a summary of Saul's conquests and of his family connexions from the pen of the Deuteronomic editor, who here takes leave of Saul before introducing his successor.

The analysis of the second main division of Samuel (I. Samuel xv—II. Samuel. viii) is more complicated. In consequence there is less agreement as to the various sources represented. There can be no doubt, however, that its contents are in the main derived from the early document M, to which, as we have seen, we owe the more trustworthy account of the establishment of the monarchy. To this main stock other matter has been added from time to time, specimens of the many floating traditions regarding David's adventures and exploits. Of these additions to the original narrative the most important is the late chapter II. Samuel vii, the promise of the permanence of David's dynasty.

Memoirs of David's Royal Court

THE third main division of Samuel, the Memoirs of David's Court (hence symbol C), II. Samuel ix–xx, of which I. Kings i–ii is the continuation and probable conclusion, is universally recognized as a masterpiece of historical narrative. Apart from the supreme excellence of its literary style, there is in it such vividness of presentation, combined with such an abundance of minute personal detail and acute delineation of character, that we are compelled to see in its author one who either himself played a part in the events he so graphically describes, or derived his information from those whose names are for ever enshrined in his pages. It is an attractive conjecture, but it is nothing more, that we owe these invaluable memoirs to the family of Abiathar, David's faithful companion and counsellor, whom Solomon afterwards deposed and banished to his ancestral home at Anathoth (I Kings ii, 26). In any case they can scarcely be dated later than the middle of the 10th century B.C. Whether, as many believe, they are the original continuation of the contemporary document M must be left an open question. The view so widely held,

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especially by German scholars, that our document C is from the pen of the early Pentateuch writer J, or one of his school, is not shared by the present writer. In his opinion C is considerably older. So, too, our greatest historian, Rudolph Kittel, who considers it older by some hundred years (*Geschichte des Volkes Israel*).

We have now reached the fourth division of Samuel, the miscellaneous appendix, II. Samuel xxi-xxiv. Here we have six passages of varying character, origin and date. The arrangement of these is peculiar. The first and the sixth, the story of the three years' famine (xxi, 1-14) and that of the three days' pestilence (xxiv) are near akin both in style and contents, and were probably the first to be placed in the appendix. Between these two cognate passages there has been inserted a list of David's paladins, with some of their more famous exploits (xxi, 15-22; xxiii, 8-39). This list in its turn has been split in two by the insertion of the two poems in xxii, 1–xxiii, 7. The bulk of the material is derived from early and reliable tradition. The poems, however, are later. Even David's hymn of thanksgiving in Chapter xxii, although included under his name in our oldest collection of Psalms (Psalms xviii), is in its present form acknowledged to be the product of an age of more advanced religious thought.

ASSOCIATED FOR CENTURIES WITH THE CAVE OF ADULLAM. **Near Bethlehem is the labyrinthine cavern of Khareitun, which a tradition, dating from the Crusades, identifies with David's fastness at Adullam. The two boys in the background of this photograph are standing at the cavern's entrance. Modern authorities suggest that the hill of Aid-el-ma, about 12 miles from Bethlehem, in a valley of the Shephelah, is a more probable location. Near the top of this hill are large caverns, partly artificial, which accord with the description (II. Samuel xxiii, 13, 14) of Adullam as a "hold."**

Photo, W. F. Taylor

LET us now sum up the results of this investigation of the literary origins of the Book of Samuel, distinguishing such as are fairly certain from those that, in the nature of the case, are more or less plausible hypotheses. At some time in the first half (970–950 B.C.) of the reign of Solomon there appeared two historical works, denoted above by the symbols M and C. So similar are they in style and literary merit, and so much at one in their sympathetic treatment of David, that it is not surprising that many of our foremost scholars regard them as being the product of a single pen. Their subsequent history can only be a matter of conjecture. It is likely that they were soon united, if ever they were separated, into a single history, and circulated as such during the remaining centuries of the monarchy, receiving from time to time additions from the store of popular traditions of the national hero.

In the years succeeding the publication of Deuteronomy (621 B.C.), an author, imbued with its spirit and with the anti-monarchical teaching of Hosea, re-wrote the early history of the kingdom, representing the institution of kingship as contrary to God's plan of a permanent theocracy in Israel. Many scholars, however, would, as indicated above, date this document, our D, a century and a half earlier, nearer to the time of Hosea. From these and other written sources, including a biography of Samuel, an unknown writer belonging, it is believed, to the so-called Deuteronomic school of historians, set to work to compile a fuller history of the period. There is reason to believe that he omitted from his work the whole of the precious Court Memoirs, with their tale of David's sins of omission and commission, as not suitable for that moral and religious instruction which it was his aim to provide. In their place, it is suggested, he composed the summary of II. Samuel viii as his conclusion of David's reign, retaining from the Memoirs (xx, 23-26) only the list of court officials now found in duplicate in viii, 16-18. The result of this editorial activity was the first edition of Samuel, dating —again largely a matter of conjecture—from the closing years of the Babylonian exile. At some later period a more liberal-minded editor, alive to the importance of the Court Memoirs, restored them to their fitting place, retaining, however, the summaries of his predecessor. This second edition is substantially our Book of Samuel.

NOW let us consider, in the first place, what the Book of Samuel has to teach us regarding the political and religious condition of the Hebrews under their first two kings, and in the second place what the book holds of moral and religious teaching for all time.

The value of Samuel for the history of Israel during the fateful century, *circa* 1070–970 B.C., cannot be overestimated. It is a commonplace of historical research that the nearer a document stands to the events it records the greater is its value to the historian. Here in Samuel, as we have seen, are preserved narratives which, in the case of the Court History of David at least, are those of eyewitnesses. The contemporary source M is further from the actual events, but is for the most part trustworthy.

In these we have a consistent picture of the loosely organized tribes, as we find them in the Book of Judges,

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gradually emerging into a nation with a distinct national consciousness. The record opens with the Hebrews groaning beneath the Philistine yoke, and goes on to tell us of the patriotic zeal of Samuel and his allies, the ecstatic prophets, who, under divine guidance, saw the need of united leadership under the strong hand of a king. Step by step we follow the partial success of Saul in his long struggle with the Philistines, and the greater achievements of his successor, who, by his foreign conquests, extended his kingdom into Syria on the north, and to the confines of the desert on the east and south. We see David's statesmanship at its highest in the selection of Jerusalem as the civil and religious centre of his realm. We are shown the jealousy that existed between the tribes of central and north Israel on the one hand, and the mixed clans that went to form the tribe of Judah on the other, a jealousy that came to a head in the disruption of the kingdom under Rehoboam.

From our Book we also learn how David laid the foundation of the civil and military administration of the state, which was further developed by Solomon. The heads of the civil administration were the Recorder, probably the official annalist or chronicler, and the Scribe or Chief Secretary (II. Samuel viii, 16f. ; xx, 24f.). David had also his council of state, of which two members, Hushai and Ahithophel, are known by name.

The village sheikhs doubtless retained their immemorial right as a court of first instance in the dispensing of justice. But the king was the ultimate court of appeal, and as such was supposed to be accessible to the meanest of his subjects (II. Samuel viii, 15 ; xv, 2-6). The ancient institution of the blood-feud, which persists to this day among the Arabs, was still in force, although the royal authority was able to exercise a salutary control over its application (II. Samuel xiv, 6-16).

On the military side David had his foreign bodyguard, " the Cherethites and the Pelethites," recruited from the far south (I. Samuel xxx, 14), under Benaiah. Next came the oft-mentioned " mighty men," professional soldiers who formed the nucleus of a standing army. Beyond these came the militia or levies, called to arms as occasion required, with David's nephew, Joab, in command.

If Samuel is of such supreme value for the history of the early monarchy, it is equally indispensable for the study of the early religion of Israel. Indeed, the data furnished by our book regarding the religious institutions, beliefs and practices of the period have contributed very materially to the formation of the now generally accepted views of the historical development of religious thought and practice in Old Testament times. " First the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear " (Mark iv, 28).

Primitive Conception of the Divine Power

UNDERLYING all, as the strongest bond of union between the tribes of north and south, is the cardinal belief in Jehovah, the covenant God of Israel. In this early period, it is true, His place and power are in His own land, " the inheritance of the LORD " and among His own people. David knows no greater calamity than to be driven from Jehovah's land to serve other gods on foreign soil (I. Samuel xxvi, 19f.). Between this primitive particularism and the attitude to heathen deities reflected in I. Samuel xii, 21 (from D) lie centuries of the progress of revelation.

The same is true of the primitive conception of sacrifice which we find in I. Samuel xxvi, 19 (M) compared with the great saying of I. Samuel xv, 22, which is the distilled essence of the teaching of the 8th-century prophets : " To obey is better than sacrifice."

To this Book of Samuel we are indebted for the picture of the temple at Shiloh, and of its priesthood and ritual of sacrifice. In the days of the early monarchy, as in those of the judges, the priestly duties could be performed by laymen. Samuel was not even a Levite, still less of the seed of Aaron. Not only did David himself offer sacrifice, but he installed certain of his sons as priests (II. Samuel viii, 18, R.V.—A.V. strangely renders " chief rulers " !). From Samuel also we have the fullest information regarding the mysterious oracle-giving ephod, so frequently mentioned as the means of ascertaining the divine will, and regarding the manipulation of its equally elusive lots, Urim and Thummim (I. Samuel xiv, 41ff. in the Greek text, xxviii, 6, etc.).

More important, however, is the fact that in Samuel we hear for the first time of the order of the prophets, although the relation of Samuel himself to the ecstatics of I. Samuel x, 5 is quite obscure. Yet it is true to say that " in his relation to the nation and its rulers Samuel was a typical example of the prophet as the spokesman and representative of Jehovah " (Kirkpatrick, " Samuel," page lv.).

David as Forerunner of Our Lord

IN this connexion a last word must be said regarding the prophetic promise—from a late source, it is true—of the perpetual duration of David's dynasty in II. Samuel vii, a promise which has been characterized as " the foundation of all subsequent Messianic prophecy." With the passing of the centuries David became more and more the ideal ruler, and his reign the golden age of Israel's past. What more natural, therefore, than that the Jews of later days, when subjection and persecution were their constant lot, should look forward to the day when a prince of the house and lineage of David should usher in the perfect kingdom of righteousness. The Jews still await the coming of that day. For us Christians the long-expected hour arrived on the first Christmas Eve when the angels sang :

> " Unto you is born in the city of David
> A Saviour which is Christ, the Lord." (Luke ii, 11).

It remains to conclude this brief exposition of the teaching of Samuel with a glance at its value as a storehouse of moral and religious instruction for our day and generation, and indeed for all time. The outstanding contribution of the Book of Samuel to religion and ethics is twofold. In the first place it teaches the great truth of God in history, and in the second place it brings out with startling clearness the nemesis of sin. As to the former doctrine, the compiler or editor of Samuel belonged to the Deuteronomistic or pragmatic school of Hebrew historians, whose aim has already been explained. This pragmatism, it is true, is not so explicitly set forth in Samuel as it is in Judges and Kings, but it is implicit in the story from first to last. For its editor, as for all his school, the history of Israel was ordained and controlled by the God of Israel. It represented " the march of the divine purpose across the tract that men call time." To the story of the century of Samuel and Saul and David we may apply the words of J. E. McFadyen. " The Old Testament, with its fine survey of the centuries, helps us to feel that history is not a chaos but an orderly progress, and that, despite innumerable obstacles and infinite

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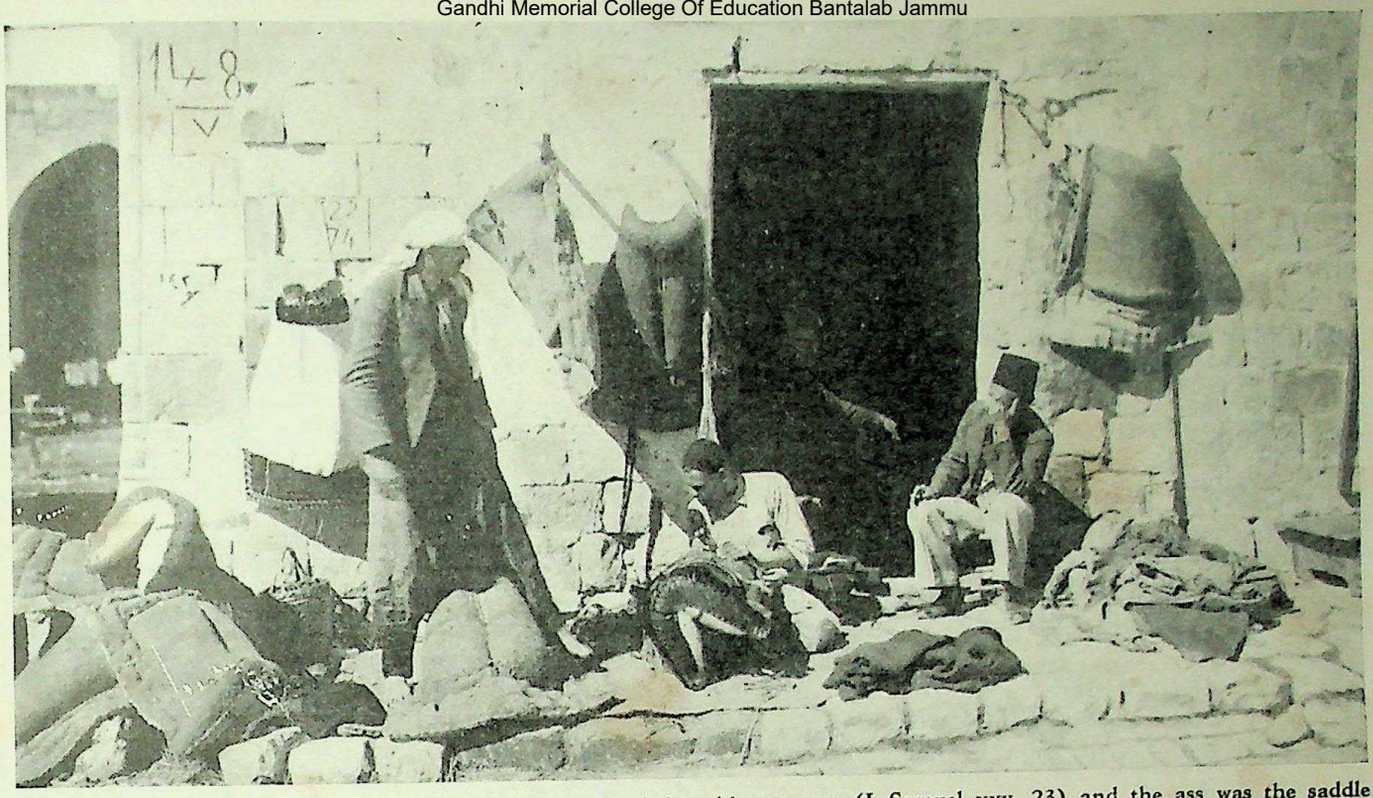

"I WILL SADDLE ME AN ASS." In the court by their dark workshop these Arab inhabitants of Nazareth are busily plying their trade of making saddles for donkeys, as much used now for riding in Palestine as they were in the time of David, when Abigail, wife of the rich and churlish Nabal, rode to meet him on one (I. Samuel xxv, 23), and the ass was the saddle animal of princes and prophets. The saddle itself is thickly padded and has a very high pommel. It is usually of bright colour and the accompanying bridle is decorated with tassels and sometimes with embroidery or ornaments of jingling brass.

Photo, Central Art Library

opposition, somehow the will of God is done, and, though it be through the wreck and ruin of other kingdoms, His kingdom comes" ("Message of Israel," p. 37f.).

The second doctrine is that of the nemesis of sin, the truth that sin ultimately brings its own punishment. This is most clearly proved in the case of David himself. With remarkable insight into character and an equally remarkable understanding of the relation of cause and effect, the author of the Court Memoirs allows us to see that the afflictions and sorrows that darkened David's later years all sprang from his adultery with Bath-sheba. At the same time he is at pains to assure us that sincere repentance procures the divine forgiveness. "The LORD hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die" (II. Samuel xii, 13).

To turn from private to public morality, the story of the Gibeonites and the house of Saul (II. Samuel xxi, 1-14), in which God appears as the avenger of a broken covenant, shows that to the conscience of Israel, even at this early period, a solemn covenant or treaty was not simply "a scrap of paper."

Of the various aspects of the religious life much may be learned or inferred from the narratives of Samuel. Take prayer, for instance, "the pulse-beat of every living religion" (Kittel). In our Book prayer occupies a prominent place. Hannah prays for a son, and David for the life of Bath-sheba's child. In the theocratic source (D) Samuel, himself the child of prayer, is represented as *par excellence* a man of prayer (I. Samuel vii, 5; xii, 19, 23). As such his name is linked with that of Moses by the prophet Jeremiah (xv, 1).

The most fruitful source of moral and religious instruction for everyday life must be mentioned in conclusion. This is the extensive gallery of historical portraits to be found in Samuel, portraits whose truth to life has been universally acknowledged. What a mine of instruction for Christian conduct is furnished by these men and women of like passions with ourselves! There is first of all the dominating figure of David, the lights and shadows of whose life and character are here painted by a consummate artist. Here is a man of real flesh and blood, at once warrior and statesman, loyal to his friends and magnanimous to his foes; a man who, as scarce another, held the secret of winning the selfless devotion of his followers, a man remiss as a parent, and on one memorable occasion guilty of a great sin, yet a man sincere in his religious belief according to his light, who in every crisis sought to know the will of God and strove to do it, and whose words in the darkest hour of all (II. Samuel xv, 26) find an echo in those of "David's greater Son": "Not my will but Thine be done."

Unforgettable Portraits of Great Personalities

CONSIDER further the mass of material for instruction in the formation of character, both for imitation and for warning, provided by the story of Samuel, patriot and prophet, the intercessor with God for his people, of Saul whose life of early promise ended in darkness, and of his son Jonathan, the Hebrew Bayard, *sans peur et sans reproche*, whose friendship with David is one of the high lights of Hebrew story. Nor can we forget David's undutiful son, Absalom, whose career is a study in moral deterioration, or his nephew and captain-general, Joab, the son of Zeruiah, whose unwavering loyalty and martial prowess help to redeem other less admirable qualities, or Joab's no less faithful brother, the impulsive Abishai, or the foreign soldier, Ittai the Gittite, and his devotion to what must then have seemed a losing cause. "And what shall I more say" of Hannah, the type of pious motherhood, of Rizpah, the never-to-be-forgotten example of a mother's self-sacrificing devotion, and of the other memorable figures that pass across the stage in this great Book of Samuel.

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LITERARY BEAUTY OF THE BIBLE. XI

Elegy and Song from II. Samuel

DAVID'S lament for Saul and Jonathan, known as The Song of the Bow and one of the greatest elegies ever composed, is taken from the lost Book of Jasher. Effectively "the sweet psalmist of Israel" uses the oratorical device of exclamation in the last two lines, bringing the poem to a swift conclusion with the repetition of its second line "How are the mighty fallen" rearranged to take first place in the final couplet. In studying the parallelism of the lines it may be noted that the fifth and sixth lines afford an example of a couplet in which the idea is repeated; that in the couplet "They were swifter than eagles, They were stronger than lions" contrast of idea is employed; while comparison strengthens the line "Thy love to me was wonderful," with "Passing the love of women." In the vividly written account of the report of Absalom's death to the King, suspense is sustained by the waiting for the approach of the two runners. The fatal news told so impressively by the second, leads up to the climax of poignant bewailment. This passage is from the portion of II. Samuel, usually known as The Court History of David (Chapters ix-xx). The English rendering of David's lament for Absalom is considered by scholars to come very close to the impassioned effect of the original Hebrew.

WITH slight variations the long song of thanksgiving in Chapter xxii appears as Psalm xviii. It commemorates David's deliverance from persecution and from Saul, his "strong enemy." The poet takes his imagery from the storm. The figure of speech "At the blast of the breath of thy nostrils" should be compared with that in The Song of the Red Sea (Exodus xv, 8). Nature and natural phenomena to the Hebrew writers reflected the qualities of Jehovah and everything in the universe was created to serve and praise Him. They composed beautiful and direct word pictures from what they saw.

SONG OF THE BOW
i, 19, 20, 22, 23, 25—27

THE beauty of Israel is slain upon thy high places:
How are the mighty fallen!
Tell it not in Gath,
Publish it not in the streets of Askelon;
Lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice,
Lest the daughters of the uncircumcised triumph.

From the blood of the slain,
From the fat of the mighty,
The bow of Jonathan turned not back,
And the sword of Saul returned not empty.
Saul and Jonathan were lovely and pleasant in their lives,
And in their death they were not divided:
They were swifter than eagles,
They were stronger than lions.

How are the mighty fallen in the midst of the battle!
O Jonathan, thou wast slain in thine high places.
I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan:
Very pleasant hast thou been unto me:
Thy love to me was wonderful,
Passing the love of women.
How are the mighty fallen,
And the weapons of war perished!

LAMENT FOR ABSALOM
xviii, 24—29, 31—33

AND David sat between the two gates: and the watchman went up to the roof over the gate unto the wall, and lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold a man running alone. And the watchman cried, and told the king. And the king said, If he be alone, there is tidings in his mouth. And he came apace, and drew near. And the watchman saw another man running: and the watchman called unto the porter, and said, Behold another man running alone. And the king said, He also bringeth tidings. And the watchman said, Me thinketh the running of the foremost is like the running of Ahimaaz the son of Zadok . . . . And Ahimaaz called, and said unto the king, All is well . . . . . .

And the king said, Is the young man Absalom safe? And Ahimaaz answered, When Joab sent the king's servant, and me thy servant, I saw a great tumult, but I knew not what it was. And, behold, Cushi came; and Cushi said, Tidings, my lord the king: for the LORD hath avenged thee this day of all them that rose up against thee. And the king said unto Cushi, Is the young man Absalom safe? And Cushi answered, The enemies of my lord the king, and all that rise against thee to do thee hurt, be as that young man is.

And the king was much moved, and went up to the chamber over the gate, and wept: and as he went, thus he said,

O my son Absalom,
My son, my son Absalom!
Would God I had died for thee,
O Absalom, my son, my son!

HYMN OF PRAISE
xxii, 4—8, 10—19, 31—34, 50, 51

I WILL call on the Lord, who is worthy to be praised:
So shall I be saved from mine enemies.
When the waves of death compassed me,
The floods of ungodly men made me afraid;
The sorrows of hell compassed me about;
The snares of death prevented me;
In my distress I called upon the Lord,
And cried to my God:
And he did hear my voice out of his temple,
And my cry did enter into his ears.
Then the earth shook and trembled;
The foundations of heaven moved
And shook, because he was wroth.

He bowed the heavens also, and came down;
And darkness was under his feet,
And he rode upon a cherub, and did fly:
And he was seen upon the wings of the wind.
And he made darkness pavilions round about him,
Dark waters, and thick clouds of the skies.
Through the brightness before him were coals of fire kindled.
The Lord thundered from heaven,
And the most High uttered his voice.
And he sent out arrows, and scattered them;
Lightning, and discomfited them.
And the channels of the sea appeared,
The foundations of the world were discovered,
At the rebuking of the Lord,
At the blast of the breath of his nostrils.
He sent from above, he took me;
He drew me out of many waters;
He delivered me from my strong enemy,
And from them that hated me: for they were too strong for me.
They prevented me in the day of my calamity;
But the Lord was my stay.

As for God, his way is perfect;
The word of the Lord is tried;
He is a buckler to all them that trust in him.
For who is God, save the Lord?
And who is a rock, save our God?
God is my strength and power:
And he maketh my way perfect.
He maketh my feet like hinds' feet
And setteth me upon my high places.

Therefore I will give thanks unto thee,
O Lord, among the heathen,
And I will sing praises unto thy name.
He is the tower of salvation for his king:
And sheweth mercy to his anointed,
Unto David, and to his seed for evermore.

VALEDICTION
xxiii, 1—4

NOW these be the last words of David.

David the son of Jesse said,
And the man who was raised up on high,
The anointed of the God of Jacob,
And the sweet psalmist of Israel said,
The Spirit of the Lord spake by me,
And his word was in my tongue.
The God of Israel said,
The Rock of Israel spake to me,
He that ruleth over men must be just,
Ruling in the fear of God.
And he shall be as the light of the morning,
When the sun riseth,
Even a morning without clouds;
As the tender grass springing out of the earth
By clear shining after rain.

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"THE PHILISTINES GATHERED . . . AND PITCHED IN SHUNEM"

Hidden from our view by one of the gardens for which this Arab village is famed are the houses of Shunem on the lower slopes of Little Hermon, south of Mount Tabor. Facing the Israelites' encampment on Gilboa, the Philistines mustered round Shunem before Saul's final battle and defeat (I. Samuel xxviii, 4). In the garden pictured above are olive and almond trees, date palms and—most conspicuous on the right—the cactus opuntia, or prickly pear, largely cultivated by the natives for its sweet and cooling fruit. This cactus is also planted in Palestine as a protective hedge for the orange orchards into which improved agricultural methods have converted many formerly waste places on the fertile plains.

Photo American Colony in Jerusalem

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"THE MAN WAS VERY GREAT . . . AND, BEHOLD, HE HELD A FEAST"

One of the important agricultural feasts in Canaan was that given by landowners for their shearers. Nabal, rich owner of "three thousand sheep" in Carmel (I. Samuel xxv, 2, 36), was thus entertaining his people when his wife Abigail returned after her errand of bounty had averted the slaughter which would otherwise have resulted from his churlish refusal of food to the outlawed David. At a time of abundance such meanness was in oriental eyes unpardonable. In the Moslem calendar today are feasts of agricultural origins. The meal is served in the open air and the guests are grouped, five or six round a common dish, as pictured above. Dancing—accompanied by musicians, like David "cunning in playing"—and sports follow the feast as in days of old.

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WITNESS TO A POWER THAT HAD WANED BY THE TIME OF SAUL

The life-size figure of a Hittite priest-king, sculptured in relief on the face of a cliff by the river Jeihan, was found in 1937 during the Neilson Expedition's work in Cilicia. It is the only rock-carving of its kind discovered south of the Taurus Mountains, and in contrast to most representations of imperial Hittites it is bearded. Hieroglyphics behind the head give the name of King Muwatalli. Professor Garstang strongly argues for the identification of this king with the Muwatalli who was defeated by Pharaoh at the battle of Kedesh, about 1287 B.C. The Hittite armies were then levied from all parts of Asia Minor and probably assembled at Aleppo in Syria. At the time of the establishment of the monarchy in Israel the vast Hittite realms, once including all Asia Minor, had dwindled to a mere Syrian confederacy.

Photo, courtesy of Professor Garstang, Director of the Neilson Expedition to the Near East

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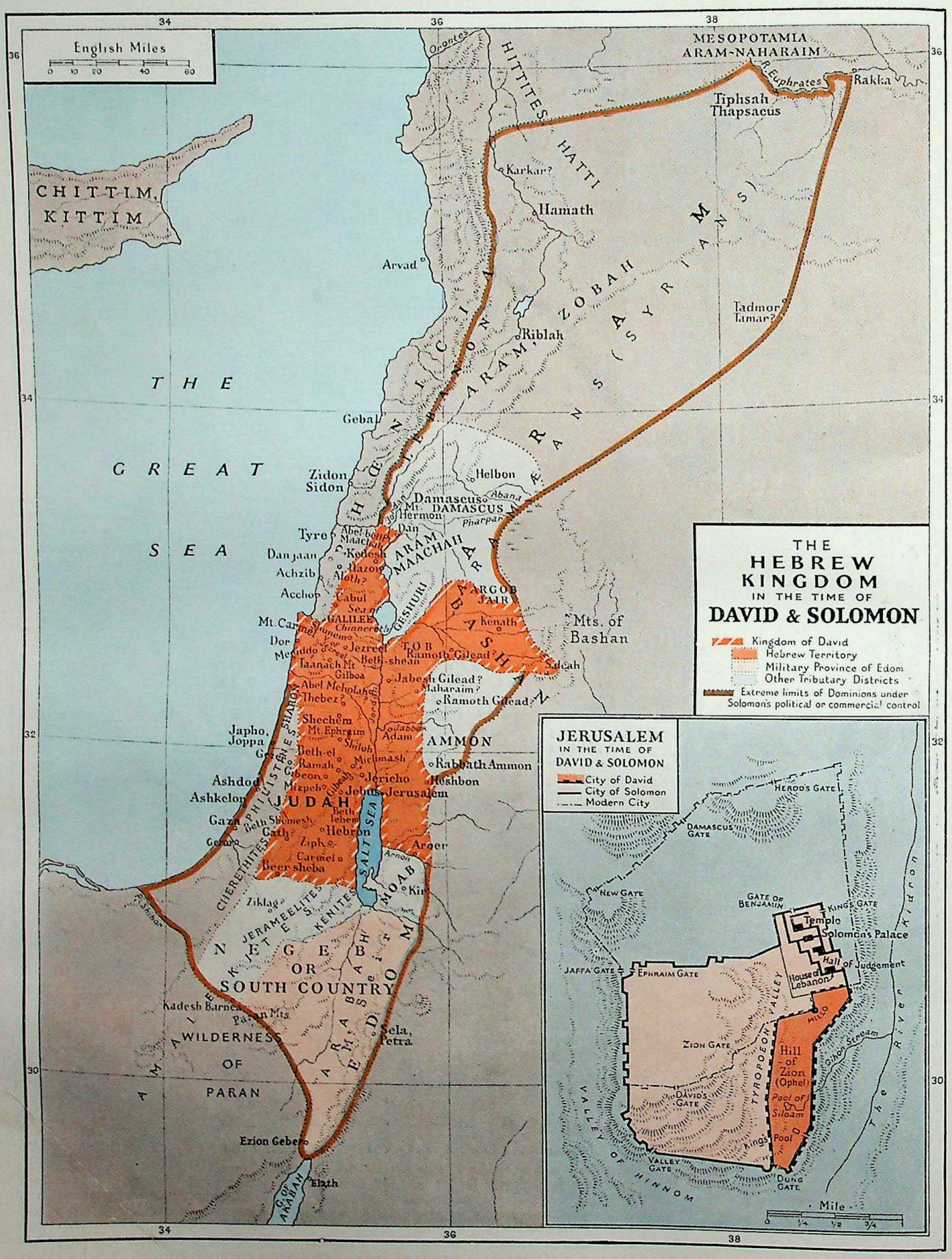

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Samuel I. & II.

III. The Land of the Books

Philistine and Hebrew in the Land of Promise

by REV. F. J. HOLLIS, D.D.

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THE two Books of Samuel in the English Bible cover an important period and raise many interesting problems.

Originally the Books of Samuel and Kings formed one continuous narration. But later the narrative in I. and II. Samuel was classed by the Jews as one, and was included amongst the works of the "former prophets"; yet Samuel and Kings were always looked upon as true history, for by the end of the 3rd century B.C., when the Greek translation was made, the original Book of Samuel was divided into two parts which were named the first and second of the four "Books of Kingdoms," that is they were the earlier part of the history of the Kingdoms of Judah and Israel. This division into two Books of Samuel has persisted; the establishment of the Monarchy is the theme. It is a story of how, out of a disunited group of clans, a compact and united people came into being.

Annihilation constantly threatened in those stern, hard times, when wandering and marauding bands seeking new homes trekked from barren regions to more fertile parts. Such threats in the past had been met by the combined efforts of two or three clans under a leader called forth by the crisis. But a new peril had arisen which threatened the very existence of the Hebrews. Hitherto the foes who had to be opposed had been but temporary invaders, but now a piratical, seafaring people had come, probably from Crete or the mainland north of Canaan, and though driven back by Rameses III from the Egyptian frontier at the beginning of the 12th century B.C., had established themselves on the sea coast of Palestine.

The beginning of this threatened invasion by the Philistines is portrayed in the Book of Judges; the invasion continued until, becoming more aggressive, this hardy and in some ways highly-civilized people had come to dominate the Israelites. The sphere of influence of the Philistines had spread from the five coast towns, over the plains and the lower hills west of Hebron and Bethlehem, dispossessing the Danites from their original settlement on the coast. In the short period of a century and a half from the time when we first hear of the Philistines they had become a grave menace, and it is clear that, if unchecked, a Philistine empire would undoubtedly have been established over the whole of Palestine and in all probability over the surrounding districts as well. Such an empire situated where the Hebrews were slowly making their home would effectually have prevented the uniting of the Hebrew clans and their final settlement in the Land of Promise.

It is interesting to speculate what might have been, for the Philistines had reached a state of culture far in advance of the Hebrews; they were well equipped for war and well organized, and over the disunited peoples of the land they threatened to establish complete sway and to build up a large buffer state between the northern and southern civilizations. They had completely blotted out the Hittite empire, and, gradually spreading inland from their sea-board cities, they captured Beth-shean. Thus by securing the most important passage of the Jordan they brought to an end the last vestige of the Egyptian occupation of Palestine.

"ABSALOM PREPARED HIM CHARIOTS." Though they imported horses from Egypt, the Israelites probably learned the use of chariots in war from the Hittites. In David's reign, two of his trusted warriors, Uriah and Ahimelech, were Hittites. Absalom and Solomon both had large chariot forces (II. Samuel xv, 1; I. Kings iv, 26). In this portion of a sculptural frieze from the public square of Carchemish, city of the Hittite Confederacy in Syria, existent in Samuel's day, a charioteer drives an archer into battle over a fallen foe.

Hebrew and Philistine Face to Face

THIS is the crisis which is narrated in the opening chapters of the first Book of Samuel. It was a crisis of great moment, and the Books of Samuel were written to show what actually happened, in spite of what seemed to be the almost certain course of events. The Philistines were well established, and it seemed that nothing could stop their permanent rule over Palestine and the neighbouring states; and yet they lacked something. Just that which made their final victory impossible was what called forth in the Hebrew clans who opposed them the necessary impulse to victory.

The Philistines were a confederacy loosely united, and their five cities with their five Lords of the Philistines illustrate to us that absence of cohesion which portended final weakness; above all, they lacked that religious unity which became the bond of strength to unite the Hebrews and bring them to victory. The Hebrews owed allegiance to a tribal god, Jehovah, with whom they had entered into covenant relationship; and this allegiance formed the necessary bond of unity and the impulse which led to triumph in the end. But it required a visible bond, someone who could hold together clans who loved their independence, someone who could use to advantage the warlike spirit of the invading Hebrew tribes. Thus the Books of Samuel record the circumstances which led to the selection, first of a Jehovah enthusiast, Saul, and, when his work was done, or as the editor of the Books conceives, when he was found

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unequal to the task, the selection of his successor David, another servant of Jehovah of a different type.

It is important for a correct understanding of the course of events at that time to inquire more particularly as to who were the Philistines and whence they came.

The problem is baffling and difficult and for its solution we seem led back many centuries to what is now considered a very important epoch in history. We must briefly consider what has recently been discovered concerning the great Hittite empire.

In the record of his achievements preserved in the inscription on a pylon of the temple at Karnak, dated 1494 B.C., we learn of the victory of the Pharaoh Thothmes III over the Hatti. This people, of whom little was known, have, during the last thirty years, been revealed to us as a highly cultured and very influential nation.

In 1907 Winckler made the great find of Hittite tablets at Boghaz Keui, and the deciphering of these was accomplished in 1919 by Hrozny. Hittite cities have been excavated in places separated by hundreds of miles, exploration has proceeded until we are now in a position to estimate something of the importance of this ancient civilized people.

Well skilled in the art of metal-work, in gold, silver and bronze, and even iron, as early as 2300 B.C., they constructed massive walls and buildings in which were stored works of art and statues, carving and monuments to be revealed to the explorer in our day. Their empire extended over the whole of Asia Minor and their sphere of influence from east to west was a thousand miles and more, and from north bordering the Black Sea to south five hundred miles.

This people, the children of Hatti, with whom Abraham is said to have had dealings, appear to have harried the inhabitants of Palestine from the north during many centuries; it is even thought by some that they invaded Egypt and perhaps were associated with the Shepherd Kings, foreigners who ruled over Egypt for about four centuries.

Decline and Fall of the Hittites

AFTER more than fifteen hundred years' domination of Asia Minor their power was undermined by a combination of Phrygians, Philistines and other peoples, who added to their own culture much which they took over from the ancient Hittites. Finally, what had been the Hittite Kingdom was absorbed by Tiglath-Pileser of Assyria about 1100 B.C., but their name and culture survived amongst the "Kings of the Hittites," a remnant of the ancient people established in northern Syria.

The great Hittite Empire of the days of Thothmes and Rameses the Great was no more. They had been defeated by the latter at Kadesh in 1288 B.C., but the great disaster occurred about 1200 B.C., when the new invaders amongst whom were the Philistines blotted out not only the kingdom but even the memory of that great Hittite power; so completely was their empire obliterated that nothing was known of them until the untiring efforts of the excavator of our day has revealed for us the story of their greatness.

Before their collapse they had founded the city of Carchemish on the Orontes and it is there that they were established as a Syrian Confederacy in the period covered by the Books of Samuel. Much of the ancient Hittite art, writing and culture was preserved, but as a race they absorbed much that was Semitic, losing their racial character in contact with the people amongst whom they settled.

Hittite Elements in Hebrew Culture

INFLUENTIAL men such as Ahimelech and Uriah were Hittites, trusted warriors of King David; clearly then there was contact in the days of Samuel and David with these Neo-Hittites.

From early times the Hittites as doughty warriors had bred and trained the horse, and it seems probable that the Egyptians first learned of the value of this animal from the Hittites, the Hebrews in like manner learned from the people of the north in the early days of the monarchy the value and use of the horse.

We have said that the great Hittite power was undermined by invaders, the Phrygians, Philistines and others; it would seem that the most likely home of origin of the Philistines was Crete and the Aegean Islands, their armour and portraits bearing a strong resemblance to that of the Achaean warrior of Homeric times. Certainly from the time of Rameses III, about 1200 B.C., we find them largely employed as mercenaries by the Egyptians, who as a reward seem to have permitted them to settle on the shores of Canaan. First then the Philistines came as Egyptian vassals, but soon, as the power of Egypt waned, they threw off every semblance of yoke and became the independent and powerful people we find established in the maritime plains in the days of Samuel.

Little is known of any art or literature of which they could boast, but from the few actual remains of their occupation, from such places as Gezer, Beth-Shemesh and Gath, we can form a picture of a typical Philistine house too wide to be spanned by a single roof beam, but with two lengths of timber whose ends were supported by a single upright column of wood resting on a flat footstone; such supporting column would not have proved impossible to shift for a man of great strength.

An interesting sword-furnace was also found at Gerar, and many weapons of bronze and iron together with flint knives and sickles, such as the Hebrews were compelled by their oppressors to use, have been discovered in the tombs at Beth-Pelet.

Pottery fragments suggest by their form and markings a close relation with those which have come to light in the ancient Hittite cities.

From a pottery mask found in a tomb and from monuments and sculptures it is possible to form some idea of the Philistine type of face—a large aquiline nose, a high and somewhat receding forehead, a short beard and plaited hair.

Such then were the Philistines who were dominating the Hebrews to such an extent that according to I. Samuel xiii, 19-21 the possession of swords and spears was forbidden by the oppressors. Only amongst the Philistines were forges permitted where the Hebrews could repair and reset their agricultural implements.

Interwoven throughout the early chapters are unmistakable marks of the dominating influence of the Philistines; their outposts (x, 5) were to be met with far inland; they had confiscated all arms (xiii, 19) and they had a large number of camp followers drawn from the Hebrews, possibly as slaves, and many of the Hebrews were in hiding (xiii, 6 and xiv, 21, 22).

The outstanding features then of these early chapters of I. Samuel are unmistakable; the Philistine influence is being felt in all parts, and the Hebrews are cowed; two or three traditions have come down that a King was elected to cope with the menace, and this king was Saul, a Benjamite. This man in all probability belonged to the group of ecstatic prophets; possibly in his times of ecstasy he was able to achieve temporary greatness, but his later years seem to have been marred by a sourness of disposition and a suspiciousness which completely counteracted the promise of early years.

Growing Importance of the Prophetic School

WE also note an importance attaching to the prophetic party; this party became more prominent in later years. Many of the changes of dynasty can only be explained by the large part taken in politics by the prophetic party. In early days, before the coming of the Hebrews, these wandering bands of ecstatic enthusiasts existed among the Semitic peoples; later they developed into bands of Jehovah enthusiasts, often irresponsible yet fervent devotees. It was one of Samuel's great works to bring some discipline into their lives and to form the schools of prophets. It is probable that these bands served to keep alive the primitive and purer Jehovah cult when later on they were disciplined and trained. That they exercised great influence over the destinies of the Hebrews is beyond question.

The Books of Samuel open with the scene set at Shiloh, where some form of temple had been erected. It is doubtful whether the conditions were such that the people as a whole were

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able to regard this as their only sanctuary. At all events Shiloh appears to have been an important centre of worship. The modern Seilun is generally identified with this ancient sanctuary. Excavations were begun in 1922 by a Danish scholar, Dr. Schmidt. As a result of these nothing more important was discovered than pottery remains; but pottery remains being indelible and almost indestructible are most important for the archaeologist. These shards, fragments of utensils of bygone ages, suggest that the Israelites were the first to occupy this site, that the main period of their occupation came to an end in the 11th century B.C., and no traces of their occupation are found after the 9th century. As the reign of Saul is usually taken to have been during the second half of the 11th century B.C. the modern Seilun probably marks the place where was situated a well-known and much-frequented sanctuary lying about thirteen miles north of Jerusalem in the territory of Ephraim. This sanctuary of Shiloh must have been a centre for the life of Israel at least south of the plain of Jezreel.

For the anthropologist the Books of Samuel are a mine of interesting folk-lore. The story of the Ark of God being sent into battle and the Philistines' attitude to the Ark, illustrate well the idea of the fortune of the people and of their national God being interdependent. For the Hebrews the name I-chabod, which means "without honour," given to the child born at the time of the disaster when the Ark of God was captured, exactly represented their state. For the Philistines the uncomfortable truth was slowly made clear to them that the mere possession of the symbol of Jehovah's presence did not necessarily mean that Jehovah was on their side. These stories belong to the earlier and more naïve strain in the Book and represent the popular and simple description of great events, events which led to the climax of Philistine aggression and the weakening and dispersal of the Hebrews.

The return of the Ark is narrated in glowing terms, and unusual and miraculous happenings are related to enhance the marvellous episode. The

"IRON SHARPENETH IRON." The Israelites used a file to sharpen their agricultural implements (I. Samuel xiii, 21), and here one is being employed to remove roughness from an array of jagged and bent sickles. Having given the blades a smooth and even surface, the man on the right hands them to his companion who passes them over a stone to produce the sharp edge essential for cutting corn. The men pictured are fellahin, settled Arabs of peasant class. In spite of some modern introduction of machinery into Palestine, field crops are still usually sown by hand and reaped with the sickle.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

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"DAVID TOOK THE STRONG HOLD OF ZION." On Ophel, the south-eastern hill of Jerusalem, stood the fort of the Jebusites captured by David and enlarged as his city (II. Samuel v, 9). Excavations have established the exact position of this on the western slope, pictured above, running up from the Pool of Siloam to the present walls of Jerusalem. Today the site is given up to market gardens. The building seen on the left of the ridge is the famous Dome of the Rock; next to it is the Mosque El Aksa. They are both situated on the site of Solomon's Temple on Mount Moriah.

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text is difficult and seems to be corrupt at the end of Chapter vi, and certain errors have probably crept in. The end of verse 18 may, with very slight changes, be read as "and the great stone upon which they set down the Ark of the Lord is a witness to this day in the field of Joshua the Beth-shemite," that is, the stone was still shown when he wrote and the narrator appeals to this as evidence of the facts which he relates. The following verse is full of difficulties, but by the help of the Greek translation we may hazard that the verse originally read "and the sons of Jeconiah were not unpunished among the men of Beth-shemesh, because they had gazed on the Ark of Jehovah; and he smote of them seventy men . . ." The words "50,000 men" are rejected by most scholars as being but a note written in the margin of the text of the narrative by some over-zealous scribe.

Sacred Stones, Hills, and Trees

THIS story of the return of the Ark is instructive, for it is clear that the writer believed that the kine came to a sudden halt because of the "great stone," the power residing in the Ark had guided them to the spot where they were to be sacrificed. The writer intends to show that the stone then became an altar. But the deity is still thought of as abiding in the stone, for it is a witness to later generations. Probably this stone and others mentioned in the Books of Samuel (I. Samuel xiv, 33-35 and II. Samuel xx, 8) were venerated from of old owing to the presence of the deity within them. Similar stories of sacred stones occur frequently in the Old Testament.

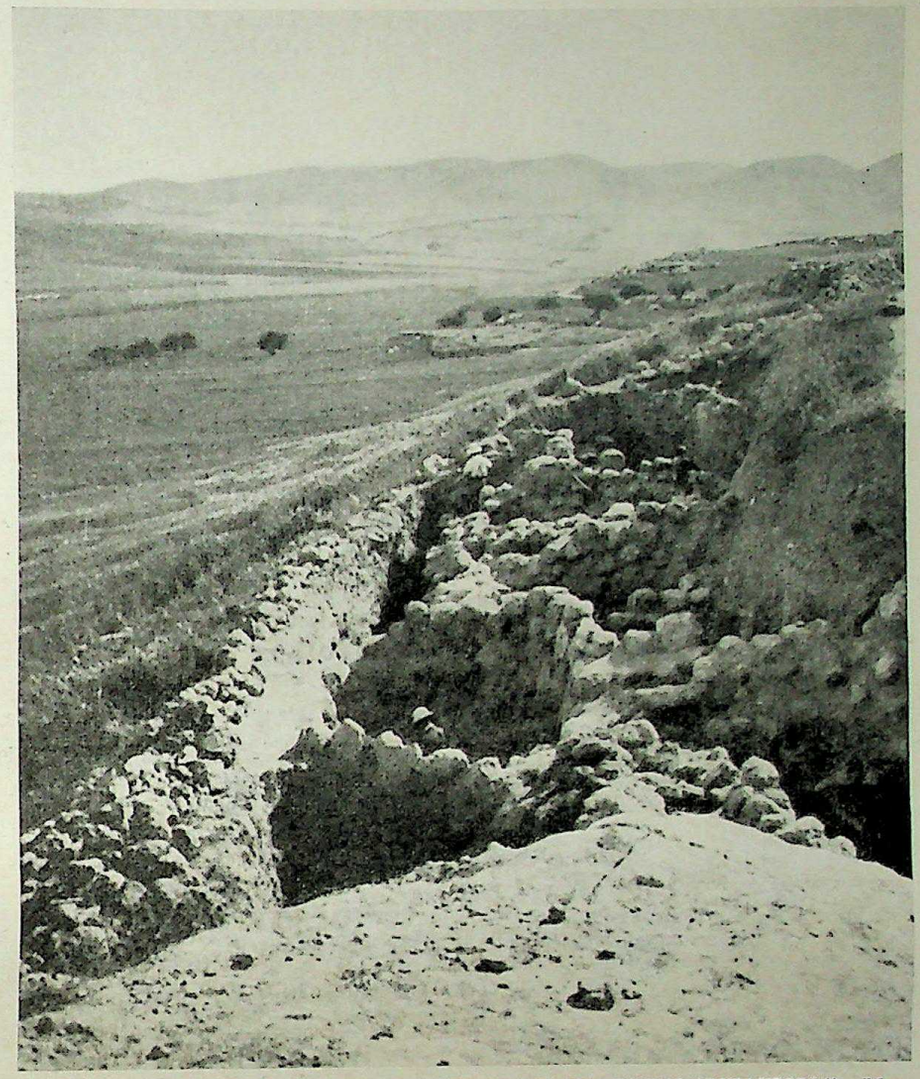
Many references also occur to sacred hills and trees. The sacred character of Gibeah, which means "hill," in the territory of Benjamin is clearly seen by its being called "Gibeah of God."

That the Mount of Olives was a sanctuary in ancient Israel is evident from II. Samuel xv, 32, for when David came to the top of the mount he worshipped God.

Not only was the deity supposed to reside in stones and hills, ancient trees were often associated with his indwelling presence. Places were named or occasions recalled by association with a sacred tree. In I. Samuel xvii, 2, we read of the vale of the terebinth, where the valley was known by the name of a single tree. Again we are told of Saul sitting in Gibeah under a tamarisk tree on the hill top, evidently to gain from the sacred presence inspiration as to his course of action.

Most interesting is the oracle recorded in II. Samuel, v, 23 and 24, the sound of the marching in the tops of the balsam trees would indicate the passage of Jehovah; the belief was clearly held that he entered into the trees and his presence was known by the rustling of the leaves.

The occasions when untoward happenings are related in connexion with the Ark illustrate clearly the ancient belief in the "numinous," that sense of the awfulness associated with the residence of the deity in an object. At Beth-shemesh when the Ark was returned from the Philistines and again at Perez-Uzzah, an unwitting error was believed to have been visited by an explosion of the divine power.



"THE KINE TOOK THE STRAIGHT WAY TO BETH-SHEMESH." Here is pictured the excavated section of the north wall at Ain Shems, site of the Biblical Beth-shemesh. The Valley of Sorek is seen to the left and in the distance the Judean hills. When the Philistines placed the Ark of the Covenant on a cart harnessed to two cows (I. Samuel, vi, 9, 13), the kine went of their own accord along this valley, main route from Philistia to Judea, until they arrived at Beth-shemesh within the Israelites' borders—sure proof to the Philistines that the plague which had stricken their people was due to unlawful detention of the Ark.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

A recent interesting theory has been propounded in regard to the Ark. It is suggested that just as it was the determined effort of later editors to claim that from early times there was but one centre of worship, namely at Jerusalem, so it was their set purpose to claim that from the time of Moses there was but one Ark.

From abundant evidence in the Old Testament itself it is clear that there were numerous sanctuaries where in all probability temples or places of worship were situated. These local sanctuaries were of ancient origin; though centres of cults debased and immoral in the eyes of reformers, yet they were popular centres of worship and were woven into the very fabric of the life of the inhabitants.

So it is thought that originally there were many arks or symbols of the presence of Jehovah. When the reformers of later times determined on the one sanctuary at Jerusalem they impressed this idea upon their legislation, making it appear that Moses had taught that there should be but one sanctuary; it is suggested that in the same way in order to bolster up the late doctrine of one Ark originating with Moses they removed as far as possible all early mention of numerous arks which were found in the traditions incorporated in the Old Testament.

IT is thought that in some passages where the "Ephod" is mentioned the word may originally have been "Ark." Arks may therefore have been associated with all the sanctuaries. These arks, the symbol of the presence of their national God, had been carried about by the nomads in their frequent wanderings and later when one group or clan settled in a district the ark remained the centre of worship.

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If we are correct in believing that the northern Israelites came to Canaan in separate groups, each bringing with them their cult object, an ark or small box-like structure, we find amongst these immigrants a different cult from that which came into Canaan with the Hebrew nomads from the south and south-west. Their symbol of the presence of Jehovah was the tabernacle constructed after the pattern of a Beduin tent.

It would seem to have been a master stroke on the part of David to have conceived the idea of bringing together the ark, the symbol of the northern cult, into the tabernacle or tent, the symbol of the southern cult.

The reign of Saul is depicted for us from two points of view; the earlier narrative, though taking the miraculous for granted, yet probably gives us a truer picture of the trend and course of events than the later narrative, which is clearly coloured by the views of the editor. In the earlier document we are introduced to Jonathan, who began the campaign by crushing a small garrison of Philistines. This stirred the Philistines to action and we have a picture of the fear inspired amongst the ill-armed and unorganized Hebrews.

This phase of the campaign is narrated in I. Samuel xiii; interwoven with the ancient material is part of the story of Samuel, who is depicted as condemning the King for hasty action in sacrificing a burnt offering before the campaign was started. Our sympathies are all with Saul who is accused of impatience, not of sacrificing wrongfully. This inserted fragment (xiii, 7-14), must have been the work of someone who assumed that the King had not shown complete submission to the divine will as expressed by Samuel, or perhaps it was but part of a larger narrative which in its complete form would not have seemed so harsh and arbitrary a condemnation.

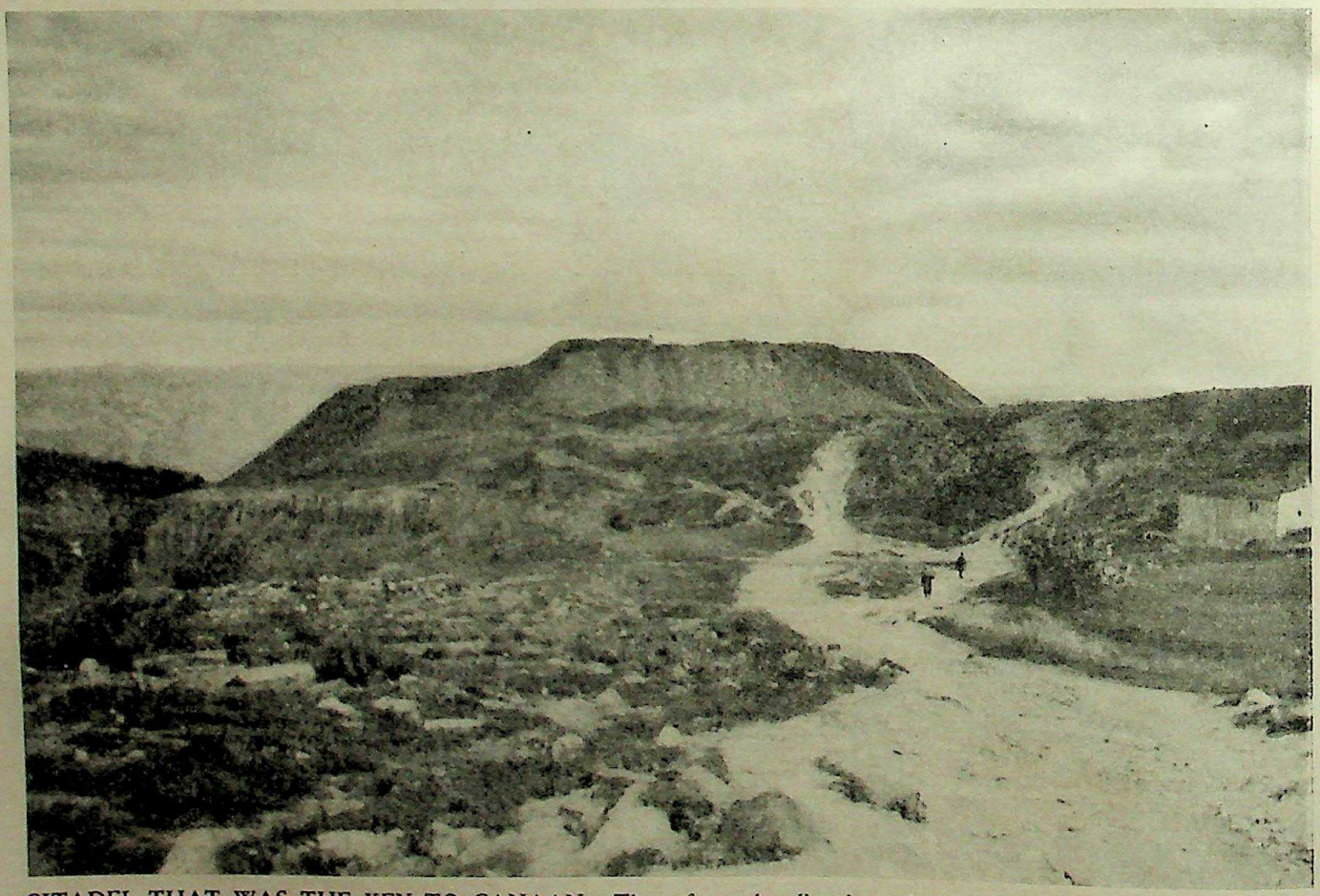
Philistine Disaster at Michmash

CHAPTER XIV, excluding verses 47-51, is typical of the early narrative. Jonathan is the hero, and with his armour-bearer only to accompany him approached a large force of Philistines, twenty of whom he slew. What exactly occurred then is not clear; perhaps there was an earthquake; at all events terror seemed to strike the Philistines and they fell upon one another. The exact locality of this pass of Michmash still remains a matter of dispute.

Dalman, following Conder and Rawnsley, placed this incident about two and a half miles south of Michmash in a very precipitous valley where there is "a tooth of rock that, like a tower on a bracket, hangs in mid-air at the angle of the rock cliff." But a position about a mile nearer Michmash up the valley seems to suit the incidents of the encounter better, for the valley there is very narrow and not so precipitous. All around the country is broken by lofty hills scarred by many a wady, covered with shale and broken boulders in the dry season, but converted into rushing torrents during the rains.

Saul, viewing the discomfiture of the enemy from a distance, then put a ban upon all food, a "taboo" of abstinence, hoping thereby to secure the continued assistance of Jehovah, who, he was convinced, was now with Israel and bringing them success. Such a "taboo" was quite in accord with the religious ideas prevalent in those times.

Perhaps the purpose of the preliminary fast was meant to be an appeal to Jehovah whereby his sympathy would be called forth and his help given. However it must be borne in mind that it was customary to offer sacrifice before a battle (I. Samuel vii, 9; xiii, 10), and sacrifices were always preceded by a fast; it is therefore possible that the fast before the battle was normally that



CITADEL THAT WAS THE KEY TO CANAAN. The rocky mound of Tell Hosn imposingly marks the site of Beisan, the Biblical Beth-shean. It is at the junction of Jordan valley with the narrow entrance to the Plain of Jezreel or Esdraelon, historic battlefield of Canaan. The city's position was thus one of great strategical importance, a guard against invasion from the direction of Mesopotamia. When Saul was king, though Beth-shean was unconquered by the Israelites, the inhabitants paid him tribute. After the fatal battle of Gilboa the triumphant Philistines entered (I. Samuel xxxi, 10) and, after stripping them of their armour, fastened the headless body of Saul and the bodies of his sons to the wall of Beth-shean.

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observed in preparation for the sacrifice and the sacramental eating of the holy flesh. War was thought of as a religious act; in fact, battles were considered to be between the tribal gods who inspired men as their instruments; men were therefore bound "to sanctify war," and this was the purpose of the preliminary fast.

Jonathan, being absent, had not heard his father's curse pronounced upon any who partook of food, and unwittingly brought Jehovah's displeasure upon the victorious Hebrews. The subsequent accusation, confession and condemnation of Jonathan are finely told, as is also the people's demand that he should be spared. Perhaps we have in this early story a hint of Saul's loss of popularity owing to his erratic character.

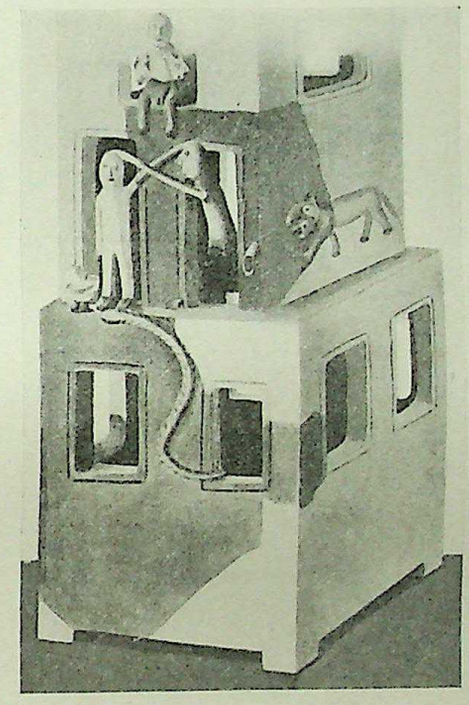
The complete estrangement of Samuel and the King is depicted in Chapter xv in the story of Saul's disobedience to the divine command to annihilate the Amalekites. This narrative belongs to the later tradition and has a strong moral lesson—"to obey is better than sacrifice and to hearken than the fat of rams; for rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry." Again our sympathies are with Saul, for we feel the harshness of this ancient ban whereby everything living was devoted to destruction.

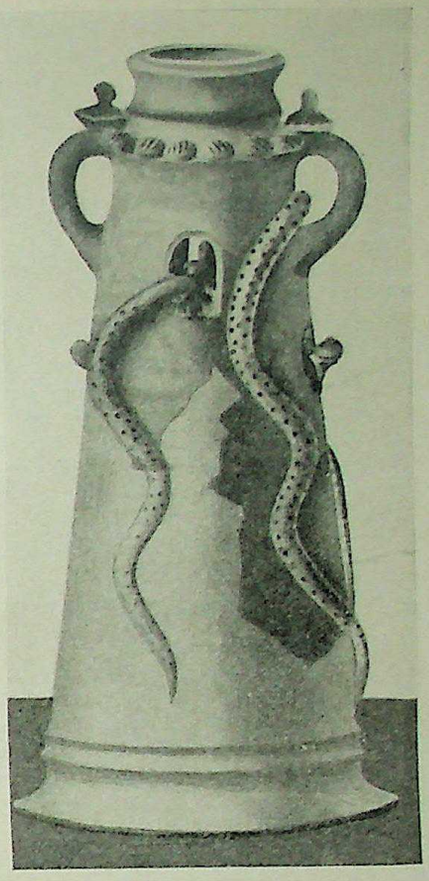
In considering this ban on all things living we have to remember that in those days the enemies of a tribe or nation were the enemies of the tribal or national god. The "herem" or ban was regarded as a particularly efficacious curse, which like other curses entered into the people and things against whom it was directed, and by its own power brought about their destruction. Lods speaks of this "herem" or curse effecting the release of a fatal power: "it seems" he says "to have been originally a magical rite, one of the many forms of war-magic."

Second Account of Goliath's Fate

THERE is an interesting duplicate narrative of the death of Goliath preserved in the Second Book of Samuel xxi, 19, where it is merely said that Elhanan "slew Goliath the Gittite, the staff of whose spear was like a weaver's beam." This tradition appears in a modified form in I. Chronicles xx, 5, where it is stated that Elhanan slew Lahmi the brother of Goliath the Gittite. The chronicler writing at a much later date may have had other information, or may have purposely altered the text so as not to detract from the exploits of David the national hero. It is interesting to note that the compilers of our Authorized Version allowed the tradition in Chronicles to influence their translation of this verse in II. Samuel, for they have inserted the words "the brother of" in italics. The name Lahmi corresponds to Bethlehemite of the older tradition. Possibly this record in II. Samuel xxi, is the statement of the actual fact. Not seldom in ancient times were the exploits of others fastened on to a national hero.

David in his flight from Saul sought refuge in the wild and rocky parts so frequently met with in the southern district of Palestine. The "Cave of Adullam," which should almost certainly be read as the "stronghold of Adullam," formed convenient headquarters, until the pursuit was too hot, when he had to go further south. Though this place has, until recently, from the 12th century onwards, been identified with a spot about four miles south-east of Bethlehem, we shall be much safer in accepting the suggestion of Clermont-Ganneau who





FROM ASHTAROTH'S HOUSE. When the Philistines entered Beth-shean after their victory over Saul at Gilboa "they put his armour in the house of Ashtaroth" to honour their idol (I. Samuel xxxi, 10). Found in this temple were the jug with serpents and the small shrine, shown above and left respectively. They are cult objects connected with the worship of the goddess and have been dated to the 13th century B.C., when Beth-shean was in Egyptian occupation.

identified it with "Id-el-miyeh," a steep hill on which are ruins of unknown date with an ancient well at the foot, and, near the top, caves of moderate size, situated about eight miles north of Hebron.

Chapter xxv, with the story of Nabal, illustrates the strict honour which David and his men claimed to have shown and their quiet demand for sustenance as a reward for their honourable behaviour. We are reminded of the stories of Robin Hood and his merry men; demands from the wealthy, if not willingly satisfied, might be ruthlessly enforced.

This incident concerning Nabal is said to have occurred at the time of sheep-shearing, an occasion of great rejoicing and festivities. Amongst the social and religious festivals which marked those days was that of the new moon. David excused himself from attendance at that feast, thereby bringing Saul's anger upon Jonathan (I. Samuel xx, 18, 24). The feast was very ancient and carries us back probably to one of the earliest forms of worship, that of the moon. For those who had reached an agricultural stage of culture the sun was most important; but not so for those who were in the nomadic stage. For them the moon was of paramount importance, travelling in search of new pastures by her beneficent rays was more tolerable than under the fierce heat of the desert sun. At every new moon joyful shouts hailed the appearance of the god and great festival was made in her honour.

Doubtless, too, the passover celebrated at the full moon of the month nearest the spring equinox was, as of old, one of the chief feasts of the year.

Of one other feast, that of "sheep- or flock-shearing," we have reference on two occasions in the Books of Samuel (I. Samuel xxv, 2, 36 and II. Samuel xiii, 23, 24). Like all the ancient feasts it was a joyful time when much eating and drinking took place. It, too, was a religious feast, clearly coming down from nomadic times, for if the increase of the flocks were due to the deity, so, too, was the gift of the wool.

In I. Samuel xxvi, 19 and 20, we have preserved the primitive conception of Jehovah's attachment to his land and people. David pleads that he should not be driven away so that he

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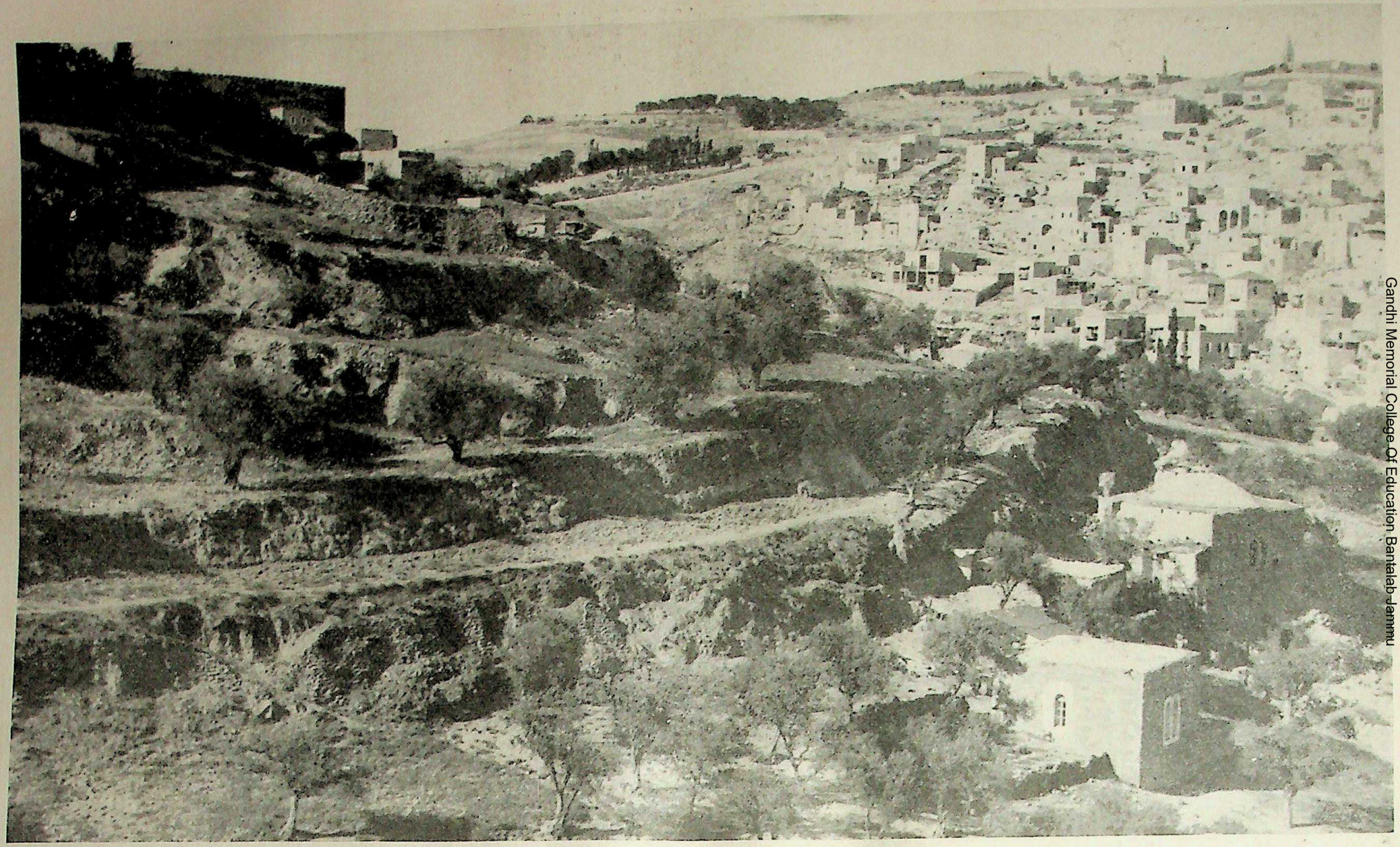

FOUNT OF THE WATER SUPPLY COMMANDED BY ZION. In the Kidron Valley at the foot of the eastern slope of Ophel is the Virgin's Fountain, identified with Gihon. The entrance is seen on the right of the photograph; beyond are the village of Siloam and the Mount of Olives. From the time of the Jebusites the spring has been the natural water supply of Jerusalem. How to command this within the walls of the stronghold in time of war was the problem of the inhabitants. They solved it by making a tunnel and shaft (*see* plan in facing page). From the top of the vertical shaft a rock-cut passage leads into the city. Three thousand years ago the women were going down this passage to draw water up the shaft from the tunnel reservoir, filling goat-skin buckets. They were not exposed to the enemy during a siege. But this same connective system was a weakness in defence. It was doubtless the "gutter" (II. Samuel v, 8) by which David's redoubtable captain Joab, leading his warriors, entered the citadel and took the garrison by surprise.

Photo, Bible Lands

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should lose the inheritance of the Lord by men saying "Go serve other gods." He fears lest his blood may fall to the earth from the presence of the Lord, that is, in other lands which belong not to Jehovah.

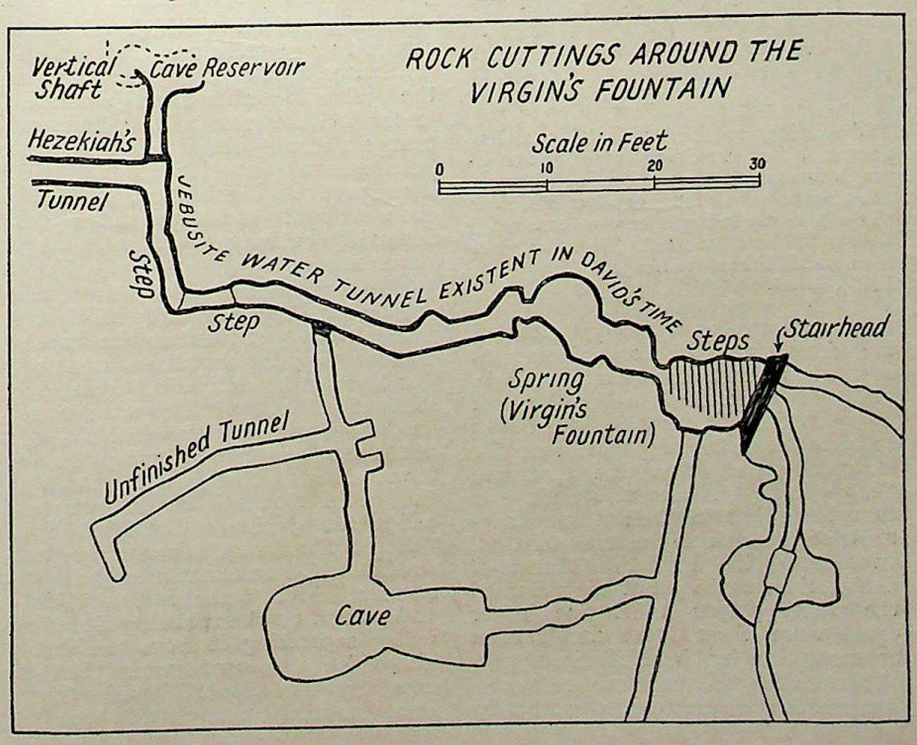
Throughout these narratives it is clear that David is depicted as reverencing the Lord's anointed regardless of his character and in spite of his hatred towards himself.

Of great interest is the record in Chapter xxviii, which depicts Samuel still operative though dead, being called forth by the Witch of En-dor. Necromancy was practised then and for long afterwards, in spite of the laws forbidding such practices, which were supposed by the later editors to have long been in force. This view is reflected in the opening words that Saul had put away those who had familiar spirits out of the land; it was assumed that a king would have enforced the laws which were thought to have existed. There are many indications such as this that the legislation of the Pentateuch was of much later date than during the early part of the monarchy in Israel; the later writers, however, could not imagine a time after Moses when the laws were unknown to all and sundry.

It was commonly believed that the spirits of the dead could by incantations and appropriate charms be recalled to be questioned about future events; such communications with the dead were in later years looked upon as disloyalty to Jehovah, for the normal method, the casting of the sacred lots Urim and Thummim, was available to all through the medium of the priest who gave their oracles thereby. From I. Samuel xiv, 42 and xxviii, 6 we gather that the casting of lots by Urim and Thummim was quite usual in those days. But that which had its roots in the far distant past was not likely to be easily eradicated. Spells and incantations

BEARING WATER FROM GIHON. These women mount the thirty-three steps from cavern to entrance of the Virgin's Fountain, Jerusalem's spring, known in Old Testament times as Gihon. Its rock-hewn works are shown in the plan. The water-tunnel of the Jebusites starts southwest of the spring-cavity, takes a sharp turn north to the cave where is a vertical shaft. Hezekiah later continued the tunnel to Siloam.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem



whereby the dead were appeased or their help enlisted were an integral part of worship, almost of life itself, amongst the Babylonians a thousand years before.

Other primitive forms of belief are borne witness to in the Books of Samuel. The teraphim were clearly household gods belonging to the head of a family. Such an image is spoken of as just a usual household object in I. Samuel xix, 13, 16. Some believe that the teraphim which were used for divination were also worshipped, a a relic of ancestor-worship.

Saul's reign had opened (I. Samuel xi) with a campaign to avenge the insult offered to the men of Jabesh-Gilead:

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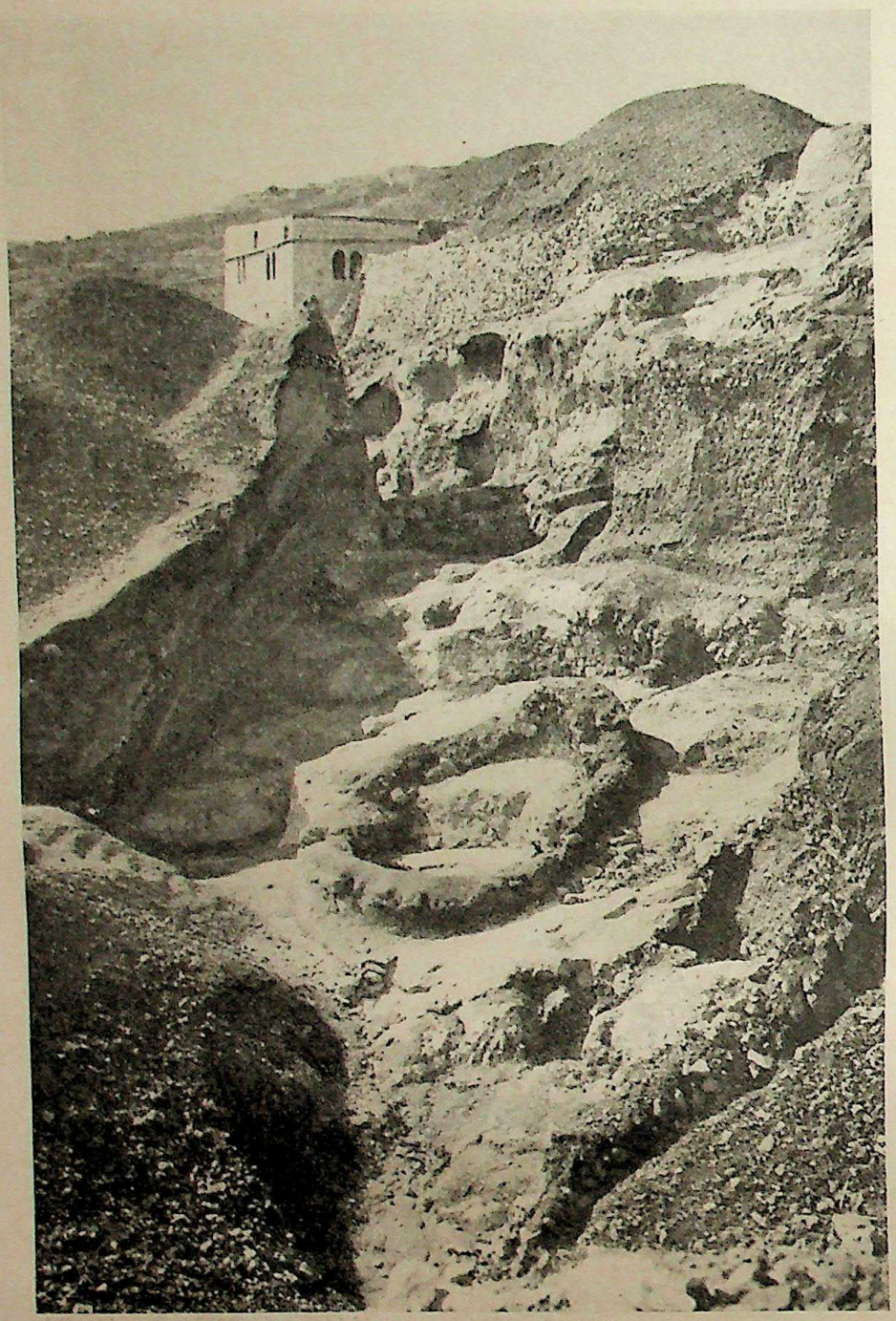

"JERUSALEM SHALL BECOME HEAPS." Lying outside modern Jerusalem the site of David's city on Ophel could be excavated, thus providing important topographical data. In the centre of the photograph is seen the base of a round tower which is probably Davidic. The fact that the original site of "Jerusalem which is Jebus" has not again been built upon, but is either market gardens or excavated ruins, recalls the minatory prophecy of Micah: "Therefore shall Zion for your sakes be plowed as a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps."

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

after the débacle on Mount Gilboa, the men of Jabesh-Gilead gave decent burial to the bodies of Saul and Jonathan which were exposed on the wall of Beth-shean; an exposure and mutilation not of disgrace, but to cause permanent harm to the spirits of the dead. David's first diplomatic move was to send messengers into the territory occupied by the men of northern Israel to thank the inhabitants of Jabesh for their good deed. It is clear that this was a wise gesture, for the Philistines had now driven a wedge right across Palestine, separating the Hebrews of the north from those of the south who recognized David as king, and were on the way to subdue the whole land. Moreover, the northern and southern Hebrews were widely sundered from the earliest days of their settlement in the land. In culture the northern people were far more advanced than the southern, the cleavage was almost complete in everything but in their acknowledgment of Jehovah as the national God. In face of the Philistine threat of domination, nothing but the union of the whole people under one leader could save them from annihilation or absorption by the Philistines.

Besides the difference in general culture due to the much earlier contact by the northern people with a wider and more developed civilization than had been the case with the southern Hebrews, there were marked differences in the manner and expression of worship. We have noted the difference which seems likely to have existed in the symbol of Jehovah's presence: the northern people favoured the Ark whereas those of the south used the tabernacle.

Furthermore there seems no doubt from a comparative study of their laws that the northern people were forbidden to make graven images, and so were accustomed to have molten images, which were supposed to take their shape and were made sacred by the action of the deity himself. On the other hand the Hebrews in the south were forbidden to make molten images and were therefore accustomed to have graven images. Each believed that the other was wrong and acting in complete disregard of the divine command. Compare in Exodus xx, 4, and xxxiv, 17 the legislation belonging respectively to the northern and southern peoples.

The result of the blood feud is portrayed for us when Abner, after arranging for the union of the northern people with those already acknowledging David as king, was slain by Joab in revenge for his brother's death at the hands of Abner when Absalom's rebellion was put down.

Excavations in Ancient Jebus

DAVID dealt with the situation in a masterly way, causing a public mourning for Abner to be proclaimed; a further wise move on the part of the king was the decision to attack and subdue Jebus, or, as we know it, Jerusalem, for Hebron was too far south to form a suitable centre of government for the combined people.

The few verses which describe this campaign are terse and difficult. In II. Samuel v, 6-8, it is indicated that the Jebusite inhabitants scornfully jeered at the possibility of anyone taking a stronghold which from time immemorial was looked upon as impregnable. There was, however, one weak spot: as always, a stronghold depended entirely upon a constant water supply.

The results of explorations carried out by Mr. Crowfoot and published in 1928, have established beyond a shadow of doubt that the ancient city was built on the hill called Ophel, just south of Jerusalem. This was situated on the spur of a hill on which, in later years, the Temple was built; that is, it was situated a little to the south of the present great walled structure called the "Haram Esh-Sherif" or "Noble Sanctuary," venerated now as of old. This ancient stronghold was surrounded on three sides by deep valleys and on the north by a shallow valley separating it from the loftier hill which was surmounted then, as now, by the Sacred Rock. There seems no doubt that on this rock the

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local altar was situated, as is frequently found, outside the city walls.

Sir C. Warren, as long ago as in 1867, discovered what is called "Warren's Shaft." It was believed that the ancient stronghold obtained water from the Virgin's Spring, the one natural spring which Jerusalem possesses; but this lies on the East of Ophel and just opposite the village of Siloam, so it was outside the walls of the ancient city. It was known that two tunnels were carried through the rock from this spring; one, over five hundred yards long, led down to the Pool of Siloam; the other ran west of the spring for seventeen yards towards the hill stronghold. At that point the rock had been cut away so as to form a pool. It was above this pool that Sir C. Warren discovered a perpendicular shaft cut through the rock, six feet by four feet, going straight up for nine yards cut through the solid rock; the tunnel then followed for fifteen yards a slope of 45 degrees; becoming at that point horizontal, the tunnel went on still in a westerly direction for about thirteen yards when another ascent of seventeen yards brought it out to the top of a hill within the area which was occupied by the stronghold. At the top of the shaft there is an iron ring, through which a rope might have been passed for hauling up water from the pool.

There is no doubt at all as to the purpose of the tunnel; it was to keep the garrison supplied with fresh water, most necessary in time of siege. Further, there seems clearly to have been a tradition that the citadel was captured by someone going up the watercourse (II. Samuel v, 8). This view is generally accepted now, and it gives us a vivid picture of how the stronghold was captured. Direct assault was known to be hopeless, but some intrepid and adventurous Hebrews, led by Joab, must have made their way up through this tunnel into the fortress of Zion, thus surprising the Jebusites, whilst their attention was attracted by a feint assault on the walls. The gap which David then forced through the walls called Millo was traced when the ruins were uncovered by Mr. Crowfoot. Furthermore, the rough walls which were later constructed by David to enclose this gap, have also been traced; thus the ancient city of David has been clearly demarcated.

The king now had a central stronghold and could employ a united army drawn from north and south; he was therefore able to strike a blow for freedom against the Philistines. The record of this is at the end of Chapter v.

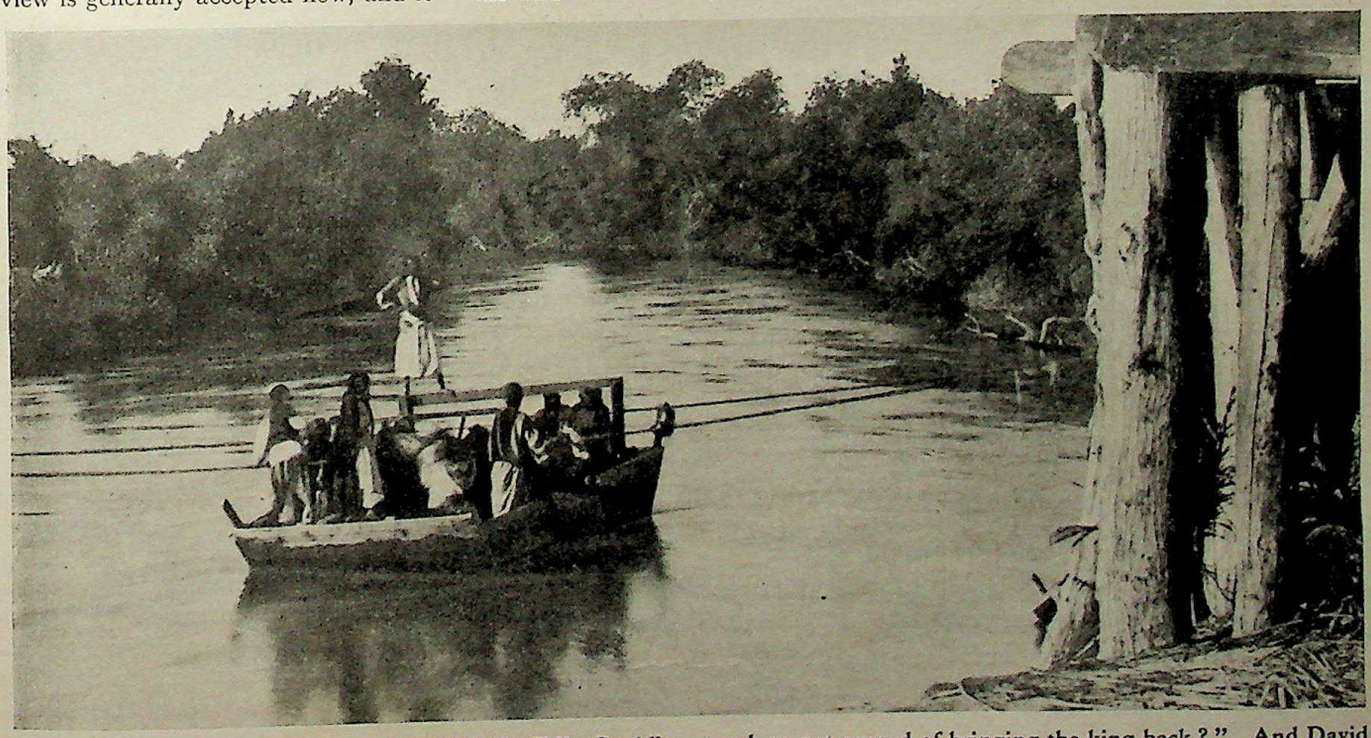
Bringing the Ark to Jerusalem

FURTHER to strengthen his position and influence, David decided to bring the Ark into the "City of David." Amidst much religious ceremony and dancing this was accomplished and the Ark was housed in the midst of the tent that David had pitched for it.

We have a glimpse of what is completely lost sight of in our day of staid and sober worship, that is, the importance in early times of the religious dance. The sacred dance with its rhythm and accompanying music was an essential part of early religious ceremonies. Often the dance was wild and ecstatic, as in the case of the bands of prophets; on the other hand, it might be stately or full of life and joyful movement.

The record in II. Samuel xxi is an interesting glimpse of a primitive belief. It was thought that by the death of seven of Saul's descendants, atonement would be made and the anger of Jehovah turned away. The Gibeonites, contrary to treaty, had suffered at Saul's hands; a famine had lasted in Israel for three years; therefore they thought Jehovah was angry and that he and the Gibeonites must be appeased by blood; a pathetic story! This "hanging unto the Lord" may have been a rain charm, as the famine was due to drought.

The last chapter of the book was certainly compiled late but it contains in all probability two separate traditions. It is useless to enquire why a census was sinful; such ideas go too far back and are also too widespread. Especially in Africa, the superstitious dread of numbering people and possessions is very prevalent. The story as we have it in II. Samuel xxiv bears marks of late date, but it may have been written to account for some terrible pestilence which prevailed. At all events, the story was made use of to account for the existence of a built altar on the very spot chosen for Solomon's temple. This built altar was rightly attributed to David. Perhaps it was of importance to chronicle that the ancient stone altar of the Jebusites was not chosen as the site for the great altar of later days. The built stone altar was a marked advance from the days when a natural stone was chosen for sacrifice. It was one step towards a deeper and more spiritual conception of worship.



"AND THERE WENT OVER A FERRY BOAT." David's household preceded him over Jordan in a ferry-boat to make preparations for his reception, on the solemn occasion of his return from Moab to Jerusalem after the death of Absalom. Then the rebellious people had demanded of the elders: "Why speak ye not a word of bringing the king back?" And David knew that he was indeed "King over Israel" (II. Samuel xix, 10-23). The photograph shows a Jordan ferry of today, though there seems nothing modern about the boat-load or the native conductor posed on his plank bridge above them.

Photo, H. J. Shepstone

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I. Kings

I

The Book in Outline

From the Rise of Solomon to the Fall of Ahab

by REV. C. SHEPHERD GIBBS, M.A., B.D.

Chaplain and Lecturer in Divinity at St. Katharine's Training College, Tottenham.

MOST readers of the Bible today understand that in order to enjoy their perusal of the historical books to the full they need a good map a rough chronological diagram some knowledge of the nature of the documents from which the books were composed, and as close an acquaintance with the archaeological background as they have the time or the patience to acquire. All this is true; yet who does not sympathize with the man who forgets his diagrams, lets his map slip to the floor, leans back in his chair and loses himself in the excitement of a good story well told?

The Old Testament is full of such stories: Joseph and his brethren, Moses at the Red Sea, David and Goliath, the judgement of Solomon, Naboth's vineyard, Naaman and Elisha, and many more—they come crowding into one's memory unbidden, bringing with them a long procession of splendid figures, kings, warriors, prophets, statesmen, and their followers. It is in that spirit that we would ask the reader to open his Old Testament at I. Kings, and to enjoy the feast of good things which the old chroniclers so liberally set before us.

It must be granted that we shall often need the scholar's aid. The point of the story will sometimes be obscure or altogether lost until we summon his trained sight and expert knowledge to our help. But even expert knowledge is but a means to an end; and that end is the better understanding of these men and women, in costume, language, and tradition so different from ourselves, yet in deeper things often so surprisingly akin, who lived and loved, wept and laughed, did wise things and foolish even as we, in a little Eastern kingdom more than twenty-seven centuries ago.

Solomon Succeeds to David's Throne

THE curtain goes up on a death-bed. David, the greatest of the Jewish kings, has come to the end of his long reign; and, did the watchers but know it, with his passing ends the golden age of Jewry for all time. The achievements of the rosy-cheeked shepherd lad who became a king and who had welded Israel into a compact and united people needed time for their consolidation. Much depended on his successor. A truly wise, patient, and statesmanlike policy was needed—patience above all things, together with the recognition that world-empire was not for little Israel, but that if she were content with her natural limitations and refrained from meddling in the affairs of her mighty neighbours she might hope for a long and prosperous independence, happy though humble.

Solomon, however, was nothing if not magnificent. His were the showy, spendthrift qualities, the wit that courtiers mistook for wisdom, the ostentatious display of wealth that ends in inevitable poverty, the interfering foreign policy which recoils upon the interferer. "Soon ripe, soon rotten," runs the proverb; and the swift, luxuriant, almost voluptuous ripeness of the age of Solomon concealed a core of decay which secretly drained the vitality of the nation. The "ifs" of history form a fascinating but unprofitable study: If William and not Harold had been slain at Senlac? If George III had yielded to the demands of the American colonists? If the British had succeeded in forcing the Dardanelles? And we may now add another "if" to our list: If Adonijah and not Solomon had been nominated to the crown by the dying king?

Adonijah's Ill-fated Bid for Power

WE know so little of Adonijah that our question must remain unanswered. There was, however, every reason to suppose that he would succeed to his father's office and title. Although the law of primogeniture was not yet so generally recognized as it later became, Adonijah himself, as David's eldest surviving son, seems to have assumed without rebuke the dignities and pretensions of heir-apparent. But a court intrigue, headed by Nathan the prophet and Bathsheba, David's favourite wife, was already undermining the ground beneath his feet. Since nothing succeeds like success, the narrative naturally assumes that the manoeuvre was justified by David's original intention It is at least as likely that vehement pressure was brought to bear upon a will enfeebled by old age and sickness. In any case, Solomon was secretly anointed king with his father's consent, and Adonijah and his followers, confronted by a *fait accompli*, fled for their lives

At David's request Adonijah's life was spared. But after David's death the bad old custom of the East was followed, by which the new sovereign ruthlessly extirpated all who seemed to be possible rivals or enemies to his own security. As might have been anticipated, the court narrative gives plausible reasons for each execution. Adonijah's crime was that he had looked with desirous eyes upon the beautiful Abishag, the youngest of the dead king's wives, which in contemporary opinion was tantamount to coveting the throne itself. Among others Joab, the blood-thirsty but faithful old warrior who had served David well, at last received the fate he had himself inflicted on many, and was slain at the altar itself. Shimei, whose chief crime seems to have been that the blood of Saul ran in his veins, was also executed. "And,"

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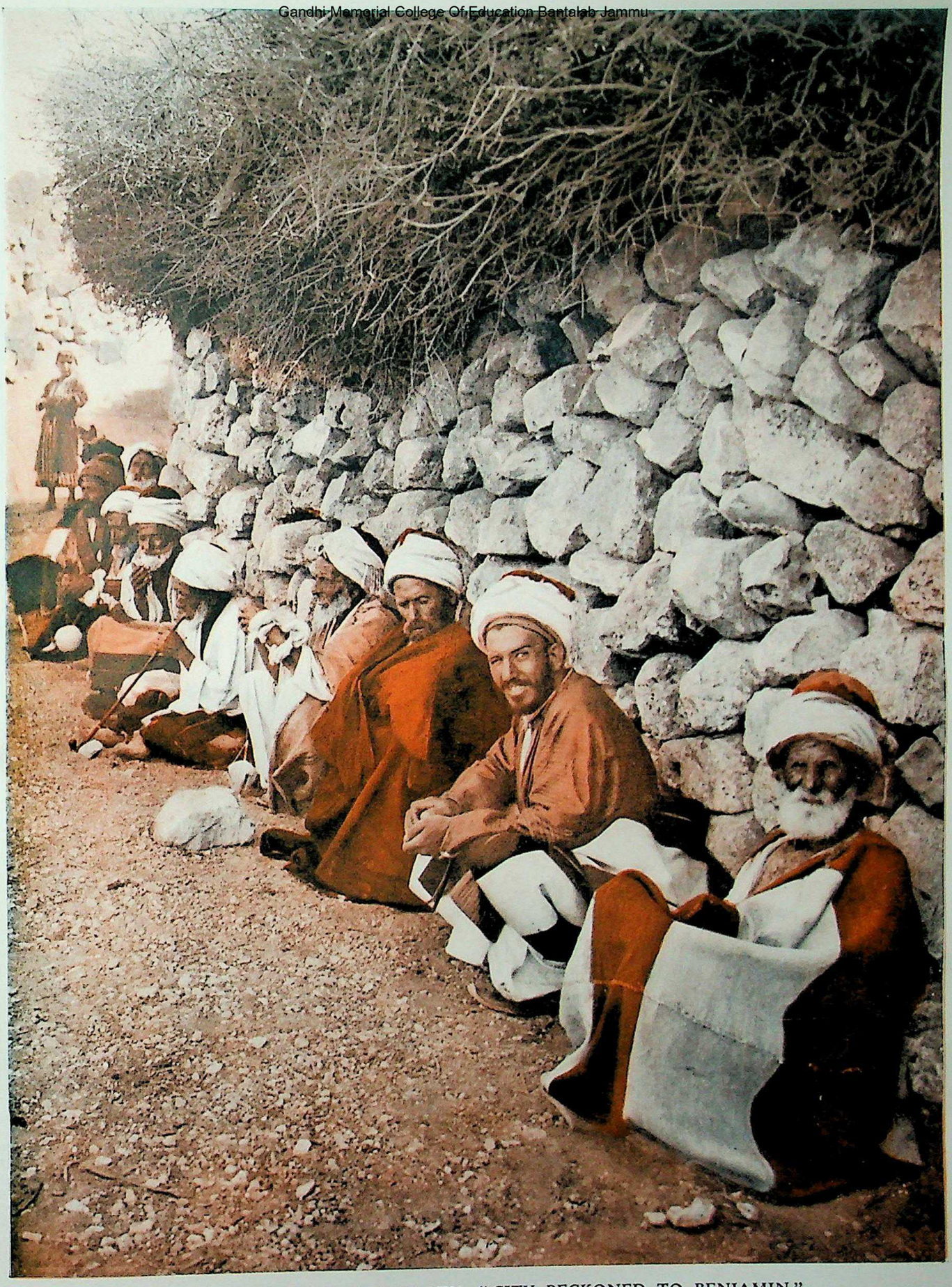

MEN OF BEEROTH, "CITY RECKONED TO BENJAMIN"

These Arabs are enjoying a time of relaxation "in the cool of the day" by the wall of El Bireh, a thriving Moslem village on the main road between Jerusalem and Nablus (Shechem). It is within the borders of the Tribe of Benjamin and identified with the ancient Beeroth, home of "the sons of Rimmon the Beerothite," slayers of Ish-bosheth, Saul's son and David's rival (II. Samuel iv, 2-7). The name means a cistern, and there are remains of ancient reservoirs by an abundant spring. The men pictured are wearing the tarboosh, swathed with a scarf; the outer garment is an abba, cloak of goat's or camel's hair, still sometimes woven in one piece like the vesture worn by Our Lord.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

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Frederick Lord Leighton, 1830-1896

RIZPAH KEPT VIGIL OVER THE DEAD BODIES OF HER SONS

To satisfy a vendetta caused by Saul's slaughter of the Gibeonites, divined to have occasioned drought and famine in the land, seven of his descendants were given up by David in expiation. Two of these were sons of Rizpah. The Gibeonites killed them and exposed the bodies on a mountain at the beginning of harvest. The picture by Lord Leighton tragically represents the mother's devoted watch. "She suffered neither the birds of the air to rest on them by day, nor the beasts of the field by night" (II. Samuel xxi, 10). When the rains came—thought to be a sign that Jehovah was appeased—the bodies she had saved could be buried with funeral rites.

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Frederick Lord Leighton, 1830-1896

"AND THE ANGEL OF THE LORD SAID, 'ARISE AND EAT'"

The painting of Elijah in the Wilderness, now in the Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool, is one of the best-known of Lord Leighton's works and is an example of his most sculpturesque and academic style. The designs of his Biblical pictures are always dignified. Here Elijah is seen sleeping in the wilderness after he had fled from Ahab's court and the wrath of Jezebel. In utter dejection he had wished "that he might die." But an Angel wakened him, "and, behold, there was a cake baken on the coals, and a cruse of water at his head" (I. Kings xix, 4-8). The second time that the Angel came with food for him, he "did eat and drink, and went in the strength of that meat forty days and forty nights unto Horeb the mount of God."

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WITHIN THE BORDER OF ISRAEL WHEN THE WISE KING RULED

In the time of Solomon the territory of united Israel extended north to the vassal kingdom of Hamath which had a capital of the same name on the Orontes. The photograph shows two sharp bends of this river as it flows through the modern Syrian town of Hama, anciently Hamath, probably once a store-city of the Wise King. These busy workers are washing wheat contained in rope baskets. The grain will afterwards be parboiled and ground to make the local cereal food. Seen in the background is the largest of four water-wheels on the river's banks. Driven by the flow they draw up water for the town's supply and irrigation purposes. The one shown has a diameter of 75 feet—a giant among water-wheels.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

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HERE ELIJAH MAY HAVE HALTED ON HIS WAY TO HOREB

Between Jerusalem and Bethlehem is a rock associated with the Prophet Elijah. It is by the highway and opposite the gates of the Greek monastery of Mar Elias (St. Elijah). The connecting tradition arose, with many others in Palestine, at the time of the Crusades. In the rock is an elongated depression—where the second and third figures from left in the photograph are sitting—large enough for a man to lie within it. Natives often rest here in that fashion, believing that Elijah did so of old when he paused in his flight from the wrath of Jezebel (I. Kings xix, 3) beside this road to Beer-sheba on his way to the Mount of God.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

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Nicolas Poussin, 1594-1665

"GIVE HER THE LIVING CHILD, AND IN NO WISE SLAY IT"

The story of the Judgement of Solomon provided Poussin with a dramatic pictorial subject. The Italianized Frenchman treated it in his well-known classical style. The grouping of this painting, now in the Louvre, is beautifully-balanced in the composition so that interest is focussed on the three important figures in triangular fashion with the head of Solomon at the apex. Listening to the mother imploring him to give her child to the other woman rather than kill it (I. Kings iii, 26, 27), he is about to pronounce judgement against the false claimant.

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G. Grenville Manton, 1855-1932

"WHEN THY FEET ENTER INTO THE CITY, THE CHILD SHALL DIE"

Jeroboam's wife, disguised and bearing gifts to the blind prophet Ahijah, came to Shiloh to enquire of him whether her sick child would recover. The prophet greeted her with the dire words: "Come in, thou wife of Jeroboam; why feignest thou thyself to be another? For I am sent to thee with heavy tidings." He then foretold the ruin of the house of Jeroboam and the child's death in punishment of the king's idolatry. "And Jeroboam's wife arose, and departed . . . and when she came to the threshold of the door, the child died" (I. Kings xiv, 6, 17). The picture by Grenville Manton—a well-known painter of historical and religious subjects—is in the Guildhall, London.

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"SHE CAME TO JERUSALEM . . . WITH CAMELS THAT BARE SPICES"

This caravan, unloading stores of spicery by the Damascus Gate of Jerusalem, recalls the arrival of the camels in the Queen of Sheba's "very great train" when she visited Solomon to prove his far-famed wisdom by her questions. She brought with her magnificent presents of gold and jewels, frankincense and myrrh; and "there came no more such abundance of spices as these which the queen of Sheba gave to king Solomon" (I. Kings x, 2, 10). Perfumery was a trade early followed by the Israelites. The materials used were derived from sweet-scented gums mainly imported from south-west Arabia, realm of Sheba—Old Testament name for the land and people of the ancient Sabaeans, renowned for their commercial enterprise.

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says the narrator, with a complacency which sounds strange to modern ears, "the kingdom was established in the hand of Solomon."

But now, in the third chapter, comes one of those swift changes of scene which makes Kings so readable. After a brief mention of Solomon's marriage with Pharaoh's daughter, we are plunged into one of the classic passages of the history, the memorable account of the king's dream. It was still at this time the custom to offer sacrifice upon the "high places." Solomon inaugurates his reign by making a thousand burnt-offerings at Gibeon. One night while engaged in these priestly duties he has a dream, in which Jehovah appears to him with the command, "Ask what I shall give thee." We may summarize, but we must not paraphrase, the noble and rhythmic words of Solomon's reply: "Thou hast shewed unto thy servant David my father great kindness . . And now, O LORD my God, thou hast made thy servant king instead of David my father: and I am but a little child; I know not how to go out or come in . . . Give thy servant therefore an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and evil; for who is able to judge this thy great people?" (I. Kings iii, 6-9 R.V.). The speech pleased God greatly, since it asked not for the fulfilment of any vulgar ambition—length of days, victory in battle, or great wealth—but for a quality rarer than them all; and He promised not only to grant His suppliant's request, but also the other, lesser blessings for which he had been too wise to ask.

The fulfilment of the divine promise is illustrated by a famous instance of Solomon's penetration and resourcefulness as a judge. It must be remembered that "wisdom" to an Oriental at this time consisted in ready wit, the capacity to coin epigrams and manufacture proverbs, and above all the extempore ingenuity and shrewd knowledge of human nature necessary in the lawsuits of a primitive people, rather than in the slower, more ponderous but more enduring qualities which make a statesman. Two women appear before the judgement-seat, each of whom claims the same child as her own. The king commands a sword to be brought, the living child to be divided with it, and half the body to be given to each claimant. One woman, like Shylock in a celebrated parallel, applauds the wisdom of the decision. What could be fairer? But the other, in whom mother-love cries louder than the voice of her own rights, offers to forgo her claim and pleads for the life of the boy. "Then the king answered and said, 'Give her the living child, and in no wise slay it: she is the mother thereof.'"

We may pass over in some haste the lengthy list of Solomon's executive officers and the various areas of local administration into which the country was mapped out under his rule. They are given in detail in the fourth chapter, but however valuable to the historian, are of no special interest to the general reader. Nor need we stay long over the numerous examples of his wealth, wisdom and power which follow, although a picturesque phrase here and there, glittering like some gorgeous jewel among the embroidery of the royal robes, arrests the eye and lingers in the memory: how "Solomon had forty thousand stalls of horses for his chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen"; how "Judah and Israel were many, as the sand which is by the sea in multitude, eating and drinking and making merry"; how "Solomon's wisdom excelled the wisdom of all the children of the east country, and all the wisdom of Egypt"; how "he spake three thousand proverbs; and his songs were a thousand and five." It is not all genuine history, if by history we understand a sober and accurate record of facts, neither too much nor too little, carefully proportioned as a photograph to the thing it portrays. But how the sparkle and the fire of it dazzle the eye, and how one's heart warms to the old narrator with his gusto and his pride, his unaffected rejoicing in the glorious days when Israel was a great and mighty nation, and the fame of her king spread to the ends of the earth!

But a greater wonder than any yet recorded is waiting for our inspection. The Temple of Solomon was his outstanding achievement; and it was doubtless

I. KINGS: A SYNOPSIS

Last Days of David

	Chapters
Adonijah Claims the Succession ...	i, 5-31
Zadok Anoints Solomon	i, 32-40
Final Advice and Death of David ...	ii, 1-11

Early Years of Solomon

Solomon puts down Conspiracies ...	ii, 12-46
Divine Promise of Wisdom and Honour	iii, 5-15
Solomon's First Judgement ...	iii, 16-28
The King's Officers and Empire ...	iv
The Building of the Temple ...	v-vi
Solomon's Palace	vii, 1-12
The Temple Furnishings	vii, 13-51
Dedication of the Temple	viii
Visit of the Queen of Sheba ...	x

Solomon's Fall from Grace

Solomon's Wives draw him into Idolatry	xi, 1-13
The King's Enemies Arise	xi, 14-42
Death of Solomon	xi, 43

The Divided Kingdom

Revolt of the Northern Tribes ...	xii, 1-19
Jeroboam King over Israel	xii, 20—xiv, 20
Reign of Rehoboam in Judah ...	xiv, 21-31
Succeeding Kings in Judah and Israel	xv, 1—xvi, 28

Ahab and Elijah

Ahab succeeds Omri	xvi, 29-34
Elijah by the Brook Cherith ...	xvii, 1-7
He raises the Widow's Son	xvii, 8-24
Contest with the Priests of Baal ...	xviii, 17-40
Elijah flees to Horeb	xix, 1-18
Ahab's Victory over Ben-hadad ...	xx, 1-34
The Story of Naboth	xxi
Ahab Slain at Ramoth-Gilead ...	xxii, 1-40
Jehoshaphat succeeds him	xxii, 41-50

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by that achievement that he most wished to be remembered. It was, however, erected by means of a tyrannical levy of forced labour, probably suggested by Egyptian precedents, and by a crushing weight of taxation, both of which had disastrous consequences.

We must not, however, minimize the achievement. Although by modern standards the Temple was not a large building, being only about a hundred feet by thirty-three, to any Jew of that time it was sufficiently imposing. To the humble and untravelled villager it must have been one of the wonders of the world. Its height of fifty feet is remarkable in proportion to the other dimensions. At the entrance stood a large porch some thirty-three feet long and half that distance broad. (It should be noted that all these appear to be interior measurements). An interesting feature is presented by the double walls on three sides of the Temple, between which subsidiary rooms were built on no less than three floors. The mechanical and constructional problems involved in the building of this interesting edifice were, for the time and place, considerable; and the general effect of the whole must have been, as has been well said, "massive rather than elegant."

The ground plan of this unique structure is also of interest. From Ezekiel's description of his ideal temple, which is evidently permeated with reminiscences of the actual Temple as he had known it, we may reasonably surmise that the approach to the porch was by a flight of ten steps. Having passed through the porch, itself a quarter of the length of the whole building, the visitor would then enter the main interior, beyond which was the "Most Holy Place" or inner shrine. This was in shape a perfect cube, of some thirty feet in each direction, and seems to have been kept in complete darkness except possibly for a lamp burning before the ark of the covenant. In this shrine, or "oracle" as it is erroneously translated in our English versions, were set the two tall cherubim, of olive-wood overlaid with gold, with a wing-span equal to their height of more than sixteen feet, so that as they stood wing-tip to wing-tip each touched a wall with its wing. There also was placed the altar, or more strictly the "table of the shew-bread," of cedar-wood; and, holiest of all, the sacred ark itself.

We must not do more than glance at the description given in the seventh chapter, with a proud and loving elaboration of detail, of the furniture with which this Semitic cathedral was equipped: the two great pillars which stood on each side of

"HE MADE THE TEMPLE POSTS OF OLIVE TREE." Though Solomon imported from Tyre cedars and "timber of fir" for the boards and flooring of the Temple, he used home-cultivated olive trees for much of the woodwork that was finely carved and for smaller doors, posts and lintels (I. Kings vi, 23, 31, 32). There are still extensive olive groves in Palestine, some of the finest being, like the one pictured, in the vicinity of Bethlehem, where a trade is done in carving fancy articles from the finely-grained wood. Prunings and the timber of old trees are valuable for fuel, as they possess good heating power. Some plantations are said to date back to Roman times.

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"EVERY MAN UNDER HIS OWN VINE." The shadows from these vines dapple the village street and give a pleasant sense of coolness on a hot day. Trellised from house to house, they recall the words in I. Kings iv, 25, "Judah and Israel dwelt safely, every man under his vine . . . from Dan even to Beer-sheba, all the days of Solomon". The country then had entered on a period of peace and prosperity after the internal warfare and conquests of David's reign. Solomon was not a military leader. He consolidated his kingdom by ruling well until his magnificence entailed the imposition of heavy taxes.

Photo. Central Art Library

the entrance; the "molten sea" that "stood on twelve oxen" of brass and "held two thousand baths"; "the lavers and the shovels and the basons"; "the candlesticks . . . and the flowers, and the lamps, and the tongs of gold; and the cups, and the snuffers, and the basons, and the spoons, and the firepans, of pure gold." When all allowance has been made for the natural exaggeration of a patriotic scribe, there can be little doubt that in this one place was collected such a treasure as seemed stupendous to the simple folk of Palestine.

The stimulus to national pride and to the national religion cannot have been small. The Temple of Solomon attracted and held the imagination so powerfully as to exert ever since a profound and lasting influence upon the faith of the Jew. But at what a cost! The nation had been bled white. Reading between the lines of the narrative it is not hard to see that the immense exactions of forced labour and the prodigal expenditure of wealth on temple and on palace left behind them a dumb and sullen resentment which flared up into volcanic fury after the death of the great king, and split his kingdom asunder. Even during his lifetime Solomon had found it necessary to cede a part of his Galilean possessions to Hiram, King of Tyre, in order to pay for timber and for labour. But a deeper mischief was the national anaemia which makes an ironic contrast with the healthful vigour into which David had fostered and led his people.

Nevertheless, Solomon's Temple became and remained, in retrospect, even more than in the days of its glory, the focus of the nation's faith. In the eighth chapter, which seems to come from the later Deuteronomic editors rather than from the contemporary sources to which most of this section can be traced, we have an eloquent example of the emotion which it could stir in the breast of the pious Hebrew. This is one of those immortal passages which it would be profane to try to summarize, and which the reader must read and re-read for himself. On the completion of his long task Solomon addresses his people, offers prayer for guidance, forgiveness, and deliverance to Almighty God, and turns again to his people and blesses them. We must content ourselves with quoting one golden passage, equally noble in its insight and touching in its simplicity: "But will God in very deed dwell on the earth? Behold, heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain Thee; how much less this house that I have builded! Yet have Thou respect unto the prayer of Thy servant, and to his supplication, O LORD my God." (I. viii, 27, 28, R.V.).

Nothing could be more dramatic, or more true, than this recognition, at the very moment after long years of toil of the dedication of an earthly temple, that hewn stone, carved wood and costly metal were but the outward representation of a Presence which earthly temples may contain, but not even infinity can confine.

Yet another swift change of scene introduces us to the charming story of the visit of the queen of Sheba.

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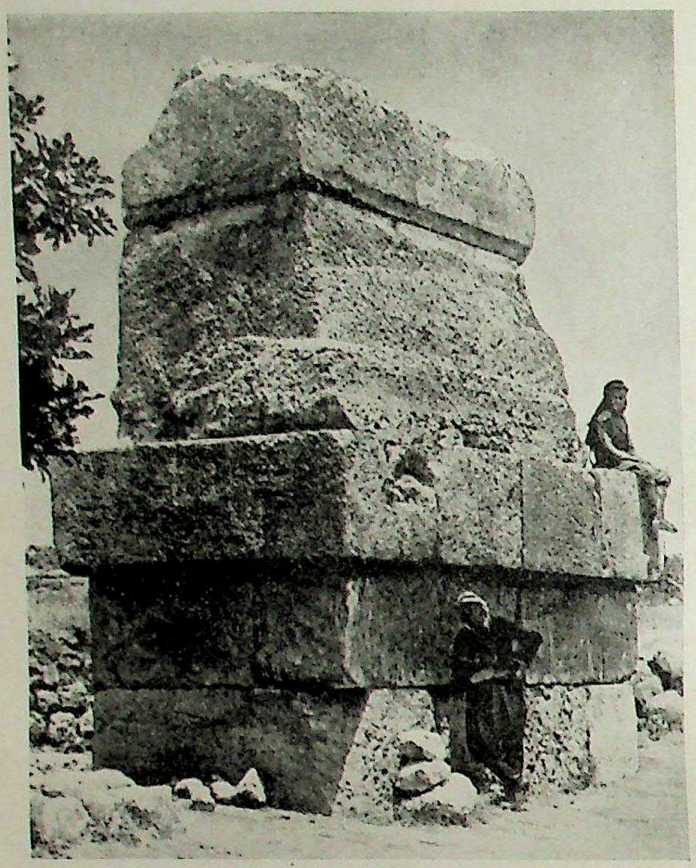

MEMORIAL TO HIRAM, KING OF TYRE. Some miles inland from "the coast of Tyre" stands this ancient Phoenician monument—a pedestal of huge stone slabs bearing a sarcophagus. It is possibly the authentic grave of that Hiram, King of Tyre and friend of David, who sent Solomon cedars and skilled craftsmen for the building of the Temple (I. Kings v, 1, 8). The Phoenicians were widely renowned for their expert work as stone-masons.

Photo, W. F. Taylor

The student of the Bible who is interested in points of literary style must have noticed repeatedly the curious felicity of many of these brief tales. He will find on inspection that much of their quaint, bright clarity is due to their parsimony of adjectives and their prodigality of nouns. Hebrew has but few adjectives; but its nouns do double duty. So even in translation this little narrative of a woman's visit to Solomon's court, which might so easily have been lost in a diffused fog of generalities, stands out with all the precision of line of a canvas by Dürer. The queen is introduced to us: her train of camels carries spices, and gold, and precious stones. She puts her hard questions to the wise king, and he answers them all. She sees his palace, his servants and cupbearers, their apparel, the burnt offering (so R.V. margin) which he offered in the house of the Lord; and—an exquisite phrase, this—"there was no more spirit in her." "It was a true report that I heard in mine own land," she says, "of thy acts and of thy wisdom. Howbeit . . . the half was not told me . . . Happy are thy men, happy are these thy servants, which stand continually before thee, and that hear thy wisdom." And so she departs to her own country.

But over the closing years of the reign the clouds which had been long threatening began to gather and the shadows to fall. The outward splendours were still great. Not only the Temple, but the palace, the newly-built city wall, the fourteen hundred chariots, the navy which came and went every three years to Ophir, "bringing gold and silver, ivory, and apes, and peacocks," all reflected the pride of their ambitious creator. These things all had their price, the paying of which could not be indefinitely delayed. In part they resulted in a personal deterioration. An Eastern monarch who wished to excel in pomp and display was expected to possess a harem extensive in proportion to his wealth. The increasing number of Solomon's wives meant an increased provision for their very varying religious needs—*i.e.*, the introduction and toleration of many alien cults. But this was only one mischief. Another was the loss of Edom and of Damascus, which Solomon's superhuman exertions in other directions seem to have left him too weak to defend. The third and greatest evil showed itself plainly, as is often the way with a sin's consequences, only after the death of the perpetrator.

Disruption of the Hebrew Kingdom

TOWARDS the end of the eleventh chapter we read of how a certain Jeroboam, "a mighty man of valour," had been given an important position as overseer of labour by the king. We shall hear much more of this Jeroboam before long. The story now before us relates how a prophet, Ahijah by name, symbolically rent his garment into twelve pieces—the Jew always loved to suit a dramatic action to the word—prophesied the disruption of the kingdom, and Jeroboam's succession to the rule of ten of the twelve tribes. The matter came to the ears of the king, and Jeroboam, who even before this had apparently come into prominence as leader of a party of malcontents, fled for his life into the land of Egypt.

No sooner, however, was Solomon in his grave than the seething discontent of a sorely tried people came to a head. The twelfth chapter, which describes with point and vigour the calamitous events that followed, is one which every ruler of a proud and free nation would do well to ponder. Rehoboam, Solomon's son and successor, comes to Shechem for his coronation. His subjects find a spokesman in the newly-returned exile. Jeroboam asks in their name whether they may hope for any alleviation of their intolerable burdens. What shall the young king reply? He asks counsel of the old men, white-haired and wise, who had attended his father. They advise moderation. Let him be a servant to his people, and they will be servants to him. The advice is unpalatable, and Rehoboam turns to the younger courtiers, obsequious and hot of head. They counsel measures yet sterner and more severe than before. And, to his own detriment and the lasting misfortune of his country, it is their advice which, like more than one blind fool before and since who has found himself upon a throne, the young king takes. "My father chastised you with whips," he cries, "but I will chastise you with scorpions."

It was the signal for civil war. Ten tribes revolted. Jeroboam was elected their leader. Rehoboam was

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left with the tribes of Judah and Benjamin alone; and although a spasmodic and intermittent warfare seems to have dragged on for many years, never again was the whole nation united as a free people under a single king. So soon had the bright dawn of David's reign and the afternoon splendour of Solomon's faded into dusky twilight.

The gloom of the depressing events he has to delineate now seem to clog the pen of the narrator for a chapter or two; and a leaden dullness, unusual in these spirited and interesting records, tempts the impatient reader to turn the next few pages quickly. We have a resentful mention of Jeroboam's reintroduction of worship at the "high places"; a trio of stories, wooden and crude, the first telling of how Jeroboam was punished with temporary paralysis for offering an illegal sacrifice; the second describing the fate that befell a disobedient prophet; the third recording how the same Ahijah who had originally prophesied Jeroboam's kingship, when asked by the queen to heal her son, responded with a prophetic curse which included both the death of the child and the fall of the royal house. Much of this matter is doubtless comparatively late, and reflects the resentment of a later generation against the leader of the revolt which ended the national prosperity; even as after three centuries the English historian still finds himself not unnaturally taking sides against Charles I or against Cromwell.

We shall not wish nor need to spend much time over the next two chapters. The effect produced is that of a succession of petty princelings, now of the Northern, now of the Southern Kingdom, their sins, their wars, their feuds, a brief verdict on each reign; that is all. The general reader may legitimately take the leap which the conscientious historian must not, and, passing over some four decades of the doings of nonentities, plunge, in the seventeenth chapter, into the reign of Ahab, king of Israel.

The Word of the Lord Comes to Elijah

ALL at once the story comes to life again. The first words introduce us to Elijah, one of the most towering and majestic figures in all the impressive portrait-gallery of the Old Testament—to his contemporaries always either the villain or the hero of the piece, to later ages an almost legendary form, a prophetic Titan who warred not against but for his God. Dislike him one sometimes may; respect, admire, honour him one must. The miraculous deeds attributed to him testify to the powerful impact of his tremendous personality upon his day and generation. "A kind of human lightning-flash," a recent writer calls him. And yet, at the centre of all this fearless vigour, we are permitted to see that there was, as with many another heroic pioneer, a soul so sensitive that it could weep for loneliness and imagined failure.

Elijah's real enemy was not Ahab, who was in many ways a great and successful ruler, but Jezebel the queen, a Phoenician by race, who made persistent attempts to introduce into Israel the unethical cult of a Phoenician nature-deity or Baal. The conflict was not merely between two deities but between two codes of conduct, since the worship of Jehovah was associated with a lofty standard of morals which not only was not assisted, but was frequently debased, by the worship of a nature-god. Readers of "The Golden Bough" will remember how often the cult of fertility is associated with sexual and other excesses.

Baal's Priests Worsted by Jehovah's Prophet

ELIJAH, as prophet of Jehovah, is anxious to show that his God can meet and vanquish Baal on his own ground, the control of nature. Hence when we first meet him he solemnly proclaims to Ahab in his Lord's name that there shall be no rain for many years. Meanwhile he takes up his own abode near the brook Cherith, a rivulet flowing into the Jordan from the east, and is there miraculously fed by ravens. During the famine which follows he meets a poor widow who with her son is dying of starvation, and inspired by pity promises that her barrel of meal and cruse of oil shall not fail until plenty returns again; and when the child is taken ill and dies he even restores the dead boy to life. But the climax of the narrative is yet to come. Having shown that Jehovah, and not Baal, is able to prevent rain, he intends to complete his demonstration of his Lord's power by showing that

"A POT OF OIL." Found during excavations on the site of Beth-shemesh at Ain Shems, this graceful pottery jar was used for storage of olive oil. That precious commodity was exported from Israel. In part return for the Tyrian timber supplied for the Temple, "Solomon gave Hiram . . . twenty measures of pure oil" (I. Kings v, 11) year by year. The Hebrew word used for measure in the text is "cor," and a cor equalled rather more than 64½ gallons.

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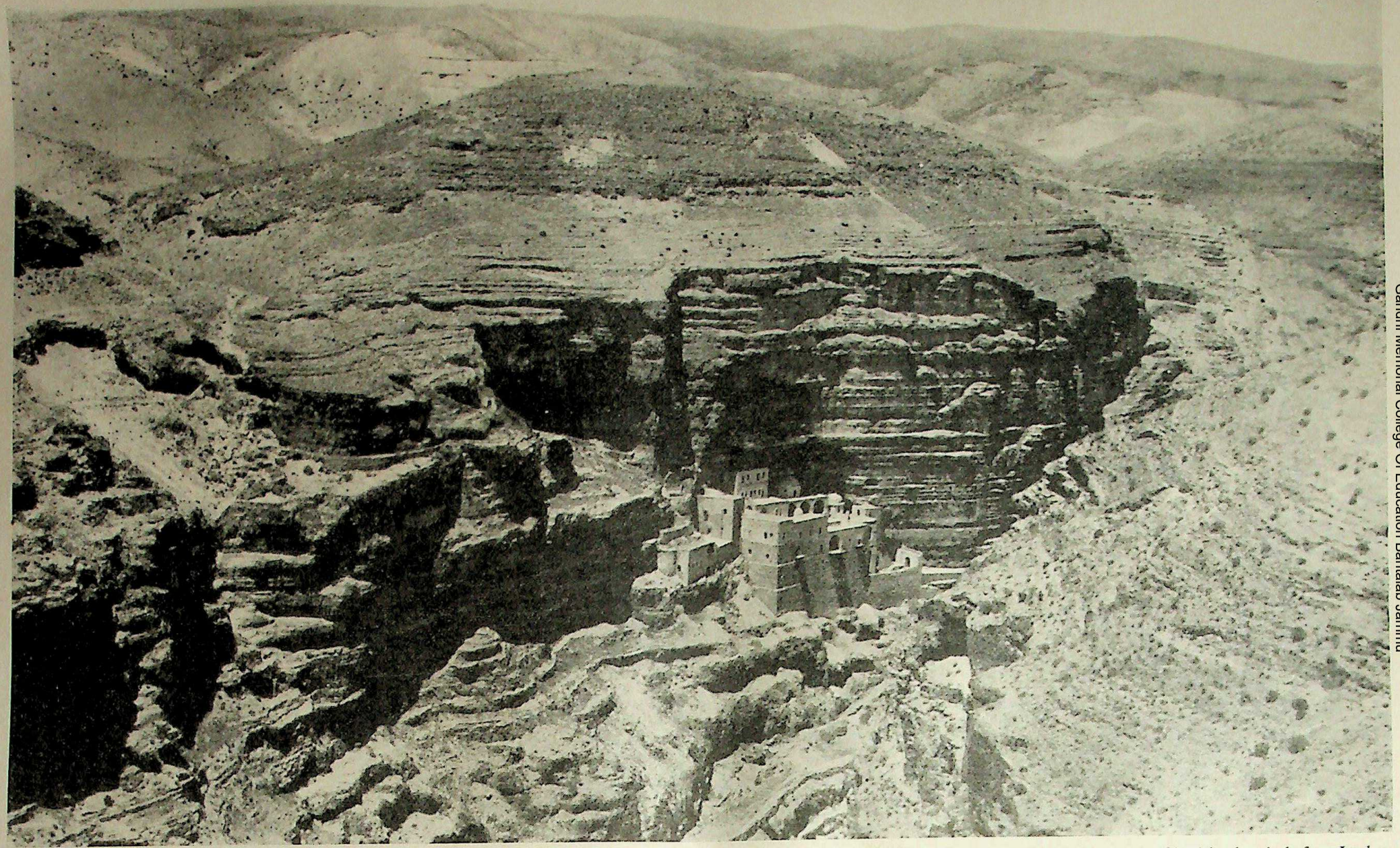

GORGE OF THE CHERITH WHERE ELIJAH WAS FED BY RAVENS. Near the old road to Jericho from Jerusalem is the viewpoint of this photograph. We are looking down into the gorge of Wady Kelt, through which flows the brook Cherith. During the long period of drought in the reign of Ahab, Elijah "did according unto the word of the Lord: for he went and dwelt by the brook Cherith, that is before Jordan. And the ravens brought him bread and flesh . . . and he drank of the brook" (I. Kings xvii, 5, 6). Built into the cliff—where was the cavern said to have been Elijah's lodging place—is the Greek Orthodox Monastery of St. George, seen in the centre of the picture.

Photo, Central Art Library

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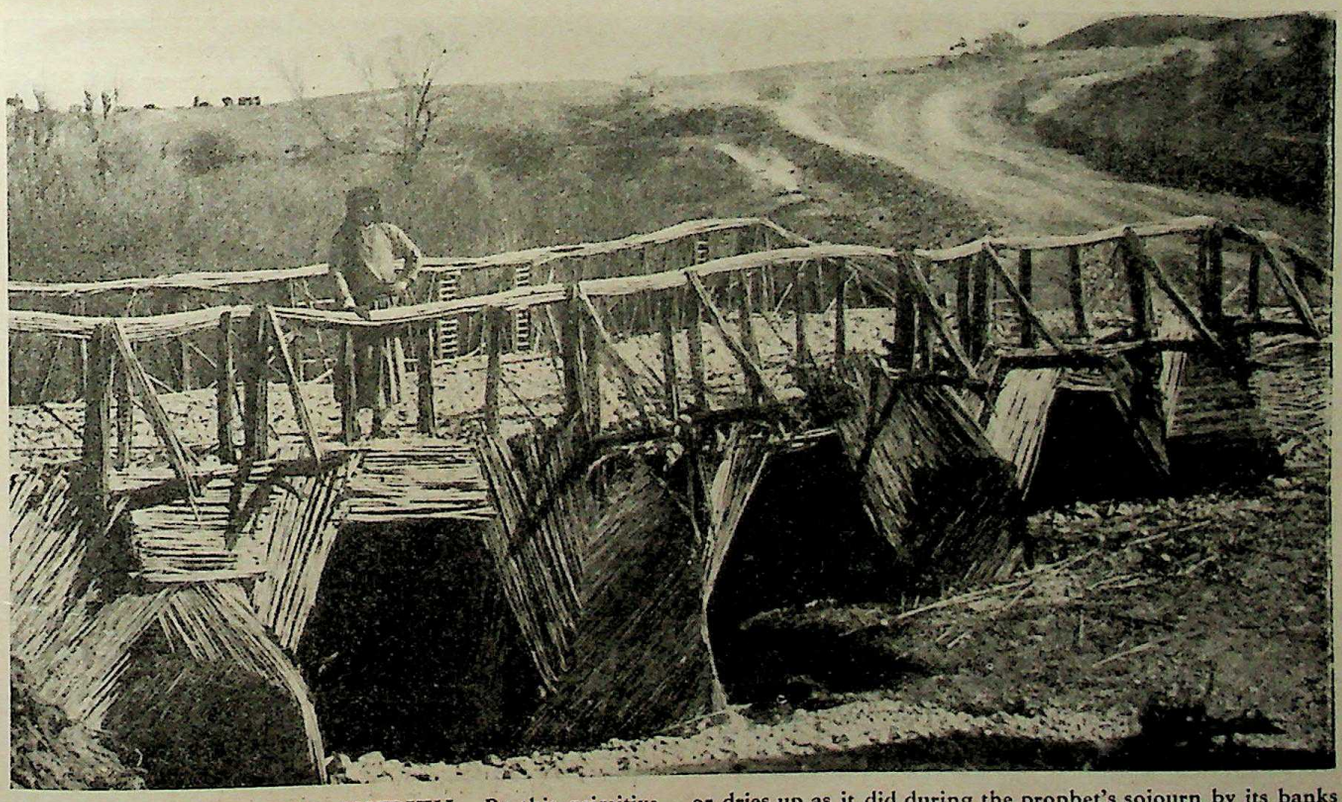
He, and only He, can restore it. To this end he issues a deliberate challenge to the four hundred and fifty prophets of the foreign god to a contest of faith. Let the issue be joined, the battle decided, once for all, before the assembled nation. Is Jehovah the God of rain and sun, or Baal? Let the prophets on either side, one against four hundred and fifty, entreat their respective deities for fire from heaven as a sign; and all men shall see which prayers are answered.

The scene which follows is elaborated with immense relish and vigour. An altar is made ready on Mount Carmel, a sacrifice prepared, and the priests of Baal like ecstatic dervishes dance and cry and gash themselves with knives in an agony of supplication. It is all in vain. Elijah jibes at them with savage irony: "Cry aloud; for he is a god; either he is musing, or he is gone aside, or he is in a journey, or peradventure he sleepeth, and must be awaked." But, says the historian, with sardonic glee, there was "neither voice, nor any to answer." At last the patience of the prophet was exhausted. He erected his own altar, laid a slain bullock upon it, made a trench about it, soaked the heap with four barrels of water three times, filled the trench with water, and cried aloud to his God. Immediately fire descended from heaven, consumed offering and altar, wood and water alike. The people, awe-struck, fell upon their faces; acknowledged the Godhead of Jehovah; then rose and slew the false prophets of an alien faith, who had so nearly seduced Israel's children from Israel's God.

So the danger was averted, and as a token of divine approval the long drought ended on the same day. But Jezebel swore vengeance against the slayer of her prophets, and compelled the fearless champion of Jehovah to flee for his life. Now comes a scene, like the quiet after storm, almost startling in its tenderness after the ferocity and frenzy of the conflict on Carmel. This is one of those deathless descriptions which, like so many others in the Bible, seems to have said for all time a thing that all men have felt, but only genius could express. The inevitable nervous reaction, part of the price which has to be paid for inspiration, came at last; and Elijah, who never feared the face of man, lay prostrate in his lonely cave and prayed for death. And there God, Who is never so near as when He seems most distant, spoke to His weary servant: not in the voice of the wind, though "a great and strong wind rent the mountains," nor by earthquake, though an earthquake followed the wind, but after both earthquake and wind had ceased, by a still, small voice. And so Elijah was comforted, and like a Greater than he who was wont to betake Himself to the mountains or the wilderness for refreshment, returned to the busy world confident and unafraid.

We must pass over the obscure though spirited accounts in the twentieth and twenty-second chapters of the wars between Israel and Syria. The exact course of events is not easy to disentangle. Here and there, as constantly in these records, a weighty and memorable phrase falls like a hammer-stroke on the ear and implants itself in the memory—"Let not him that girdeth on his armour boast himself as he that putteth it off"; "Put this fellow in prison, and feed him with bread of affliction and water of affliction;"



SPANNING THE BROOK CHERITH. By this primitive bridge, fashioned of reeds, light traffic crosses the brook identified with Cherith, the water of which supplied Elijah with drink while he was being fed by the ravens. It is the largest stream in the district, but in summer becomes a mere trickle; or dries up as it did during the prophet's sojourn by its banks "because there had been no rain in the land" (I. Kings xvii, 7). The bridge—which must be less flimsy than it looks since pack-camels on occasion pass over it—leads to the Greek monastery of St. George within the deep rift of the Wady Kelt.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

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SPRING FROM WHICH ELIJAH DRENCHED THE ALTAR. On Mount Carmel is a stream which has never been known to run dry during the rainless season. It flows near the traditional "Place of Burning" commemorating the miracle of Elijah and the priests of Baal. From this stream might have been obtained, even in that time of severe drought in Ahab's reign, the barrels full of water which the prophet commanded to be thrown over the altar until the trench surrounding it was filled (I. Kings xviii, 35). Mount Carmel is still, as in Biblical days, a famed beauty spot of Palestine, green even in the heat of summer.

Photo. W. F. Taylor

"A certain man drew a bow at a venture." But the narrative as a whole is cumbersome and not very illuminating. The decline of Israel's power as an independent nation is fairly evident; but the student who is interested in the details of the process needs a commentary and a good modern history of the time beside him. Our present concern is not so much with tendencies and policies as with persons. Let us return once again to the stern yet attractive figure of Elijah.

After calling the young Elisha to be his successor, he is not again heard of until Ahab's murder of Naboth—a crime which even to the old chronicler, who was not squeamish, seemed especially mean and despicable. Here again it is Jezebel who, like Lady Macbeth, is the real villain. Ahab, spoilt by the privileges of despotic kingship, had set his heart on a vineyard belonging to one of his subjects, Naboth by name. He endeavoured to buy it but was rebuffed. The sturdy peasant refused to part with his ancestral inheritance, humble though it was. Ahab fell ill of peevish vexation; and his wife, irritated that a mere subject should refuse a royal request, incited her husband to bring a false charge of treason against the man, the penalty for which was death. The plot succeeded, Naboth was stoned, and Ahab's greed was satisfied.

But not for long. Scarcely had he taken possession of his new property when a shadow fell across his path, and Elijah, grim and gaunt, stood before him, every inch a prophet. The king cowered like a whipped cur. "Hast thou found me, O mine enemy?" he whimpered. "I have found thee," cried the prophet, and proceeded to pronounce upon Ahab and all his house a terrible curse—a curse which shows still, in letters of livid flame, how the Hebrew's sense of justice, that priceless heritage which was the accompaniment of his religion, had been outraged. The rights of the poor man have never been more indignantly defended, more passionately vindicated, than in the pages of the Old Testament. Is it too much to say that for a democracy to endure, defying the winds and shocks of time, its roots must still be planted deep in that soil which has nursed so many a hero's faith, the preaching of the Hebrew prophets?

AND so we close this story-book, though others still remain; and as we close it are thankful for the courage and vision of many of these early servants of the Lord; sorry for their sins; wiser, let us hope, for their mistakes; inspired to walk a little more faithfully in the royal road of duty because of those others who, in the long, long ago, prepared a highway for the coming of the King.

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LINKED WITH NAAMAN THE LEPER. Outside the walls of Damascus and near the East Gate, there remains a trace of Naaman, the Syrian captain. An early tradition associating the site with his house led in medieval times to the erection there of a hospital for lepers, commemorating his healing by Elisha (II. Kings v, 1-14). The ruined arches of that once imposing building are pictured above. Through Damascus flows the Abana, which, with the Pharpar, Naaman so scornfully preferred to Jordan when he received the prophet's message, "Go wash in Jordan seven times and thou shalt be clean."

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

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Chronological Table of the Hebrew Kingdoms

This Table, a continuation of that given in pages 244 and 245, covers the period from the disruption of the Hebrew Kingdom on the death of Solomon to the fall of Jerusalem and the extinction of the Kingdom of Judah.

Though the Assyrian records enable us to fix several of the most important dates, not even the most careful comparison can remove from the subject a considerable measure of uncertainty. The dates of the Hebrew Kings given below are those adopted by Professor T. H. Robinson and Professor W. O. E. Oesterley in their "History of Israel" (Oxford University Press, 1932), while those of contemporary events are given in the "Universal History of the World," edited by Sir J. A. Hammerton.

Date B.C.	*Hebrew History*		*Contemporary History in Egypt and the West*	*Contemporary History in Mesopotamia and Asia Minor*
	Judah	*Israel*		
936	Rehoboam	Jeroboam I		
930			Shishak invades Palestine and captures Jerusalem	
925			Osorkon I (925-889) succeeds Shishak	
919	Abijam			
916	Asa (c. 916-875)			
914		Nadab		
912		Baasha		
911				Revival of Assyria. Reign of Adad-nirari II, 911-889; comes into conflict with Babylon over disputed boundaries
900				Ben-hadad, king of Syria, allies himself with Judah against Israel
889			Reign of Takeleth I (889-865)	Reign (889-884) of Tukulti-Ninurta II in Assyria; wars with Urartu (Armenia)
888		Elah		
886		Zimri. Omri; transfers capital from Tirzah to Samaria		Northern Palestine now appears in Assyrian inscriptions as the "Land of Omri"
884				Reign of Ashur-nasir-pal II (884-859), in Assyria
875	Jehoshaphat (875-850)	Ahab (875-853). Elijah prophesies		Ashur-nasir-pal invades the west and subjugates all Mesopotamia above the Babylonian kingdom
865			Osorkon II (865-850)	
860		Ahab at war with Ben-hadad of Damascus		Ben-hadad II head of confederacy of Syrian states
859				Shalmaneser III succeeds Ashur-nasir-pal
853		Alliance of Ahab with Ben-hadad against Shalmaneser		Shalmaneser wins battle of Karkar against Ahab and Syrian confederacy
852		Death of Ahab; Ahaziah succeeds		Rebellion of Mesha of Moab against Israel
850	Jehoram	Joram or Jehoram. Elisha prophesies	Shishak II (850-825)	
848				Shalmaneser assaults Damascus but is beaten off
847				Moabite Stone on which Mesha records victory over Hebrew alliance
842	Ahaziah			Hazael murders Ben-hadad and seizes throne
841	Athaliah	Jehu		Black Obelisk of Shalmaneser III, recording homage paid by Jehu, king of Israel, and others
838				Shalmaneser again attacks Damascus
835	Joash			
827				Civil wars in Assyria
825			Iuput (825-821)	Shamshi-Adad V (824-805)
821		Jehoahaz	Shishak III (821-769)	Order restored in Assyria
814				Ben-hadad III succeeds Hazael in Syria. Continues his father's policy of harrying Israel
805				Adad-nirari III (805-781).
804		Jehoash; is successful against Syria		
800			Carthage founded (traditional)	

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From Solomon's Death to the Babylonian Captivity

Date B.C.	Hebrew History: Judah	Hebrew History: Israel	Contemporary History in Egypt and the West	Contemporary History in Mesopotamia and Asia Minor
795	Amaziah			
788		Jeroboam II; recovers Damascus and Hamath. Hosea prophesies		
786	Azariah (Uzziah). Amos prophesies			
781				Shalmaneser IV (781-771)
773				Shalmaneser attacks Damascus
771				Ashur-dan III (771-754)
769			Pamai (769-763)	
765				
763	Eclipse of the sun (*see* Amos viii, 9)		Shishak IV (763-725)	
757	Jotham			
753			Rome founded (traditional)	
747		Zechariah. Shallum. Menahem. Jonah prophesies		Accession of Rezin in Syria
745			Complete disruption of central authority in Egypt; Kashta the Nubian holds Thebes	Tiglath-Pileser III (Pul) seizes Assyrian throne. During his reign (745-727) Syria and Israel are again dominated, Babylonia is annexed and Urartu (Armenia) invaded
741	Ahaz; submits to Assyria. Isaiah and Micah prophesy			
737		Pekahiah		
735		Pekah; with Rezin tries to compel Ahaz into alliance against Assyria		
734			Syracuse founded	Fall of Damascus and death of Rezin
733		Hoshea		
727		Hoshea reduced to vassalage by Shalmaneser, and rebels	Power in north Egypt belongs to Tafnekt, prince of Sais	Shalmaneser V (727-722)
725	Hezekiah (725-696) abolishes idolatry; defeats Philistines			
724		Israel invaded by Assyria		Shalmaneser attacks Samaria
722		Hoshea appeals to So of Egypt but without avail. Fall of Samaria, and end of House of Israel	Piankhi, son of Kashta, defeats Tafnekt, the Saite. With Piankhi is associated So (Shabaka)	Sargon II (722-705) succeeds Shalmaneser and captures Samaria. In Babylonia the Chaldeans under Merodach-baladan rise against Assyria
	Judah only			
720			Battle of Raphia, in which So of Egypt and allied Philistines are defeated.	Revolt throughout Syria. Sargon wins victories at Raphia and Karkar
712			Shabaka (So) founds 25th Dynasty	
711	Azuri, king of Ashdod, tries to involve Hezekiah in rebellion against Assyria. Isaiah and Micah prophesy			Assyrian punitive expedition against Ashdod
710				Merodach-baladan, king of Babylon since 722, deposed by Sargon
705	Hezekiah strengthens defences of Jerusalem and ensures water-supply (Siloam inscription)		Tarentum founded	Death of Sargon; accession of Sennacherib (705-680)
701	Palestine invaded by Sennacherib and subjugated, with exception of Jerusalem. Hezekiah nevertheless makes submission		Shabaka succeeded by Shabataka. In Upper Egypt Piankhi and Amenartas (sister of Shabaka) are co-regents	Sennacherib invades Palestine, defeats rebels at Battle of Eltekeh. Rise of Media and Lydia
696	Manasseh succeeds Hezekiah. Jeremiah prophesies			
689			Tirhakah, Nubian king in Egypt	

[*Continued overleaf*

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Chronology (cont.): to the Fall of Jerusalem

Date B.C.	*Hebrew History Judah only*	*Contemporary History in Egypt and the West*	*Contemporary History in Mesopotamia and Asia Minor*
680			Sennacherib slain. Esarhaddon succeeds (680-668)
679	Esarhaddon colonizes Samaria		Syrian campaign. Babylon rebuilt
678	Manasseh pays tribute to Esarhaddon		
671	Fall of Sidon	Egypt conquered by Esarhaddon	Campaign in Egypt
668		Assyrian overlordship established in Egypt	Death of Esarhaddon. His son Ashurbanipal (Sardanapalus), succeeds (668-627)
664		Psammeticus I (664-609) founds 26th Egyptian Dynasty. Revival of art and power	
661		Tirhakah heads revolt in Egypt but is defeated	Expedition against Tirhakah
652		Egypt under Psammeticus recovers her independence	Babylon allied with Elam, revolts, but both are defeated and Susa, capital of Elam, destroyed
641	Amon succeeds Manasseh. Nahum prophesies	Psammeticus invades Assyrian territory of Philistia	Rebellion in Syria
639	Josiah succeeds (639-608). Jeremiah and Zephaniah prophesy		Beginning of invasion from Scythia (Jeremiah vi, 22)
626		Periander, "tyrant" of Corinth	Death of Ashurbanipal. Ashur-etil-ilani succeeds (626-621)
621	Josiah initiates religious revival and reforms, occasioned by discovery of Book of the Law during repairs to the Temple (II. Kings xxii, 3)		Sin-shum-lishir succeeds to Assyrian throne, followed by Sin-shar-ishkun (621-612)
616			Nabopolassar, rebel king of Babylon (625-605) defeats Assyrians at Kablini and combined forces of Assyrians and Egyptians at Arrapha
612			Alliance against Assyria of Cyaxares the Mede and Nabopolassar. Destruction of Nineveh (Nahum iii)
609		Pharaoh-Necho succeeds Psammeticus in Egypt	
608	Josiah slain by Necho at Megiddo. Jehoiakim succeeds	Necho marches up Palestinian coast to support remnant of Assyria, now fled to Harran	
605	Jehoiakim submits to Nebuchadrezzar but later revolts	Nebuchadrezzar finally defeats Assyrians and Egyptians under Necho at battle of Carchemish. Succeeds his father, Nabopolassar, on throne of Babylon	
600		Thales of Miletus; Etruscan Dynasty at Rome; Solon's legislation at Athens	
597	Jehoiachin succeeds; transported to Babylon (II. Kings xxiv, 1-16). Zedekiah succeeds		First Babylonian assault on Jerusalem
593		Psammeticus II succeeds Necho	
588	Zedekiah revolts against Babylon, at instigation of Hophra. Joined by Tyre and Sidon	Hophra (Apries) succeeds (588-569)	
586	Destruction of Jerusalem and end of kingdom of Judah (II. Kings xxv, 10-21) Some of the population (including Jeremiah) flee to Egypt		Nebuchadrezzar destroys Jerusalem and carries most of population into captivity

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"THE PEOPLE PIPED WITH PIPES AND REJOICED WITH GREAT JOY"

Playing tunes which echo round the mountain slopes from a tube with fingerholes punched according to the notes of the scale, this shepherd boy pipes to his flock. The oboe-like strains of his reed have a wild sweetness as primitive as the instrument. Such pipes were in use thousands of years before this youthful musician was born. They were the most commonly-played instruments in Canaan and adjacent lands. Piping is not always mentioned in the Bible in connexion with such joyful sound as it is in I. Kings i, 40, on the occasion of Solomon's anointing, when the people played so loudly "that the earth rent." It accompanied mourning and solemn ritual as well as triumphant processions and pastoral gladness.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

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"SO THE WATERS WERE HEALED UNTO THIS DAY"

This pleasant spring, near the ruins of ancient Jericho, is known as Elisha's Fountain. It is believed to be the one into which the Prophet cast the salt from a new cruse when the people of the city complained "the water is naught, and the ground barren" (II. Kings ii, 19-22). The words spoken by Elisha were: "Thus saith the Lord, I have healed these waters: there shall not be from thence any more death or barren land." The water of the spring is excellent and it now irrigates fields and fairly extensive orchards in the district. The building to the left is a mill for grinding corn.

Photo. American Colony in Jerusalem

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"FULFIL YOUR WORKS, YOUR DAILY TASKS"

Washing-day is less irksome in the East than in the West, especially in the dry season, when it can be done in leisurely fashion out of doors, and the rinsed garments are spread on wall or rock to dry quickly in the sun. In some parts of Palestine clothes are still washed by treading on them with bare feet as in Biblical times. The soap then used appears to have been made of olive oil and soda with the addition of ashes or lye. Though ordinary laundering was doubtless done at home the fuller's was evidently a common trade (II. Kings xviii, 17), with bleaching and drying grounds, walled enclosures conveniently situated by a pool.

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HEZEKIAH "MADE A POOL AND A CONDUIT"

The tradition linking the large artificially-built reservoir in Jerusalem, known as the Pool of Hezekiah, with the engineering feats of the good king of Judah who "brought water into the city" (II. Kings xx, 20) by means of the Siloam tunnel, is an old one. This same reservoir is called Pool Amygdalon by Josephus, the Jewish historian writing in the first century A.D. The conduit passes underneath the city wall near the Jaffa Gate, conveying water from a pool in the Valley of Hinnom. The large building shown in the photograph is a Coptic khan—at the northern end of the reservoir; beyond is seen the great dome of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

Photo, Newtonian Illustrated Press

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II. Kings

I

The Book in Outline

From Elijah's Translation to the Captivity in Babylon

by REV. CANON S. N. SEDGWICK, M.A.

Rector of Warnford, and Canon of Portsmouth.

THE Second Book of Kings, or, to give it its sub-title in the A.V. "commonly called, the fourth book of the Kings" continues the story of the two kingdoms till their disastrous end, Israel in 722 B.C., and Judah in 586, and once again a magnificent succession of incidents and heroes will take the general reader's attention. But it is worth emphasizing that the compiler was bent on writing the history of his people from the *religious* point of view, and desired that they should gather serious lessons from their national history. What many a modern historian would have chosen to underline, the political, or international, or commercial success or failure of the several kings he has little concern with, but anything of an ecclesiastical or religious character, especially as it affects the people's loyalty or faithlessness to God, *and its results* for good or evil, is made much of. One can almost read the contempt in the summing-up of Ahab's reign. "Now the rest of the acts of Ahab and all that he did, and the ivory house which he made, and all the cities that he built, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?" Such books have vanished, but the record of how this small nation, the Hebrews, lived towards God and the things of the spiritual world remains to this day.

We carry on with the story of Elijah and his successor Elisha. No doubt the record from which the compiler drew his narrative contained sundry legendary embellishments to their lives, which are natural enough, when we remember how such stories grow round the lives of heroes or saints, especially among a primitive people. So we may pass over the story of his summoning fire from heaven twice, to consume officers and troops sent to escort him to the sick bed of king Ahaziah, only bearing in mind that in after years our Lord rebuked those disciples of His who would have loved to see a Samaritan village thus destroyed for insulting their Master.

Close of Elijah's Prophetic Ministry

KING AHAZIAH had met with a serious accident. For some unknown reason he chose to send to a heathen temple in the Philistine city of Ekron, to inquire whether he would recover. But the occasion turns out to be Elijah's last public appearance as the champion of the religion of Jehovah, and he comes by the king's bedside to foretell his coming death.

But now it was time that the work of the prophet should be handed over to his successor. Some years before (I. Kings xix) Elisha had been chosen as the prophet's servant and ultimate successor, and the two set out on a series of farewell visits to the schools of the prophets in Bethel and Jericho. It is needless to speculate where such communities came from, but Elisha heard words of foreboding from both of them as to Elijah's end. And the great prophet, too, tested his servant's loyalty and devotion by bidding him stay behind. But Elisha refuses to leave his master till the end. Elijah's end is shrouded in mystery even in the account that leads up to it. There is a tenseness about the words themselves, hinting at something awful yet to come.

Elisha Takes up the Mantle of Elijah

THE two men crossed the Jordan Elijah smiting its waters and dividing them with his mantle, with the same sure purpose as when the ark passed over before the advance of the children of Israel centuries before, and then, with what seems to us a touch of pathetic affection, he offers his follower a last gift. Elisha asked for a double portion of Elijah's spirit—as if a first-born son's right—that he might worthily succeed his master. It must depend, said the old prophet, on whether you have eyes to see heavenly realities. But when the end came (no "explanation" of it is possible) Elisha saw the vision of "the chariots of fire and horses of fire" by which his master was borne away. He had passed the test of loyal obedience, and the ability to perceive spiritual ideals. Henceforth he was in Elijah's place, and his first symbolic act was to copy his master with the same faith. "Where is the Lord God, the God of Elijah?" he cried, as he smote the river with Elijah's cloak, and after he had thus crossed he was received without question as Elijah's successor. Immediately he showed that he had indeed inherited his master's powers, for the healed fountain of Jericho, the "*Ain es-Sultan*," is said to be the spring over which Elisha wrought his miracle, and its waters are pure and salubrious "unto this day."

We need not spend time over the war with Moab, and its concurrence with the inscription on the famous Moabite Stone, detailing Mesha's revolt against Israel. The armies of Israel under Jehoram, of Judah under Jehoshaphat, with that of the king of Edom, formed a triple alliance to attack Moab, but would have died of thirst but for Elisha's directions, given under the prophetic impulse aroused by music—a curiously modern touch. The allies won a temporary victory but in the end achieved no decisive result.

There follows one of the most touching stories in the Old Testament—that of the Lady of Shunem and her son. Though like the similar story in Elijah's life (I. Kings xvii), it yet contains differences which are marked, and points of detail of remarkable verisimilitude.

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As Elisha journeyed frequently through Shunem, a wealthy lady who regularly entertained him, persuaded her husband to build a little room "on the wall" for his use. "The prophet's chamber" has become a proverbial name for a guest-room. The prophet, desiring to make some return for her hospitality, received a dignified and reserved reply when he asked her what boon she would desire. "I dwell among my own people" she answered. Her modesty and at the same time her pride in her family shine through her words. Gehazi, however, Elisha's servant, who is consistently exhibited as a "man-of-the-world," has the shrewd worldly wisdom to know what her secret wish is: "she has no child." When Elisha promises her a son, we see the woman's long-hidden desire leaping to the forefront; but the prophet's words seem too good to be true—"Do not lie unto thine handmaid." None-the-less, Elisha's promise came true, and the parents rejoiced in their boy until one day, in the cornfield, where he was playing among the reapers, he complained of headache.

The next words are in such beautiful and pregnant English that no paraphrase could equal them (and the original Hebrew is equally fine, of course):

"And he said unto his father, My head, my head. And he said to a lad, Carry him to his mother. And when he had taken him, and brought him to his mother, he sat on her knees till noon, and then died. And she went up and laid him on the bed of the man of God and shut the door upon him, and went out . . ." (II. Kings iv, 19-21).

It is a master of the short story who originally told it as the compiler of Kings has copied it. Every word carries its full weight. We see her husband's indulgent, easy-going attitude to the mother, as he wonders (all ignorant of the boy's death) at her wishing to visit the prophet on an ordinary day; but he does nothing to stop her, and in her almost fierce and certainly curt instructions to her donkey driver we see something of the agony of a mother's heart. When she met, first Gehazi, and then Elisha, there is the same intensity of emotion in the words that cover her speech and actions. And so on to the end. The method by which Elisha tried to bring life into the dead child is not only interesting to the student of ancient folk-lore and magic, but the Christian fathers loved to read into the scene a parable of Christ's restoration of our nature by contact with it.

The miracle performed, are there finer words wherewith to end the story? When the mother came to the room where her boy was still alive . . . "he said, Take up thy son. Then she went in, and fell at his feet, and bowed herself to the ground, and took up her son, and went out" (II. Kings iv, 36-37).

Two other minor tales of the prophet lead on to what is again one of the famous stories in the Old Testament—The Cleansing of Naaman the Leper.

In view of the requirements of space, we have no room to go through it in detail, but every one of the characters is alive, and has been used in sermons and addresses times without number for homiletic purposes. Naaman himself, the leper-captain of the Syrian host, popular with slaves and servants, the little maid, the soldiers, Gehazi, etc. Again phrases from it, like "the house of Rimmon," have become almost household words, and there are no more dramatic endings to stories sacred or secular than the words wherein Gehazi, the lying, self-centred servant, is cursed: "The leprosy of Naaman shall cleave unto thee, and unto thy seed for ever. *And he went out from his presence a leper as white as snow.*"

Again passing over the story of the axe-head made to swim, a story which incidentally reminds us of the growing development of the prophetic communities, our eyes light on another story of the confidence of Elisha in the midst of enemies, of how he outwits a whole army sent to seize him. It is to be noted that both Elisha and his master were intense patriots and men of political sagacity, hence it came about that the Syrian king found Elisha a serious stumbling-block in his proposed campaigns, and determined to capture him. For this purpose a strong force of Syrians surrounded Dothan, where the prophet was residing. Modern emphasis naturally is given to the incident in which the prophet prays for his servant, terrified by the sight of the enemy, "Lord, I pray thee, open his eyes that he may see." (This prayer

II. KINGS: A SYNOPSIS

The Passing of Elijah

	Chapters
Last Days of Elijah	i—ii, 8
His Ascension	ii, 9-11
Elisha Established as his Successor ...	ii, 12-25

Elisha's Miracles

Elisha ensures Victory of Jehoram against Moab	iii
He multiplies the Widow's Oil ...	iv, 1-7
Elisha and the Shunammite	iv, 8-37
The Story of Naaman	v
The Floating Axe-head	vi, 1-7

Syria Against the Kingdoms

Ben-hadad Besieges Samaria	vi, 24—vii, 20
Hazael Usurps Syrian Throne	viii, 7-15
Jehu Anointed King Over Israel ...	ix, 1-10
He Slays Jehoram and Ahaziah ...	ix, 11-29
Death of Jezebel	ix, 30-37
Destruction of Baal Worshippers ...	x, 18-28
Athaliah and Jehoash in Judah ...	xi—xii
Hazael Invades Judah	xii, 17-21
Jeroboam Recovers Damascus and Hamath	xiv, 28
Succeeding Kings in Judah and Israel	xiv, 29—xvii, 4

Beginning of Assyrian Supremacy

Samaria Destroyed by Sargon: End of House of Israel	xvii, 6
Hezekiah Ascends the Throne in Judah	xviii, 1
Sennacherib Invades Judah	xviii, 13—xix, 37
Isaiah Prophesies before Hezekiah ...	xx
Manasseh and Amon	xxi
Reign and Reforms of Josiah	xxii—xxiii, 30
Last Kings of Judah	xxiii, 31—xxv, 7
Nebuchadnezzar Destroys Jerusalem: the Captivity	xxv, 8-26

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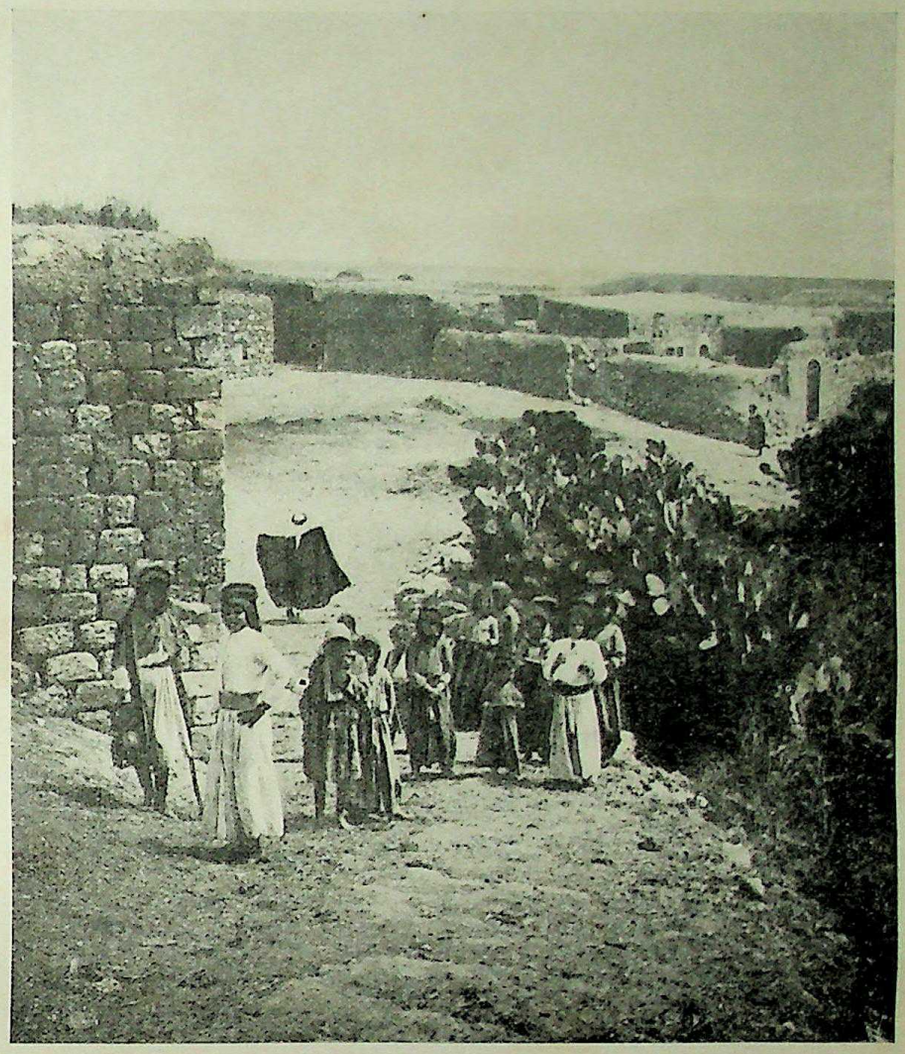
found an almost verbal echo in the last words of Tyndall, as he was led to execution for his translation of the Bible — "Open the king of England's eyes that he may see.")

To the young man was granted that spiritual vision which Elisha had shown himself able to use, when Elijah bade him farewell. Now was vouchsafed to him the vision of the same horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha, whose words, "they that be with us are more than they that be with them," have inspired many a faltering soul.

But the story ends by the entrapping of the whole army, suddenly blinded by Jehovah, and led into Samaria, where, at Elisha's bidding, they are hospitably treated and freed—"And the bands of Syria came no more into the land of Israel"—and passes on to a grim narrative of a fearful siege of Samaria by Ben-hadad (though which king of Syria he is, it is impossible to discover), in which the prophet himself in the famine-stricken city prophesies a strange end of their plight.



HERE DWELT THE GOOD SHUNAMMITE. **Often visited by Elisha, Shunem is on the lower slope of Little Hermon, seen right from the road going north to Nazareth after passing Jezreel. In the prophet's time the village was the home of the wealthy woman who had built for him the guest-chamber on the wall of her house —that is on part of the roof—and whose son he restored to life after she had ridden to Mount Carmel to beseech his aid (II. Kings iv, 25-37).**

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

As so often happens in these Elisha-narratives, the other personalities in them stand out with vivid characterization. So here, the attention is drawn to the four lepers outside the walls, who in despair determined to surrender to the enemy, went into the camp, and found it entirely deserted. It was these men who brought the news to the watchmen at the gate of Samaria, and thus led to the fulfilment of the prophets words.

Elisha played his part, not only in scenes like those already narrated, but in events of wider political significance. There is such a story now dealing with his meeting with a certain Hazael, an officer in Ben-hadad's court (and mentioned twice in an inscription of Shalmanezer II as king of Damascus). Influenced by the prophet's words, Hazael acts on their suggestion, which, like the witches' prophecy in Macbeth, develops into murder, and that the assassination of the Syrian king. But of far greater import to the compiler is the Revolution in Israel, also set on foot by Elisha.

FOR long the opposition of the prophets to the religious influence of the house of Omri had been thrust into the background, but it had never been stifled. Now it seemed to Elisha that the time had come for a new decisive effort to destroy it finally and wipe out the worship of Baal from the land.

The story is told in some of the finest descriptive passages in the Old Testament. Indeed, if they are read as a whole, or possibly for the first time in their fullness, they prove as engrossing a piece of literature as may be found anywhere.

Yet when the revolution ends, after its horrible progress of blood and murder, it fails in its object. It brings no end to the false religion of the people, though for the time the worship of the Phoenician gods is suppressed; the history stands as an example of attempting to change the religion of a people by secular force—a lesson much to be borne in mind at the present day. In the end, Elisha and the other prophets forced their country to pay for the abolition of the Baalim a price which it could not afford.

Hosea (i, 4) in after years could call his son Jezreel, "for yet a little while, and I will avenge the blood of Jezreel upon the house of Jehu, and will cause to cease the kingdom of the house of Israel."

Again space must limit any prolonged paraphrase, especially in view of the fineness of the original narrative. Suffice it that Elisha found in the young, dashing military officer, Jehu, the son of Nimshi, stationed at Ramoth-Gilead, a possible leader in the revolt. He sent a young prophet to crown him king of Israel.

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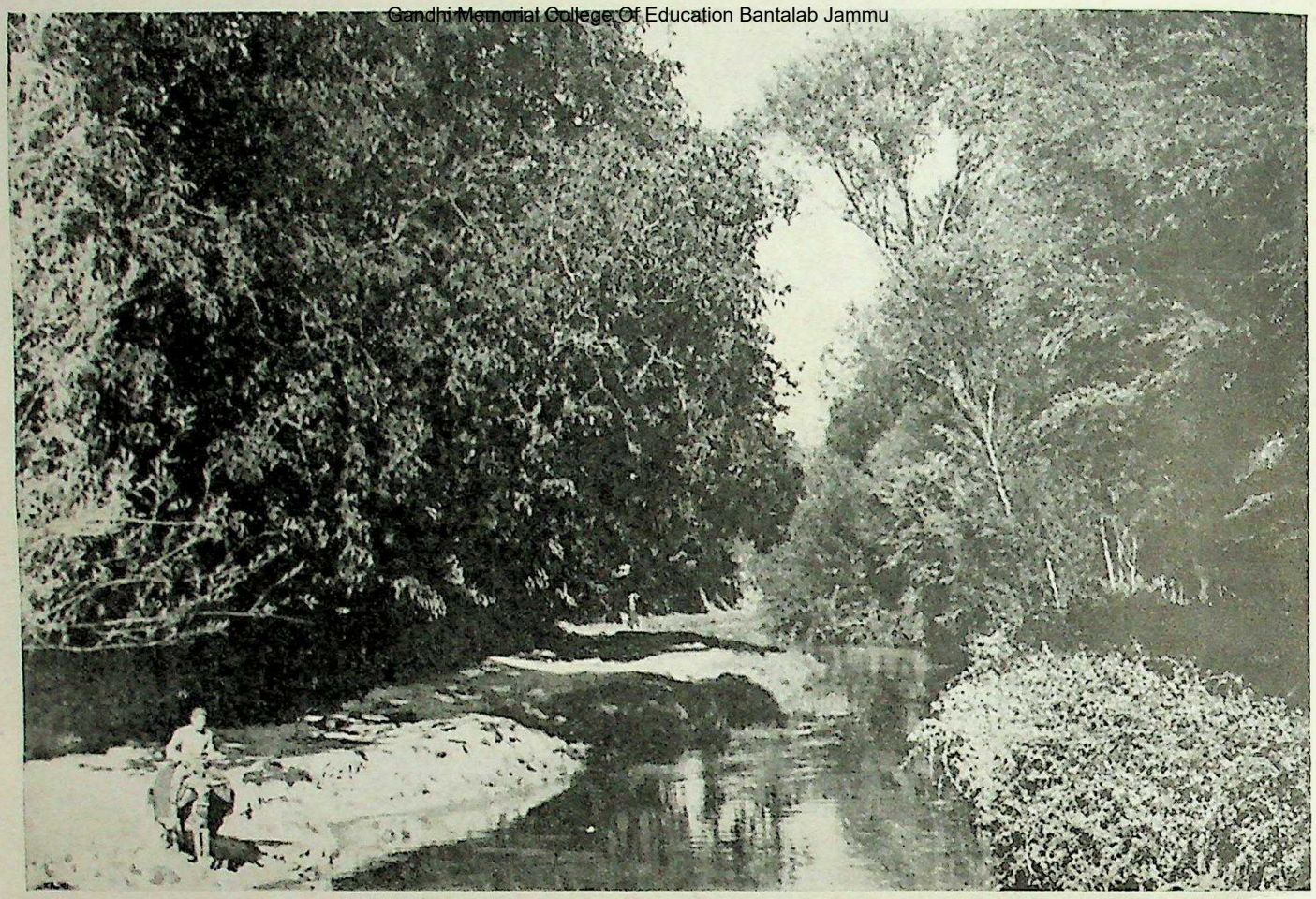

" BETTER THAN ALL THE WATERS OF ISRAEL ? " A lovely reach is pictured here of the Abana, river of Damascus, with which the Jordan was so contemptuously compared by Naaman, the great Syrian captain, who "was a leper" (II. Kings, v, 1, 12). The river, now called Barada, rising amidst the Anti-Lebanon mountains, descends to the plain and gives a glory of fertile beauty to the gardens of Damascus. It flows through the city, making of its surroundings an oasis in the desert. It is not surprising that the goodly waters of his land were extolled by Naaman when he saw Jordan's turbid stream.

Photo, W. F. Taylor

Then follows the headlong gallop to Jezreel, some fifty miles, which has given to every furious driver the nickname of " Jehu " ; it is succeeded by the murder of both kings of Israel and Judah, and the dramatic end of the " painted Jezebel," who died at least with courage and with the taunt that has become proverbial on her lips : " Had Zimri peace who slew his master ? " This was followed by the massacre of the royal princes of Israel and Judah, a practice all too common in ancient days, and then with one decisive blow heaped upon another, Jehu hurries to Samaria to exterminate the Baal-worshippers, the temple and all the idolatrous emblems there.

At his death, the compiler transfers us to the account of the Revolution in Judah. Here Athaliah, the queen-mother and the last remaining representative of Ahab's house, had reigned for some six years, having, as she thought, destroyed all the " seed royal." But we are told how one child, the boy Joash, was saved by the high priest's wife and, brought up secretly in his house, is finally crowned the lawful king in the temple courts, while Athaliah meets her doom at the entrance to the " king's house."

In the period which follows, the compiler, with painstaking care, summarizes references to some unimportant reigns, but sandwiches in among them an account of the death of Elisha. The end befits the man. Let it be borne in mind that the great difference between Elisha and his master and predecessor was that Elijah had been always a prophet against the monarchy, whilst Elisha had been generally in favour and respected. It was natural that at the end of his life he should be visited by Jehoash the king, to whose dynasty he had been always loyal, and who, with genuine tears, remembered the great part he had played in his country's struggle for freedom. It was as if the prophet's vision had become actualized in him. " My father, my father," said the king, " the chariot of Israel and the horsemen thereof."

Arrows of Victory Against Syria

BUT the old prophet would give the king a last reminder of the invincible power of the Lord, the true defence of Israel. With his hands on the king's hands, as if he would bequeath to him some of his own indomitable courage and faith in God for Israel's ultimate victory over Syria, he bade him shoot an arrow through the open window towards Damascus : " The Lord's arrow of victory, even the victory over Syria." Then he bade him beat the arrows upon the ground. Jehoash struck thrice and stopped. Elisha perceived only too well that the king would never show sufficient persistence in his resistance of Syria finally to overcome the enemy : " Thou shouldest have smitten five or six times ; then hadst thou smitten Syria till thou hadst consumed it ; whereas now

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THE SO-CALLED TOWER OF JEZEBEL. On the site of Jezreel, where Ahab had a palace, stands this picturesque old tower used by the native villagers of Zerin as a storehouse for fuel. It is traditionally but quite erroneously associated with the death of Jezebel of Tyre, Ahab's ruthless queen. Its uppermost window is said to be the one from which she was flung to her death after uttering her famous taunt (II. Kings ix, 31). Attired as was customary for "a king's daughter," she looked out at Jehu, who had slain her son Joram, and said, with bitter scorn, "Had Zimri peace, who slew his master?"

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

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"TAKE A PRESENT . . . . OF FORTY CAMELS' BURDEN." This lengthy train of heavily-laden camels recalls the caravan of Hazael when he "took a present with him, even of every good thing of Damascus" and went to meet Elisha, the man of God, to enquire of him whether his master, the king of Syria, would recover from his disease (II. Kings viii, 9). Evidently the prophet was famed and highly revered beyond the kingdom of Israel. The camels pictured are plodding along one of those cross-country trails, beaten during thousands of years by the feet of countless beasts of burden. Many such ancient tracks are to be found in Palestine. One rider on a donkey can direct a whole caravan. Camels will continue in an accustomed direction until the signal for halt is given. They never give way to anyone, and are awkward animals in the narrow streets of a town.

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thou shalt smite Syria but thrice." So the stern patriotism of the prophet ended in forebodings as to the future of his country.

We can follow the compiler in passing rapidly over the next chapters, briefly carrying on the story of the succeeding kings of Israel and Judah. Not that they are unimportant, for, meagre as the record may be, there are details which will arouse the attention of the student. Much of the narrative can be supplemented from the Chronicles: it is a period of internecine conflicts, of wars with Syria and Egypt, and with the shadow of Assyria, that great power, on the east of Arabia and the Syrian desert, whose capital was Nineveh and whose increasing power was for the time unrivalled, gradually darkening over the Northern realm.

Amaziah of Judah (795-786 B.C.) boastfully threatened the Israelites and was utterly beaten at Beth-shemesh. Jeroboam II of Israel (788-747), whose reign was the longest and most successful of the kings of Israel, is dismissed in one short paragraph, of which we may notice the reference to the prophet Jonah (xiv, 25), to remind us that we have here reached the age of the prophets whose writings we possess, such as Amos and Hosea.

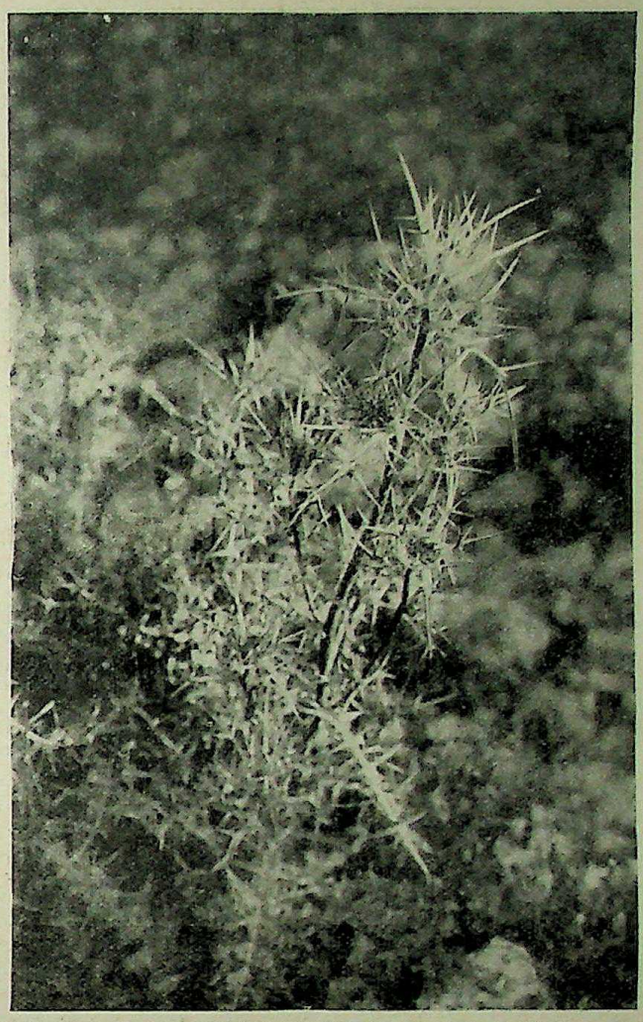
Azariah (Uzziah) of Judah (786-757), Zechariah and Shallum of Israel (747). . . . We must omit these and others, men who arose, fulfilled their little destinies —and passed, until we come to the account of the last king of Israel, Hoshea (734-722).

Already part of the little country of Israel had fallen into the hands of Assyria, and its inhabitants had been deported, two years or so before Hoshea became king. The country, including Galilee and "all the land of Naphtali" was captured, the people exiled, and Hoshea, who must have been the leader of the pro-Assyrian party, murdered the king (Pekah) and mounted the throne.

It is interesting to know that extant records of Tiglath-Pileser, the Assyrian King, claim that he himself put Pekah to death and set Ausi' (Hoshea) on the throne, which may indeed be true, and is an instance of the increasing evidences of external history to the truth of the Bible history.

Downfall of the Northern Kingdom

HOSHEA reigned as a vassal of the Assyrian king, but he was a man of ambition and quite untrustworthy. Very briefly, the compiler tells us of his revolt from Shalmaneser V, who consequently led a punitive expedition into the country, and enforced a heavy fine. But even this did not prevent Hoshea from attempting to conspire with So, king of Egypt. The result proved fatal to the kingdom of Israel. Hoshea was taken and imprisoned, Samaria, the capital, was besieged, and though it held out for no less than three years, it was ultimately taken by Sargon, Shalmaneser's successor. "Samaria I besieged and captured"—the words are from Sargon's records—"27,290 of its inhabitants I carried away; fifty chariots I collected from them; the rest I allowed to keep their property; I set my governor over them and imposed the tribute of the former king upon them."



"THE THISTLE THAT WAS IN LEBANON." In the Bible various words signify prickly plants, the exact species being unidentifiable. A useful fuel—"the crackling of thorns under the pot"—such vegetation also forms common fodder for goats and camels. The Syrian thistle, as pictured above, is probably the plant to which the king of Israel (II. Kings xiv, 9) contemptuously compared the king of Judah, contrasting himself as a cedar of Lebanon.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

Such an event—the final extinction of the Northern kingdom—left an undying impression on all those who read this history, and the compiler of the book (or perhaps the final editor) is led to reflect upon the underlying causes of this national downfall.

From his point of view, they were clear: the adoption of Canaanitish idol sanctuaries (high places) and worship, the ignoring and defiance of the prophets and their warnings, the continuous introduction of foreign religions, and finally the sin, with which it all began, the calf-worship introduced by Jeroboam I, when the Northern kingdom was first separated.

National sin! We may have our views as to the correctness of this catalogue of causes, and when we read the Books of Amos and Hosea (addressed to the Northern kingdom), we find other sins mentioned including violence, bloodshed, injustice, drunkenness and luxury (Hosea iv, 1, 2, etc., Amos vi). No one will gainsay, however, the verdict of history, that certain causes inevitably bring certain results. Perhaps we should not put down every national calamity so

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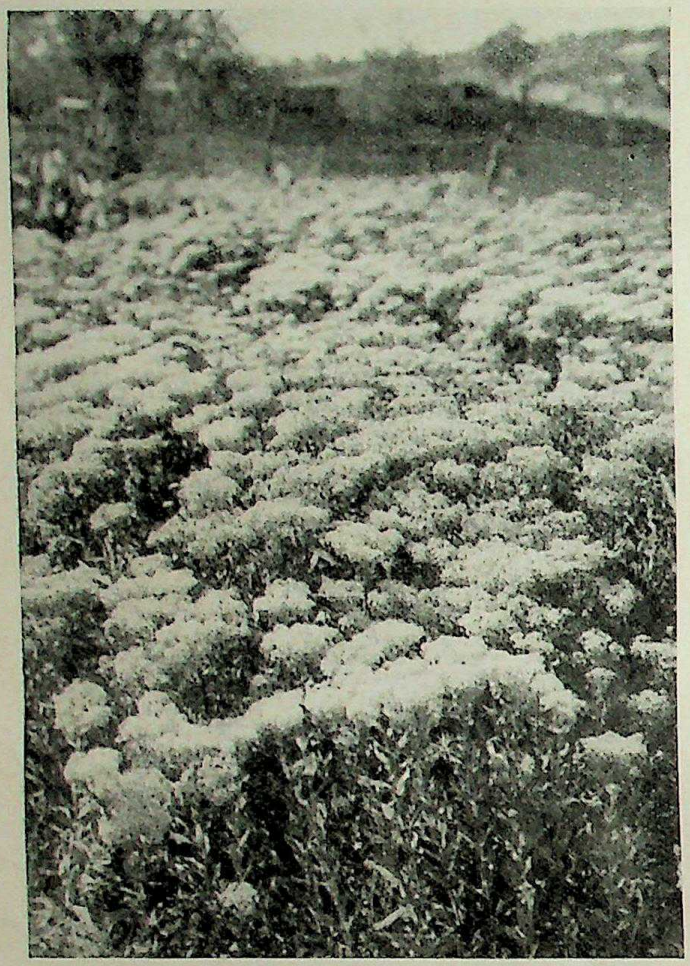

"THEY WERE AS THE GRASS OF THE FIELD." During the months of spring, the Biblical "seed time," a lovely growth of herbage and flowers covers the waste places of Palestine. The wild peppergrass pictured here is particularly abundant; but quickly withering in the heat it forms an apt illustration to the simile used by Isaiah (II. Kings xix, 26, 35) to denote the pride of Sennacherib's warriors and the destruction of "an hundred fourscore and five thousand."

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

naively to the wrath or punishment of God, but, however simple or crude may have been their outlook, these ancient writers had the truth of the matter in them. Of Israel *and of Britain* the words express a needed reminder—

Lo, all our pomp of yesterday
Is one with Nineveh and Tyre!
Judge of the Nations, spare us yet,
Lest we forget—lest we forget!

But this is not the end of the story, for next we find a little historical allusion which is of considerable importance to students of the New Testament, who are aware of the Jewish hatred of the Samaritans.

WHERE did they come from, and how came they to be settled half way between Galilee and Judea? The explanation is given here (xvii, 24ff). The country was colonized by captives sent there from other parts of the vast Assyrian Empire—"from Babylon, and from Cuthah and from Ava, and from Hamath and Sepharvaim"—a policy which the Assyrian kings instituted to prevent any attempt at insurrection or struggle for freedom. They found the country infested by lions, which they interpreted to be a sign of the displeasure of the local god. They begged to be instructed in his religion, and one of the exiled Israelite priests was sent to teach them, with the strange but not unlikely result, that the worship of Jehovah was intermingled with that of their own gods which they had brought with them.

Of this mixture of cults and races was the Samaritan community born, which was so loathed by the Jews in the time of Christ and still exists in Palestine.

The rest of II. Kings tells of the fortunes of the Southern Kingdom, Judah. But it is plain that the compiler has special interest in two reigns especially—those of Hezekiah and Josiah.

Hezekiah 'Did that Which was Right'

THE story of Hezekiah's reign has an extra interest for students because it is obviously founded on a biography, if not an autobiography, of Isaiah, in whose Book (xxxvi–xxxviii) the actual words are reproduced.

"He did that which was right in the sight of the Lord," and the first task to which the young king—he was but 25—set himself was the first thoroughgoing reformation of the religion of his country, due, no doubt, largely to Isaiah's influence. The heathen shrines, pillars and idol-emblems were destroyed, and special emphasis is laid upon the destruction of a brazen serpent, which tradition said was the one made by Moses in the wilderness, and which had become an object of worship. Whether it stood in the Temple and was regarded as an emblem of Jehovah cannot be said, but it is at least a proof of the persistence of serpent-worship in Israel.

This zeal for the worship of the true God, the compiler tells us, was accompanied by outward prosperity, Hezekiah enlarged his kingdom by a campaign in Philistia and was strong enough to break off his allegiance to Assyria.

This last effort however brought the forces of Assyria into the country. Sennacherib had now succeeded Sargon, and his inscription is in the British Museum. Hezekiah was forced to pay a tribute, but the matter did not rest there, for later on Sennacherib, who had his hands full with a campaign in the South and Egypt, sent a second army to Jerusalem under three of his officers, the Tartan, the Rabsaris and the Rabshakeh. These are not proper names, as in the A.V., but titles—"the Commander-in-Chief, the Head of the Officers, and (?) the Chief of the Eunuchs."

Their purpose was to capture the city, not only by force, but also by persuading the inhabitants to rebel against the king. The story of their attempt appears to be told twice in slightly differing words, a sign of its importance in the eyes of the compiler. And we do not doubt that he was right. Jerusalem was left isolated by the capture of "all the fenced cities of Judah," the Assyrians felt certain of their conquest, the arguments of the Rabshakeh, if they prevailed, would save the trouble of reducing the city by a long siege.

Once again, we admire the skill with which the characters of the principal personages are depicted. The Commander-in-Chief is a typical man-of-the-

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world. His arguments are such as have been used again and again by critics and enemies of religion. We read his contemptuous, cynical remarks against the religion not only of Jehovah, but of the cults of the other countries which Assyria has overwhelmed. He believes that God is on the side of the big battalions. He appeals to his hearers' "common-sense"—the speech is said to have been made to the defenders of the walls—and to the apparent witness of "facts:" "what confidence is this wherein thou trustest, what possible chance have you in the end? Are you hoping for help from Egypt?—a bruised reed! Is it the help of Jehovah? So far from allowing His worship to grow and spread, you have restricted it to Jerusalem alone—not the way to propitiate your deity! As for troops, there are no horses, or men to ride them. I will wager that if I give you 2,000 horses, you cannot find riders for them. And if you still rely upon help from your God, it is Assyria which is commissioned by Him to destroy the land."

So he ends his appeal to the people to give up the defence of the city, and to surrender by asking what other gods have ever saved the countries of their worshippers. "Where are the gods of Hamath and of Arphad? of Sepharvaim, of Hena and Ivah?"—a question of value today to a student of comparative religion—but it was unanswered then, for "the people held their peace . . . for the king's commandment was, saying, Answer him not." Silence is best. No arguments could convince such an opponent. The officers of Hezekiah go to the palace with their clothes rent, and he himself goes into the Temple, whilst he sends a deputation to Isaiah. Isaiah has his answer ready, having already received a revelation from God. The king of Assyria would give up the attempt, return to his own land, and there fall by the sword.

BUT the end of the Assyrian campaign was to be more spectacular (and there is some reference to it in Herodotus ii, 141, who says that a plague of field mice—symbols of plague—gnawed the bows of the soldiers and their shield thongs by night). The appalling disaster is described in brief but impressive words—"And it came to pass that night, that the angel of the LORD went forth, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians an hundred fourscore and five thousand: and when men arose early in the morning, behold, they were all dead corpses." (II. Kings xix, 35, R.V.)

But yet another wonder—this time, a homely and personal one—is to be granted to Hezekiah. In II. Kings xx, 1-11, it is recorded of the king that, seriously ill and warned of his approaching death, he prays for recovery and is granted fifteen more years of life. There is a three-fold interest in the record. (1) The "changing of God's mind" presents no difficulty to the writer; (2) the medicinal use of figs is not only mentioned in the classics, but is still a recognized home-remedy in the East; (3) such objects as sun-dials were actually in use by the Babylonians.

Hezekiah's reforms lasted only for his lifetime, and Manasseh, his son and successor, undid all his father's work, but when the reign of Josiah begins, it meets with the compiler's unqualified approval, and is of immense interest and importance for the story of the discovery of the Law Book in the Temple.

Religious Reformation Under King Josiah

ON his accession Josiah immediately set on foot a reformation of the national worship. He sent his secretary, Shaphan, to the Temple to oversee the payment of the men at work with its repair, when the high-priest Hilkiah told him that he had found "the book of the law" in the Temple. The king was in consternation when it was read to him, showing that the book must have contained some severe denunciations on those who neglect to keep the covenant. (*See* the closing discourses in Deuteronomy xxviii, xxix.)

He sent a deputation to Huldah, a prophetess and wife of one of his courtiers, but she reiterated the doom which the book conveyed upon those who forsake Jehovah, but promised that it should not come upon the country in Josiah's time, because of his faithfulness and devotion.

"TIGLATH-PILESER, KING OF ASSYRIA." The conqueror of Syria and Philistia, paid by Menahem, king of Israel, tribute of a thousand talents of silver, is mentioned first in the Bible as Pul (II. Kings xv, 19) and later as Tiglath-Pileser. He was the third Assyrian monarch of that name and reigned from 745 to 727 B.C. To secure so powerful an ally against his enemies in the North (II. Kings xvi, 7, 8), Ahaz, king of Judah, bribed Tiglath-Pileser with treasures from the Temple at Jerusalem.

British Museum

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WHERE ELIJAH SLEW THE PROPHETS OF BAAL. The traditional site of Elijah's contest with the prophets of Baal is on the inland ridge of Mount Carmel, overlooking the Plain of Esdraelon (Jezreel). The river Kishon, taking a big S curve, flows along by the foot of the ridge, as seen in the photograph. After the miraculous fire consumed his burnt sacrifice, putting the false prophets to confusion before the people (I. Kings xviii, 40), "Elijah said unto them, Take the prophets of Baal; let not one of them escape. And they took them: and Elijah brought them down to the brook Kishon, and slew them there."

Photo, W. F. Taylor

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The king immediately convened a great assembly of the people in the temple, and the book was read to them. King and people thereupon bound themselves under a solemn agreement (covenant) to observe the law it contained, and "all the people stood to the covenant."

A most complete Reformation followed. The list of heathen practices shows the degree to which the degradation of Jehovah's worship had sunk, the Temple itself had to be purified from its heathen emblems, whilst the "high places" or sanctuaries throughout the country were suppressed.

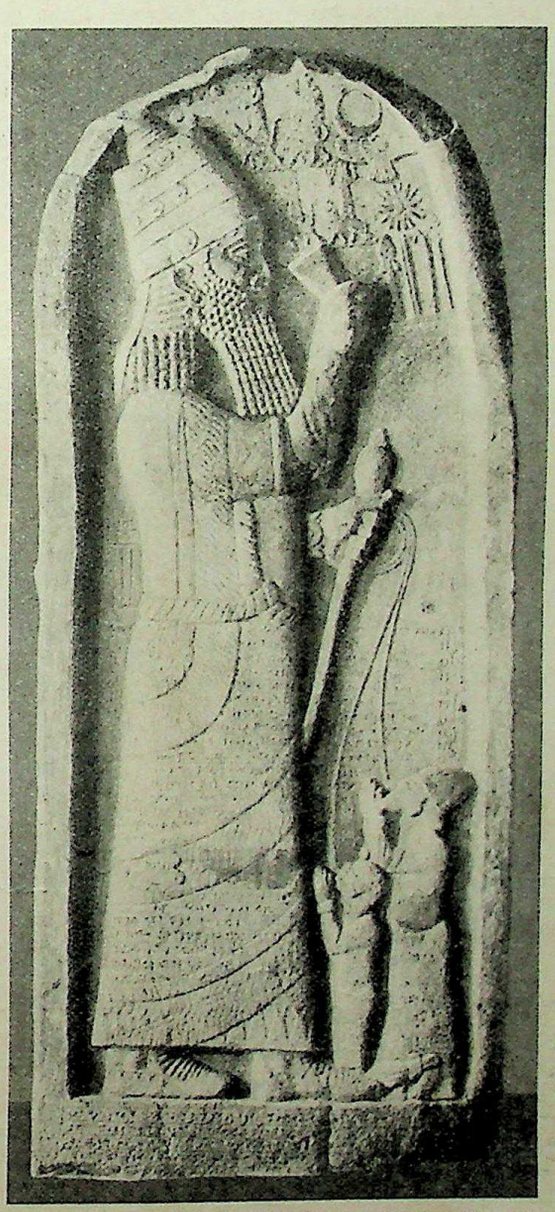
The king's activity extended even beyond the boundaries of his own kingdom to Bethel, where he destroyed the shrine of the calf-worship inaugurated by Jeroboam, and to Samaria.

Then an observance of the Passover took place according to the instructions laid down in the newly-discovered book. Formerly it had been observed in people's homes throughout the country: now it could only be kept by the people coming to Jerusalem. Such were the reforms which Hezekiah procured, and scholars have little doubt that the book itself was Deuteronomy in much the same form as we have it today. It was probably hidden in the Temple by some unknown prophet or martyr during the reign of Manasseh, though we have no light on its date or authorship.

But the empire of Assyria was tottering, and Necho II of Egypt attempted to conquer the Syrian provinces for himself. Josiah "went against him" and fell in the battle of Megiddo, 608 B.C.

Josiah was the last of the "good" kings of Judah. The narrative passes summarily over those that intervene up to the last of all. The formula is repeated each time: "And he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord." The little country of Judah had but another ten years of independence to run. During that decade, Nineveh fell, and the Empire of Assyria fell into the hands of the Babylonian kings, of whom Nebuchadnezzar is, perhaps, most familiar to us. The king of Judah, Jehoiakim, transferred his allegiance to him and then rebelled. He died just before a Babylonian army, under Nebuchadnezzar himself, appeared before Jerusalem and captured it. The young king Jehoiachin, with the royal family, the élite of the people and a large body of useful men, were deported to Babylon, and the last king of Judah, Zedekiah as he was called by the king of Babylon, was set, a mere puppet, on the throne.

The Book records nothing of his reign but the siege and final fall of Jerusalem. Treason and rebellion against his overlord led to the siege. Both Jeremiah and Ezekiel (*see* their Books) counselled him to keep his word to Nebuchadnezzar. In vain. The city held out for eighteen months, and when at last the walls were breached, Zedekiah and his troops cut their way through the enemy's lines, leaving the citizens to their fate. He was captured at Jericho, brought to Riblah for a trial, and received the Assyrian form of punishment for rebellion. His children were killed before his eyes, and he was blinded.



"ESARHADDON REIGNED IN HIS STEAD."
The son and successor of Sennacherib, mentioned in II. Kings xix, 37, reigned in Assyria from 680 to 668 B.C. A mighty conqueror, he subdued Syria and there he established the worship of the heavenly bodies, a form of idolatry adopted by Manasseh, king of Judah. This monolith, set up at Shamal in North Syria, represents him holding vanquished kings by cords through nose-rings.

Berlin Museum

So Jerusalem became a "heap of stones," its chief men were massacred, and the rest were carried away captive. The Book closes with a bare reference to the Babylonian governor, Gedaliah, whose thrilling story must be read at length in the pages of Jeremiah; he was treacherously murdered, and the remnant of his adherents fled to Egypt for safety.

The history appears to descend step by step into ever deepening gloom, but a spark of hope illumines its last page. Zedekiah, the blinded ex-king, prisoner in Babylon, is set free, and treated with royal honours by the new king of Babylon. "He spake kindly unto him and set his throne above the thrones of the kings that were with him in Babylon." What was the purpose of this? None can say, and the Book of Kings gives no clue. But at least it pointed towards a happier future for the people of Israel, it may even have impressed the exiles as a pledge that Jehovah would not utterly forsake the "seed of David" with whom, ere long, the definite Messianic hope would be associated. To those who continue to read the story of the Jews in the remaining Books of the Bible, it is a prevision of the days when Jerusalem's warfare should be accomplished and her sin pardoned.

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LITERARY BEAUTY OF THE BIBLE. XII

Varied Style in First Kings

BIOGRAPHIES of Solomon and Elijah the Tishbite are bound up with history in First Kings. It is difficult to separate the historical form from the biographical in Biblical literature. The Hebrew writers believed in the educational value of stories in praise of great men; of lessons to be drawn from the punishment of wrongdoers. They stressed the personal element to supply illustrations for their religious teachings. Material was interspersed in the annals which beautified and supported their main theme of the glorious omnipotence of God as judge and ruler. His servants—kings, seers, warriors, priests, prophetesses and mothers in Israel—succeeded according to their obedience to His will. Lest the prosperity of Solomon's reign might seem to point to success apart from righteousness the chroniclers, though they extol his wisdom and his understanding heart, gifts of God, are careful to emphasize that in his later years of idolatry he sowed the seeds of national decay. His punishment was to know that the kingdom would be rent in his son's reign. Splendidly described is the great achievement of the Temple's construction. Reverent and stately is the dedication containing the beautiful lines quoted in this page.

THERE is diversity of styles in the Book. The various sources mentioned from which material is taken—the lost book of the Acts of Solomon, the chronicles of the Kings of Judah and the chronicles of the Kings of Israel—account for such diversity and there is also the strong contrast between the Court history and the stories of Elijah the Tishbite, one of the most dramatic of Bible characters, intervening to denounce the sins of royalty. A lovely passage tells how the prophet of wrath was calmed and comforted by "the still small voice." Mendelssohn dramatized the great opponent of Baal in his Oratorio, Elijah, produced in 1846 at Birmingham.

AN UNDERSTANDING HEART

iii, 5—7, 9, 11—13

IN Gibeon the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream by night; and God said, Ask what I shall give thee. And Solomon said, Thou hast shewed unto thy servant David my father great mercy, according as he walked before thee in truth, and in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart with thee; and thou hast kept for him this great kindness, that thou hast given him a son to sit on his throne, as it is this day. And now, O Lord my God, thou hast made thy servant king instead of David my father: and I am but a little child.

Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad: for who is able to judge this thy so great a people?

And God said unto him, Because thou hast asked this thing, and hast not asked for thyself long life; neither hast asked riches for thyself, nor hast asked the life of thine enemies; but hast asked for thyself understanding to discern judgment; Behold, I have done according to thy words: lo, I have given thee a wise and an understanding heart; so that there was none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee. And I have also given thee that which thou hast not asked, both riches, and honour: so that there shall not be any among the kings like unto thee all thy days.

TEMPLE DEDICATION

viii, 23, 27—30

LORD God of Israel,
There is no God like thee,
In heaven above, or on earth beneath,
Who keepest covenant and mercy with thy servants [heart:
That walk before thee with all their
But will God indeed dwell on the earth?
Behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee;
How much less this house that I have builded?
Yet have thou respect unto the prayer of thy servant,
And to his supplication, O Lord my God,
To hearken unto the cry and to the prayer, [today:
Which thy servant prayeth before thee
That thine eyes may be open toward this house night and day,
Even toward the place of which thou hast said,
My name shall be there:
That thou mayest hearken unto the prayer [this place.
Which thy servant shall make toward
And hearken thou to the supplication of thy servant,
And of thy people Israel, when they shall pray toward this place:
And hear thou in heaven thy dwelling place:
And when thou hearest, forgive.

QUEEN OF SHEBA

x, 1—9

AND when the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon concerning the name of the Lord, she came to prove him with hard questions. And she came to Jerusalem with a very great train, with camels that bare spices, and very much gold, and precious stones: and when she was come to Solomon, she communed with him of all that was in her heart. And Solomon told her all her questions: there was not anything hid from the king, which he told her not.

And when the queen of Sheba had seen all Solomon's wisdom, and the house that he had built, and the meat of his table, and the sitting of his servants, and the attendance of his ministers, and their apparel, and his cupbearers, and his ascent by which he went up unto the house of the Lord; there was no more spirit in her. And she said to the king, It was a true report that I heard in mine own land of thy acts and of thy wisdom. Howbeit I believed not the words, until I came, and mine eyes had seen it: and, behold, the half was not told me: thy wisdom and prosperity exceedeth the fame which I heard. Happy are thy men, happy are these thy servants, which stand continually before thee, and that hear thy wisdom. Blessed be the Lord thy God, which delighted in thee, to set thee on the throne of Israel: because the Lord loved Israel for ever, therefore made he thee king, to do judgment and justice.

THE STILL SMALL VOICE

xix, 9, 11—16

AND he came thither unto a cave, and lodged there; and, behold, the word of the Lord came to him . . . Go forth, and stand upon the mount before the Lord. And, behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the Lord; but the Lord was not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake; but the Lord was not in the earthquake: and after the earthquake a fire; but the Lord was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice.

And it was so, when Elijah heard it, that he wrapped his face in his mantle, and went out, and stood in the entering in of the cave. And, behold, there came a voice unto him, and said, What doest thou here, Elijah? And he said, I have been very jealous for the Lord God of hosts: because the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away. And the Lord said unto him, Go, return on thy way to the wilderness of Damascus: and when thou comest, anoint Hazael to be king over Syria: and Jehu the son of Nimshi shalt thou anoint to be king over Israel: and Elisha the son of Shaphat of Abel-meholah shalt thou anoint to be prophet in thy room.

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A QUEEN'S MAUSOLEUM MIS-NAMED THE TOMBS OF THE KINGS

Near Jerusalem and behind St. George's Cathedral on the Nablus road, is the entrance to the so-called Tombs of the Kings, known to the Arabs as Tombs of the Sultans. The tradition that this series of sepulchres, cut into the soft limestone and approached by a wide staircase, was the burial place of the kings of Judah, is without authority. Excavations have shown that the structure was used as a mausoleum for Helena, Queen of Adiabene in Mesopotamia, her son Izates and his family, all of whom were converted to Christianity in the 1st century. The fine sarcophagus, believed to be that of Queen Helena, who settled in Jerusalem, is now in the Louvre.

Photo American Colony in Jerusalem

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Sir E. J. Poynter, 1836-1919

"THY WISDOM AND PROSPERITY EXCEEDETH THE FAME WHICH I HEARD"

Solomon's meeting with the Queen of Sheba, amid the magnificent surroundings of his throne-room, is a subject which specially appealed to Sir Edward Poynter, whose pictures of the Ancient East are distinguished by the scholarly accuracy of their detail. The setting fully accords with the Queen's unstinted praise of Solomon's glory. But though greatly admiring the lavish beauty of his palace—built after the completion of the Temple—and the rich array of his Court, she was still more impressed by his wisdom (I. Kings x, 9): "Because the Lord loved Israel for ever, therefore made he thee king, to do judgment and justice."

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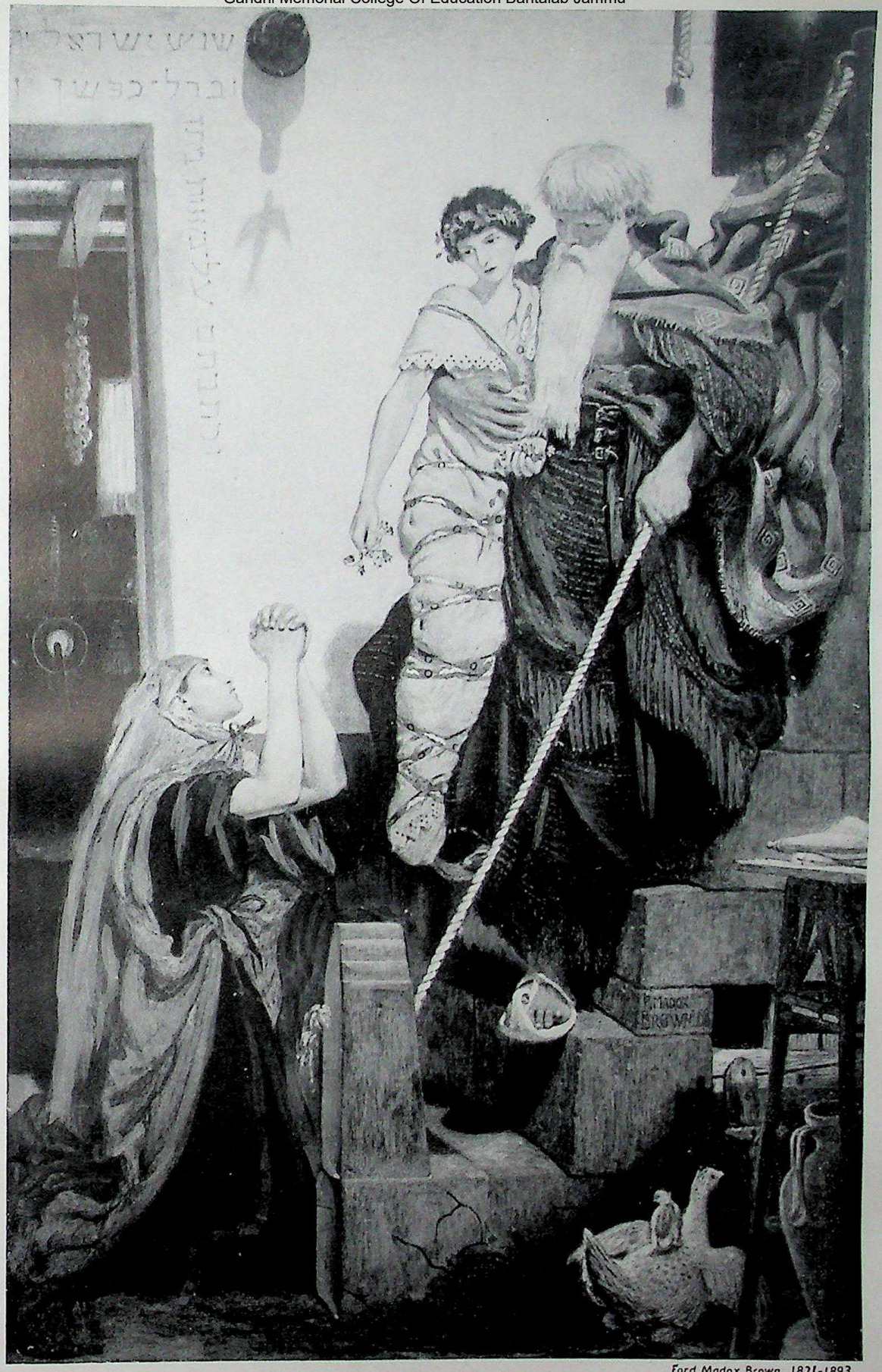

Ford Madox Brown, 1821-1893

ELIJAH SAID, "SEE, THY SON LIVETH"

Lovely in its sincerity and fine design is the picture of Elijah restoring the Widow's Son. Ford Madox Brown, early associated with the English Pre-Raphaelite art movement, painted a version in oils (now in the City Art Gallery, Birmingham) as well as the large water-colour, dated 1868, to be seen in the Victoria and Albert Museum, London. The attitude of the mother is beautifully expressive of her almost incredulous joy as Elijah brings the child down from the upper room. He descends the outside staircase of the little dwelling where he had been sustained by the widow's barrel of meal that wasted not and the cruse of oil that did not fail (I. Kings xvii, 16, 23, 24).

And the woman said, "Now by this I know that thou art a man of God."

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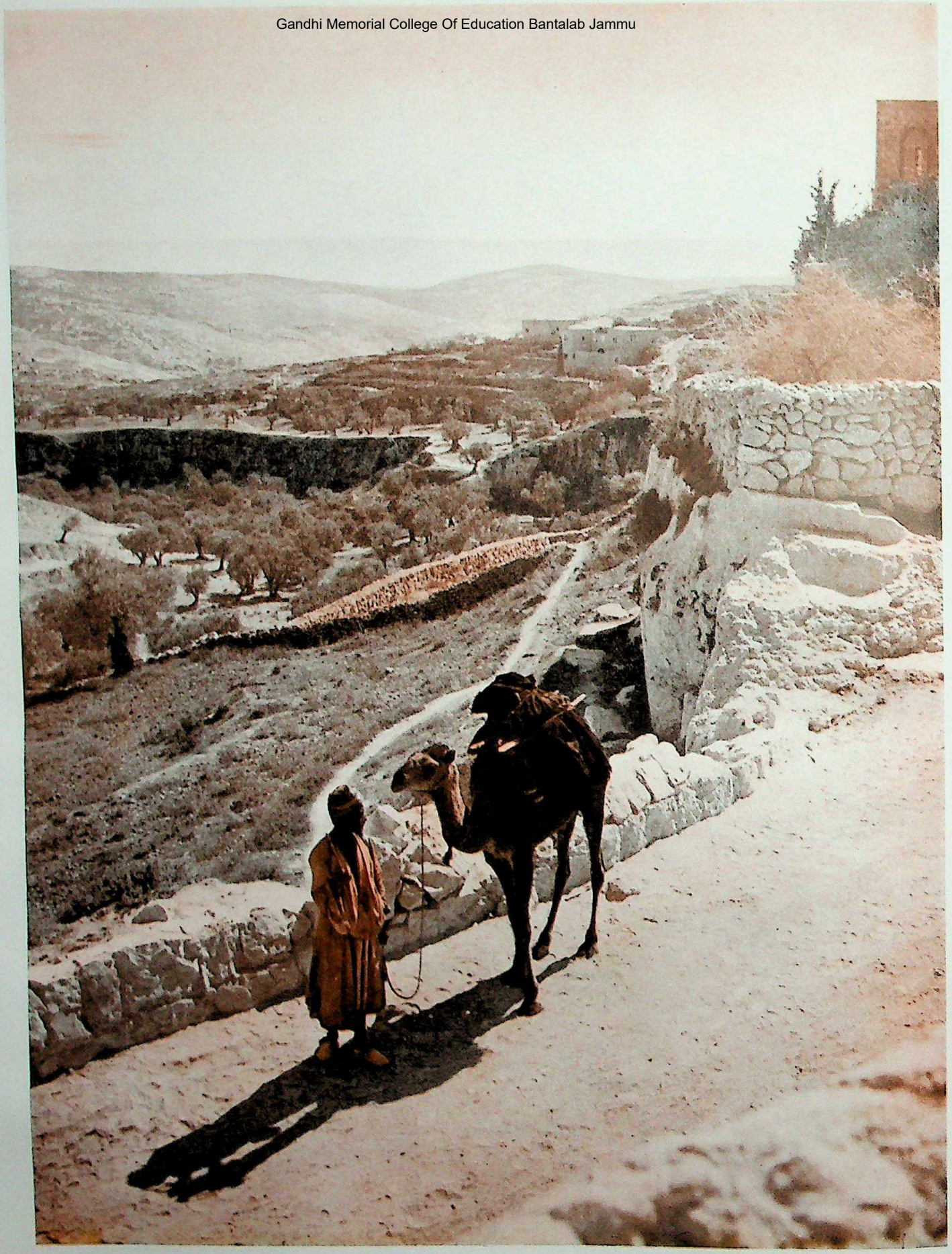

VALE OF HINNOM, ONCE CALLED "THE VALLEY OF SLAUGHTER"

On his way from Jerusalem to Bethlehem this peasant turns to admonish his dilatory camel as they reach the upper part of the Vale of Hinnom. Dust lies thick on the limestone roads of the district. Soft when under the earth, the rock hardens with exposure and is quickly pulverized on a much-traversed surface. Far away into the distance stretches the Valley which formed a boundary between Judah and Benjamin and was anciently of such sinister repute—scene of idolatrous worship involving human sacrifices. There was the site of Tophet abolished as a sanctuary by Josiah at the time of the reformation in Judea (II. Kings xxiii, 10), "that no man might make his son or his daughter to pass through the fire to Molech."

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

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"BUILDERS DID HEW THEM, AND THE STONE-SQUARERS"

Jerusalem is a city of stone; masons are constantly at work repairing old buildings and constructing new. Their tools remain much the same as in Old Testament times —hammer, pick and chisel; wedges to insert in the holes carefully made by the drill and driven in to ensure a good split. The limestone which underlies all the district is the material used now as it probably was in the days when Solomon built the Temple and his own palace. He had "fourscore thousand hewers in the mountains" quarrying the rock (I. Kings v, 15, 18). The stone-squarers were experts from the Phoenician city of Gebal. A house of hewn stone was then a sign of wealth; its quoins were referred to metaphorically to denote importance and stability.

Photo American Colony in Jerusalem

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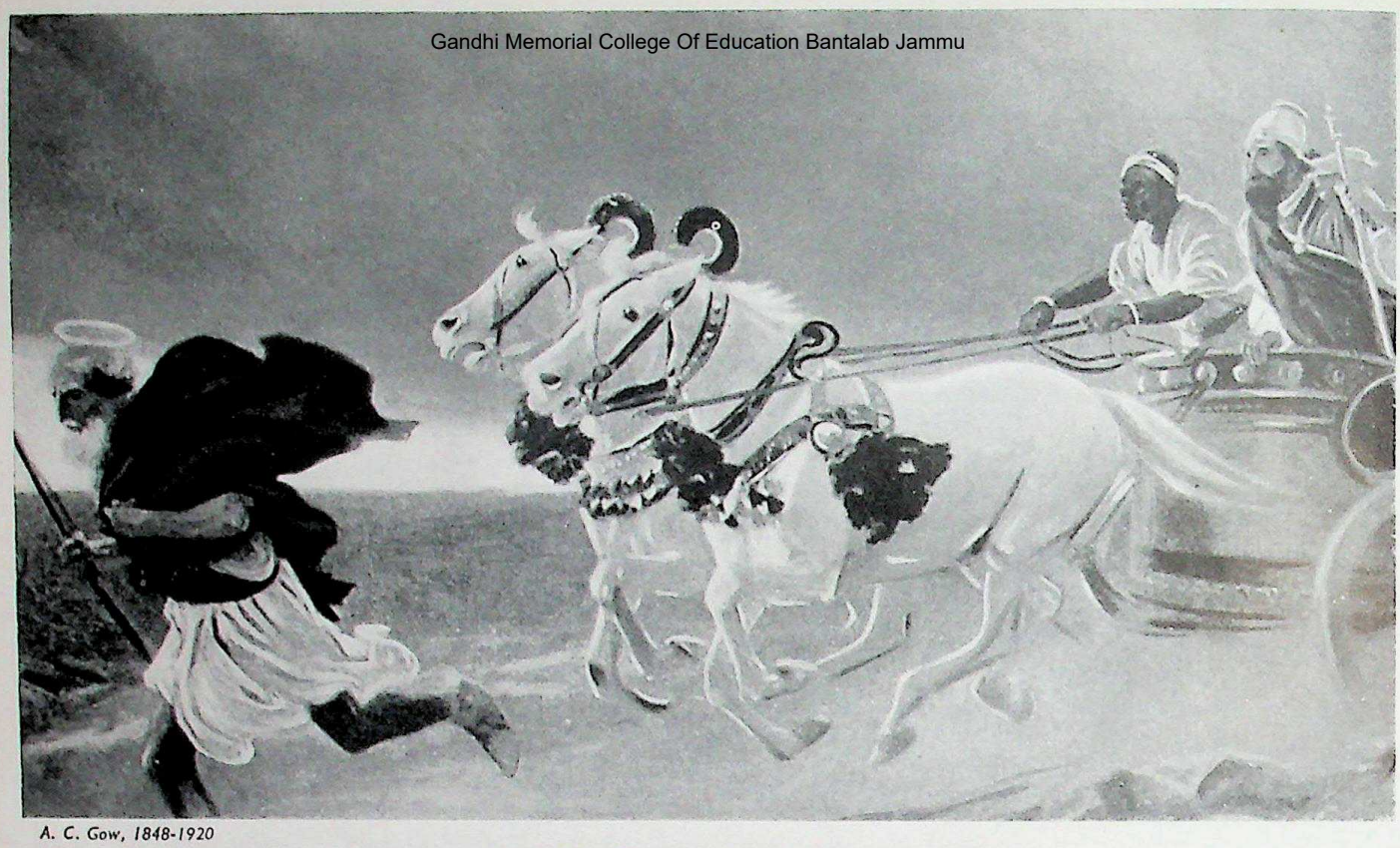

A. C. Gow, 1848-1920

ELIJAH RAN BEFORE AHAB'S CHARIOT

After Elijah by prayer on Mount Carmel had obtained the sign of longed-for rain, "a little cloud out of the sea, like a man's hand," he sent a message to Ahab to prepare his chariot and drive down to his palace before the storm overtook him. This illustration by A. C. Gow shows the prophet, as he "ran before Ahab to the entrance of Jezreel" (I. Kings xviii, 44-46) "mean while that the heaven was black with clouds and wind."

The picture by T. M. Rooke, of Ahab asking Naboth to sell his vineyard, is in the Russell-Cotes Collection at Bournemouth. The king wanted the ground "for a garden of herbs" because it was close to his palace (I. Kings xxi, 2, 3). Naboth's refusal to part with his land—a refusal which cost him his life—was grounded in love of his inheritance and in the natural pride which he had in its cultivated value and beauty.

T. M. Rooke, b. 1842

"AHAB SPAKE UNTO NABOTH, GIVE ME THY VINEYARD"

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V. de Brozik, 1851-1901

"A CERTAIN MAN DREW A BOW AT A VENTURE AND SMOTE THE KING"

The death of Ahab is realistically imagined in the picture by V. de Brozik, a Hungarian painter whose historical and religious works have value as interesting illustrations. In I. Kings xxii, 34, 35, is recounted how Ahab, king of Israel, was slain in battle against the Syrians. Despite his despotic rule, the faults of his character, and the dangers of his idolatrous innovations, he was a brave and able man who died fighting for his people, remaining throughout the day "stayed up in his chariot," after being mortally wounded by the chance arrow of a Syrian bowman, until he "died at even."

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BRINGING THE INCREASE OF THE FIELD TO MARKET

Filing along the hillside paths of fertile Ephraim, these villagers take the produce from their allotments to the local market. Their dress, consisting of a tobe, or loose tunic, and trousers, is more suitable for workers on the land than are the trailing garments worn by the women in Southern Palestine. Cabbages and cauliflowers are the best vegetables cultivated. Olives, almonds, figs, and apricots are grown and sold easily. It is probable that throughout the period of the monarchy in Israel and Judah land was held in common by village communities as it is today. This was the " field " of the Bible. Portions were and are assigned by lot periodically to the inhabitants to cultivate and own " the increase of the field."

Photo American Colony in Jerusalem

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Kings & Chronicles

II

The Story of the Books

Prophet & Priest Recount a Tale of Decline and Fall

by REV. J. A. FINDLAY, M.A., D.D.

Lecturer in Theology at Didsbury College, Manchester.

THE period of history covered by these Books runs roughly from 1000 B.C. to 580 B.C. They are probably based partly on documents compiled by officials at the courts of the two kingdoms, partly on a contemporary, or almost contemporary, history of the division of Palestine between the ten tribes and the two kingdoms, and the events which led to the destruction of each of the kingdoms in turn. With these more or less official documents (*see* I. Kings xi, 41 ; xv, 7, 31) is combined a popular narrative concerned with the exploits of Elijah and Elisha. The First Book carries the story as far as the reigns of Jehoshaphat in Judah and Ahaziah in Israel, the Second continues it to the final destruction of the Southern Kingdom.

The whole narrative is " written up " from the point of view of the great prophets of the 8th and 7th centuries B.C., and we must allow for this fact at every turn. Solomon, for instance, is on the whole highly praised and Ahab roundly condemned, though the modern historian is led to the conclusion that Solomon's reign, in spite of its apparent prosperity, was disastrous, while Ahab was perhaps one of the most successful kings that Israel ever had. Omri, his father, was another prosperous monarch, while Jeroboam II, in his long and victorious reign, brought the Northern Kingdom back almost to its former greatness ; neither Omri nor Jeroboam receive particular attention here.

Three classes of people combined to make history in those days ; they were prophets, priests, and kings. From our point of view the prophets are immeasurably the most important, so we will begin with them.

Fissures in the Solomonic Façade

READING between the lines of the First Book, we realize that its editor was after all aware of serious defects in Solomon's character and policy. He is condemned for setting up altars to heathen deities close to the splendid temple he built for Jehovah, and for marriages with foreign wives. He is not blamed so much for polygamy, for the possession of a large harem was thought of as the rightful prerogative of an Eastern monarch, but for alliances with heathen powers ; idolatrous shrines were set up, not because Solomon was himself an idolator, but to please his foreign wives. His ambition was clearly to build a great empire, not by warlike prowess, as David had done, but by statesmanship.

To all such alliances with heathen powers the prophets were utterly opposed ; they believed in a small self-contained state concentrated upon the worship of Jehovah. Of course they were right ; the only chance of survival for Israel was that she should become the headquarters of pure religion and keep out of the melting-pot of international politics. Assyria and Babylon would never have thought it worth their while to interfere with her if she had followed Isaiah's advice and refrained from provocation. She might from her fastnesses in the hills have watched in security great armies march down her maritime plain, for Jerusalem was as nearly impregnable as a city could be, if she had been content to be a little people. Seeking to become a rich trading empire, she had perforce to take possession of the great trade-routes which skirted her territory.

So the trouble began ; at last, Assyria first and then Babylon were compelled to deal with the hornets' nest in the hills. The Northern Kingdom, lying far more directly in the track of the great armies, was destroyed a century and a half before Judah, but for the Southern Kingdom at least the policy of splendid isolation was perfectly practicable.

New Trends in Jehovah's Worship

JEHOVAH was originally worshipped as a god of the desert, for Israel had entered into covenant with Him at Mount Sinai in Arabia (called Horeb in these Books). Thence he had set out on His travels with His people, it was believed, in the Ark. When David settled in Jerusalem he brought the Ark into the city, and, on the building of the temple by Solomon, Jehovah was settled, so to speak, there. The prophets did not believe, however, that Jehovah could settle down within four walls, or that He could be localized. This comes out in Solomon's prayer at the dedication of the temple (I. Kings viii, 27) : " Will God indeed dwell on the earth ? behold, the heaven of heavens cannot contain Thee ; how much less the house that I have builded ? " This dislike of the idea of boxing up God, so to speak, reappears in the New Testament (John iv, 21 ; Acts vii, 48), and still lingers among the Arabs. A sheikh of the Beduin or wandering desert tribes told me that people who settle in towns and villages are heathens, because they try to fasten God down in one spot (the word " pagan " means " villager ").

In one of the sources which go to make up the First Book of Samuel, Samuel, the founder of the prophetic order, though he was not himself a prophet, is represented as opposing the institution of monarchy in Israel, because it tended to assimilate the people of God to other nations. By the time of Solomon the prophets had accepted the inevitable ; they then supported the centralization of religion at Jerusalem. If there must be a temple, it was better that the worship of Jehovah should be confined to a place where they could keep, so to speak, their eyes on it. Worship at the " high places " (village shrines) up and down the land soon became degraded, for at such shrines it was impossible to avoid infection by local customs. From the prophetic point of view the trouble was that Jehovah had come to be worshipped, no longer as the God of the overarching desert sky, but as a " baal " (owner) of the soil, in other words, as a localized deity.

We cannot make any sense of the Books we are studying, unless we understand what they mean by the word " baal." Originally, no doubt, among all Semitic peoples, each town, village, or hamlet, perhaps even each field or stream or tree, had its own " baal," thought of as owning the soil, and making it fertile. When Jehovah came

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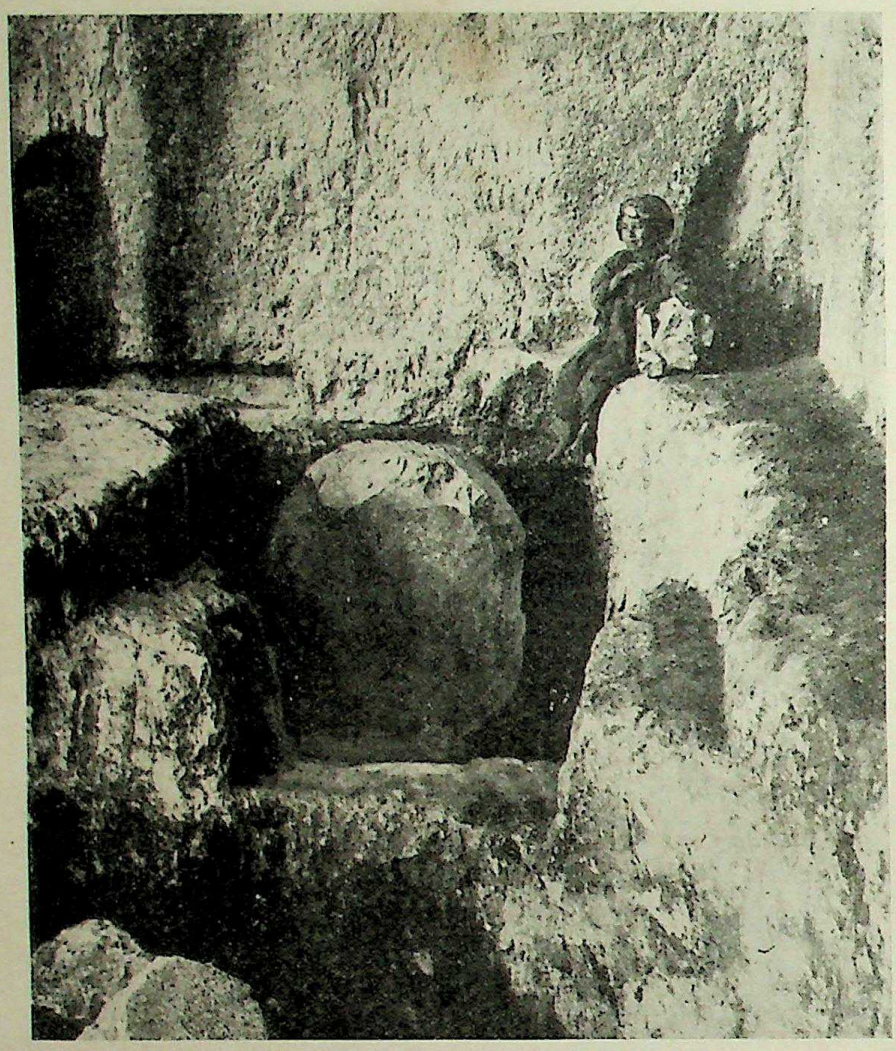

"WAS BURIED . . . IN THE CITY OF DAVID." In the Tombs of the Kings, outside the northern walls of Jerusalem, an object of special interest is the rolling stone, seen in position, wedged in its groove at the entrance to a grave, according to Hebrew custom. The rock-hewn sepulchre in which the body of Jesus was laid must have been closed in just this fashion, for we are told that the women coming early in the morning of the third day (Luke xxiv, 2) "found the stone rolled away from the sepulchre."

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

to Palestine, the natural thing for His Hebrew worshipper to do was to call Him his "baal," and worship Him on the nearest hill-top, already regarded as a sacred place. The fertility which multiplies crops and cattle was Jehovah's gift; this is a wholly religious idea, but it is easy to see that, when God is, so to speak, transferred from the sky to the soil, His chief function will soon be thought of as making land and cattle fertile, and sex comes into religion with disastrous consequences.

The "people of the land" who are for ever being denounced for their idolatrous practices by the prophets would have been aghast if you had charged them with heathenism or disloyalty to Jehovah. They did not, at least at first, worship heathen gods; the trouble was that, without knowing what they were doing, they made a heathen god—a "baal"—of Jehovah Himself. This they did quite innocently; when Saul called his son Eshbaal, he meant to signalize his loyalty to Jehovah, for the name Eshbaal simply means "man of my lord." The prophets who edited the Books of Samuel and Kings (really four parts of the same Book) detested the name "baal" so much that they turned it to Ish-bosheth ("man of abomination"). No father would have called his son "man of abomination." In Saul's time "baal" was still an innocent word; the prophets then gave it its sinister significance.

It was bad enough that Jehovah should be worshipped as a "baal," worse that the baals of other nations should be introduced into Jehovah's land. Solomon took a step in this direction when he built shrines for his foreign wives; Ahab went further when he provided for Jezebel not only a temple, but an elaborate organization of priests and prophets. Throughout this period the prophets of Jehovah were waging what must have seemed to be a losing battle for pure religion; if they were fanatics, they were fighting against tremendous odds. In the end they won, for we hear no more of the "baals" after the return from exile; if they had not won, Israel would have disappeared from the pages of history as did Moab, Ammon, Edom, Semitic peoples who, closely akin to the Hebrews, began their course side by side with her.

They won by accepting facts; if they could not prevent there being a human king in Israel, they could and did establish themselves as keepers of the king's conscience; even Ahab consults the prophets before setting out on a campaign, though he flouts Micaiah's advice. If they could not prevent the people settling down in towns and villages, they could concentrate their religious life in Jerusalem, and ally themselves with the Temple-priests—the quarrel between prophet and priest comes later. Only yielding where it was absolutely necessary, they used a situation they mistrusted and disliked to keep at bay unwholesome ideas which were in the air of the age they lived in.

For this purpose they carefully edited and revised contemporary records of the history of the monarchy; all the kings of Israel and Judah are judged, not by their success or failure as monarchs, but simply by the question "Did he help or did he hinder the cause of pure religion"? Above all, they were able to believe—from the time of Amos onward at least—that their God was lord of the whole earth, and held the world-empires in the hollow of His hand. It was as though some Abyssinian prophet were to proclaim that his god was lord of the dictators at the very time when they were destroying his people. Perhaps some prophet has done so, but if so, no one has heard of him. The amazing thing is that everyone has heard of these Hebrew prophets, while their oppressors are mere names to us.

THESE early prophets were violent men, with no interest in anything which we should call culture, but at least they insisted that there was a law which could over-ride the will of the despot and the passions of the mob, and they have made the world listen to them. The kingdom of Israel was first divided, and then, as a consequence of its division, perished, as all the other little kingdoms which lay in the path of the great empires perished; these great prophetic ideas lived on, and by and by created a new world, as all great ideas do.

Originally these "prophets" were hardly to be distinguished from dervishes, consecrated to the service of Jehovah. Samuel, their first patron, broke away from the

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local shrines, and founded a school of "sons of the prophets," who wandered from place to place, living a celibate communal life. Their antics were at first rather the subject of curiosity than admiration. When Saul took to "prophesying," people thought it odd that a promising young man should patronize such undesirable company (I. Samuel x, 11), and Amos is at pains to state that he had no connexion with them (Amos vii, 14). They were "possessed" by the spirit of the God they served, and their possession manifested itself in their doing and saying unaccountable things. Foretelling the future was never their sole function, though they did so occasionally.

A further development was manifest when Nathan, the prophet, came to David's court; he had probably shared his wanderings. There were prophetesses, too (II. Kings xxii, 14), and some of the prophets were married men, for the idea of vocational celibacy first appears with Jeremiah. At first despised, they made themselves feared, and by and by, in the persons of their leaders came to wield almost unlimited power over the imaginations of king and people alike. It was by no means unique that a king should have a "man of God" at his court; it was and is unique in ancient absolute monarchies or modern totalitarian states, that one of them should dare to say to the monarch or dictator "Thou art the man," and prescribe penance for a deed which was common form for Eastern despots, who take it for granted that they have a prior claim to the possessions of their subjects.

Growing Antagonism of Prophet and King

AT the beginning of I. Kings we see David on his death-bed, and are allowed to watch intrigues concerned with the succession to the throne. Solomon is understood to be David's choice, and Nathan the prophet is prominent on his side; he allies himself with Zadok the priest, while Abiathar, the other son of Aaron who had officiated during David's reign, attaches himself to the opposite party. Nathan ensures Solomon's succession; he dies soon afterwards, but his son Zabud appears as "king's friend" in I. Kings iv, 5.

But the concessions made by Solomon to foreign cults soon turned the prophets against him; Ahijah of Shiloh (I. Kings xi, 29) encourages Jeroboam to revolt, and prophets are noticeably absent from Rehoboam's counsels. After the division of the kingdoms Jeroboam I's action in setting up golden calves at Bethel alienates their sympathies from him in turn, and he is denounced by a "man of God" when standing before his altar (I. Kings xiii, 2). The calves were set up in honour of Jehovah; Jeroboam naturally felt that he could not afford to have his people going to worship over the frontier, and purposed to make Bethel, already attractive because of its associations (Genesis xxviii, 19), a northern rival to Jerusalem. The calves were symbols of fertility; that was the trouble from the prophetic point of view. The strange story of the old and young prophet which follows the protest at Bethel suggests that the association of men of God with the courts of kings has come to be discountenanced. We observe a return to the older idea of a group of desert-prophets; members of this order suddenly appear at court, and disappear as quickly, for Church must not accept favours from the state, nor prophet from king.

Ahijah again appears (I. Kings xiv) to pronounce the doom of Jeroboam I's dynasty, and for some time we hear no more of the "men of God"; in I. Kings xvi, 1, Jehu—who must not be confused with the king of that name—foretells the ruin of Baasha's line. Then we come to the story of Elijah, last and greatest of the desert-prophets. Ahab had gone further than any of his predecessors; he not only imported male and female deities from Tyre, but himself patronized their cults. Jezebel was clearly a great woman, and the duel between her and Elijah provides us with one of the most dramatic stories in or out of the Bible.

Opening the Way to 'Abominations'

IT is vital that we should realize the magnitude of the issues at stake in it. In I. Kings xiv, 24 (in connexion with Rehoboam's disastrous reign) we have a reference to temple-prostitutes; when once the idea of fertility involving sex and sex-relations comes to be associated with worship, the way is open for every kind of abomination. Elijah wins the first round on Carmel, and Jezebel the second. Probably Elijah over-reached himself when he slew the prophets of the Tyrian baal; Jezebel would never forgive this. He was a man of violence, and his violence defeated its own ends. He flees for his life to Horeb (Sinai), the original seat of Jehovah-worship. There he sees a vision which suggests that Jehovah is not to be found so much in fire, wind, or earthquake, as in "the breath of a light whisper"; He is most active when He seems to be doing nothing. Elijah is given one more commission, to appoint Elisha to take his own place, Hazael to be king of Syria and Jehu king of Israel; the two between them are to bring Ahab's dynasty to an end.

In I. Kings xxii prophets appear again, but now they are divided; Micaiah foretells the death of Ahab in battle, and his prophecy is fulfilled. Elijah does not appear here; the story of the death of Ahab comes from another source.

As the First Book begins with the death of David, so the Second begins with the passing of Elijah. He returns to the hills across the Jordan from which he had come, and the prophet of fire is carried away by a chariot and horses of fire. Elisha is left to carry on his work, but he, unlike Elijah, is a statesman, in constant attendance at court. The wonder-stories which make the first few chapters of the Second Book so fascinating come from the same source as I. Kings xvii-xxi; the narrative bears all the marks of popular mythology, and attests the veneration which the prophets had now won for their office in the Northern Kingdom.

IT is not necessary to believe that God actually sent she-bears to destroy children who had been rude to Elisha; no doubt the children were devoured by bears, but the connexion of their melancholy end with their treatment of the prophet is the product of superstitious imagination working upon actual events. Nor are we bound to think that Gehazi and his family were actually smitten with leprosy because he had told a lie to his master. His sin really consisted in accepting a "change of garments" from Naaman the Syrian general at a time when Syria was on bad terms with Israel (II. Kings v, 23), for to refuse a garment from the head of one's own kingdom or tribe or accept one from the head of another has always been regarded as high treason by Semitic peoples. This idea lingers on among the Arabs today who still call treason "leprosy." Most of the other stories are conspicuous examples of faith-healing.

Outside the Elijah-Elisha saga, it may be observed, there are no miracles—unless the disappearance of the host

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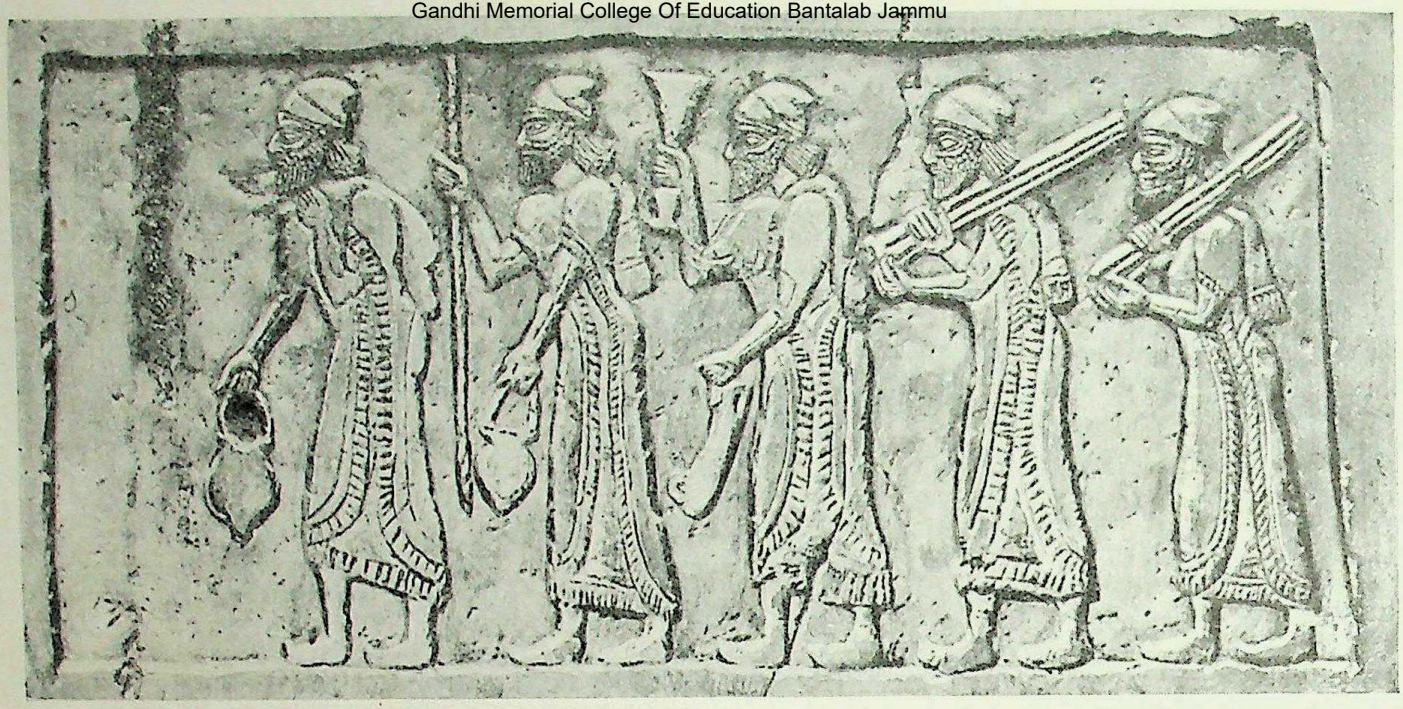

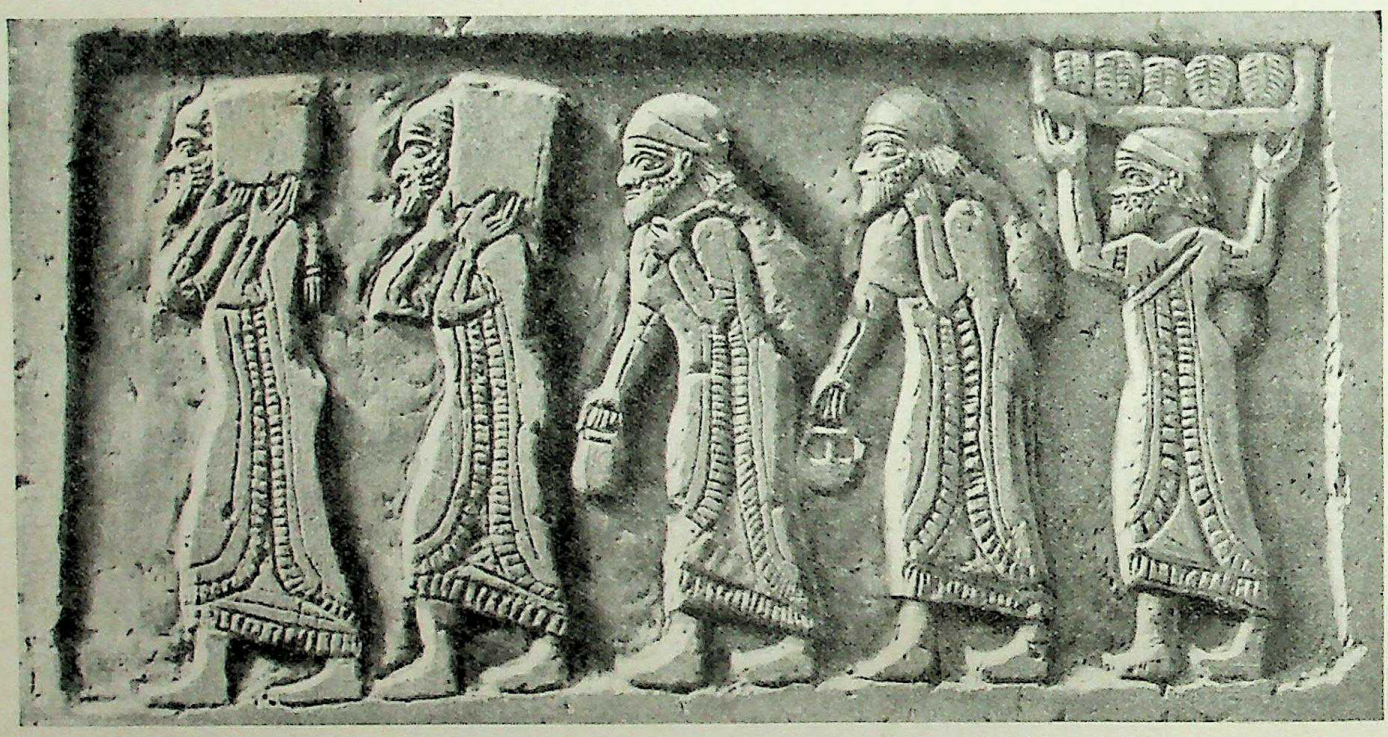

HOW JEHU SENT TRIBUTE TO ASSYRIA. On the stone obelisk of Shalmaneser a band of four sculptured panels—two of which are shown above—represents bearers of offerings from Jehu, king of Israel. There is no reference to this incident in the Bible, but as the tribute was paid at the time of Shalmaneser's expedition against Hazael of Damascus and of Jehu's accession to the throne of Israel in 841 B.C., it is probable that the latter hoped to gain the protection of the great king against Damascus and thus to strengthen his own usurped position. The obelisk, set up in Nimrod, is now in the British Museum.

of Sennacherib is counted as one, or the paralysis of Jeroboam I's arm.

The great writing prophets from Amos to Jeremiah all exercised their ministry during the period covered by these Books, but none of them except Isaiah are mentioned in them. The story of the deliverance of Jerusalem told in II. Kings xviii, 13-xix, 37 is almost certainly taken from Isaiah xxxvi-xxxix, not vice versa.

Originally it was believed—even by such men as David—that each country and people had its own God. This is called monolatry or sometimes henotheism.

But the world-shaking discovery, first clearly stated by Amos, that Jehovah was God of the whole earth, and that His power was not dependent upon the continuance of the kingdom and people of Israel is anticipated in our books in the stories of Elijah and Elisha's dealings with foreign kings and peoples; that is because they were written by disciples of the very prophets about whom, with the exception of Isaiah, they are so strangely silent.

Till Isaiah's time the struggle for Jehovah against baalism was carried on chiefly by prophets in the north, by priests in the south. Judah was less exposed to the direct infection of baal-ideas, for the existence of the Temple exercised a steadying influence. At any rate, Jerusalem lasted more than a century longer than Samaria, which fell to Shalmaneser in 722 B.C.

II. Kings xi describes a struggle carried on chiefly by priests parallel to that waged by the prophets in the north; Athaliah takes the part of Jezebel, but the priests hide their candidate for the throne (Joash) in the Temple, and succeed in evading the vigilance of the murderous queen. It is extraordinary that Joash should have been successfully hidden: this fact speaks volumes for the veneration in which priests and Temple were held.

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Again, after the reaction under Manasseh and Amon, the fortunate discovery of "the book of the law" *in the Temple* (this was the book we call "Deuteronomy"; *see* page 207) brought about another reformation under Josiah's ardent patronage. It is enthusiastically described in these Books, though Jeremiah is as silent about it as the Books of Kings are about him—perhaps because he was sceptical of its depth and permanence. He was right, but we ought to give these priests of Jerusalem their meed of honour; by less sensational methods than those of Elijah they achieved a more lasting result, if not upon the history of the world, at least upon that of their own people. It is at least clear that this unusual alliance between lay prophet and clerical priest secured a future for political democracy as well as for religion.

It has been hinted already that not all the kings denounced in these Books as causing "Israel to sin" were vicious men or unsuccessful monarchs. Scorn has often been poured upon the summary judgements which appear in these Books at the end of their often very short biographies, but it should always be borne in mind that these verdicts are not directly concerned either with the character of the man or the events of his reign; they are based purely and simply upon his attitude towards the moral and religious ideas which alone have given this little Semitic people a commanding place in history.

Solomon laid the foundations of his kingdom's ruin in his dreams of empire, involving on the one hand alliances with heathen powers, on the other extravagant expenditure, heavy taxation, and conscription of labour. He was extraordinarily successful, and succeeding generations looked back to his reign as the golden age, but the measure of his temporary success was that of his permanent failure. Rehoboam followed in his father's footsteps without his father's mitigating shrewdness; he disdained the advice of Solomon's counsellors, gathering about him a group of young hotheads who encouraged him to browbeat a discontented people into submission.

Positions of Judah and Samaria Compared

STRONG measures taken by weak and unprincipled men soon led to revolt, and the division of the kingdoms follows quickly, a catastrophe from which the nation never recovered. Cut off from the Temple, the separated ten tribes soon became just another of the little kingdoms of the Near East, maintaining a precarious existence by war and international intrigue until the inevitable end came. Their history for the 250 years of their existence was one of usurpation by mutinous generals, followed by wholesale massacre, only relieved by the appearance of protesting prophets; it is significant that not one of its kings "did what was right in the sight of Jehovah." Its most successful kings were Omri, Ahab, and Jeroboam II; they were strong men, though only Ahab receives much attention in our Books. But their victories had no permanent importance, and Samaria fell as soon as it got into Assyria's way.

Judah, though less prosperous than her northern rival, had a securer position. If only her rulers could have been induced to avoid meddling in international politics she might never have fallen. This was the burden of Isaiah's message to the kings and people of Judah; your "strength," he said, "is to sit still," and specially not to meddle with Egypt. Hezekiah was strongly under his influence, specially after the splendid vindication of the prophet's policy in the destruction of Sennacherib's host, but after Isaiah's death, Josiah, though himself one of the "good" kings, was tempted to attack Pharaoh of Egypt with fatal consequences, first to himself and then to his people. After that the destruction of Jerusalem in its turn was only a matter of time.

We have taken the prophets first, though the Books are called in our Bible "the Books of the Kings" ("kingdoms," as in the Greek version would be a better title) for they are the most significant characters in the story. They failed all along the line, and these Books tell us how completely and persistently they failed. Even in the Southern Kingdom such success as was theirs only came from alliance with the priests, who were always government officials as the prophets never were. In a deeper sense they succeeded gloriously; failing to save their nation from disaster, they yet succeeded in keeping true religion alive in the world, and so preparing the way for Christ and Christendom.

Religious and Social Teaching of the Books

IT would be superfluous to praise the literary and artistic qualities of these Books. Solomon's prayer at the dedication of the Temple is a classic of liturgical eloquence, and the Elijah and Elisha stories are unforgettable. The story of Elijah's conflict with the priests of the Tyrian baal on Mount Carmel is as splendid in its rhythm as the stories of Naaman the Syrian and the Shunammite woman are exquisite in their homely and human detail; both are flawless achievements of unconscious art. If the prophets disdained culture, they certainly could tell a story! As for their religious teaching, we have already referred to their master-ideas; their belief in one supreme God who rules over world-empires, and yet is not too busy to intervene on behalf of a poor widow faced with a domestic problem which means all the world to her.

Of course, their doctrine of God does not rise to the height of the Christian revelation. A three years' famine is sent because of the people's sin (compare Amos iv, 6f); it should be noticed that Jesus implicitly denies that God does this kind of thing in Matthew v, 45. The great heretic Marcion pointed out as long ago as the second century A.D. the contrast between the God who was supposed to have sent she-bears to punish boys who had been rude to His prophet and the God and Father of Our Lord who said "Suffer little children to come to Me!"

There is nothing to be gained by slurring over such glaring contradictions as these; it is important indeed that we should understand them, if we are to teach the Old Testament either honestly or effectively. Jehovah Himself is described by Micaiah (I. Kings xxii, 23) as putting "a lying spirit" into the false prophets, and so luring Ahab to his doom, and the story told in I. Kings xiii, of an old prophet tempting a young one, and then pronouncing doom upon him, is utterly repellent to our notions of right and wrong. It should be noted that these elements are all refined away in the Books of the Chronicles; compiled after the exile was over; they reflect the spirit of an age in which violent austerity was the natural outcome of insistence upon the sovereignty of the one true God. What were these prophets to believe? They were not philosophers, and so could find no way out of the dilemma; if she-bears destroyed young children just after they had dared to taunt the man of God about his baldness, who could be responsible but God?

On the other hand, it is equally important to observe that a real humanitarianism is visibly developing under the shadow of this tremendous faith in Almighty God.

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GOSSIPS MEET BY AHAB'S WELL. On the Plain of Esdraelon and near the village of Jezreel is Ahab's Well. A vague tradition connects it with the site of Naboth's vineyard, the plot of land which the king coveted for a kitchen garden. In the days of Israel's monarchy vineyards were far more numerous than they are today, but the Plain of Esdraelon is still particularly fertile. Zionist colonies established there have introduced modern agricultural methods. The Arab peasants, however, remain unchanged: in the daytime superficially cultivating the soil and in the evenings visiting the wells, the social gathering-place and common water-supply.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

The prophetic call was always thought of as an individual one, a thing between Jehovah and a single man (*see* C. R. Smith "The Bible Doctrine of Society," page 114). Here is the only charter of individual liberties and rights—no matter how poor and humble that individual may be—that can ever be secure against the self-aggrandisement of nation, class, or dictator. It is just because the modern world has lost the sense of the sovereignty of Almighty God that it has also lost the sense of the value of the individual human life; we shall never get back one without the other.

Dr. Smith points out that "a series of very democratic miracles" are ascribed to Elisha; he wrought wonders not, as Moses had done, to redeem a race, but to save a widow from a moneylender, feed a hungry crowd, save the sanitation of Jericho, or rescue a borrowed axe. The seeds of all democratic progress in liberty and equality are sown when a man can stand unarmed before a king and plead for the rights of the poor. Elijah cannot save Naboth's vineyard as Nathan cannot save Uriah, but both can and did enter a protest in the name of Almighty God that the world will never be allowed to forget. The significance for the history of social progress of the prophets of Israel is even now not fully grasped.

And if it is true that within the nation the prophet as representing neither material force, nor social prestige, but the power and purpose of the God for whom he stands before king and people alike, is the great pioneer of undiscriminating justice for all, it is equally clear that he is the forerunner of universal brotherhood. Elisha is not unwilling to help Naaman, Syrian general warring against his people as he is, though he will accept no favours from him; the "little maid" at Naaman's house who, though a prisoner of war, is sorry for her master and mistress, provides not merely a touch of "human interest," but stands for a sympathy which overrides the fiercest national antipathies. It is even more noticeable that Elijah, most ruthless of all the great prophets in his hatred of foreign and specially of Phoenician influence, takes refuge with a Phoenician widow, and becomes the good angel of the house! It is interesting to notice that Jesus mentions these two instances as suggestions of universalism in the Old Testament (Luke iv, 25-27).

Last of all, the prophets, violent men as they were, became the first preachers of peace on earth. David is not allowed to build the Temple, because, though a "man after God's own heart," he had inevitably become a man of war. Solomon, in spite of all his grievous faults, kept the peace, and prevailed by peaceful methods; that was why Solomon's reign is still thought of as the golden age. The battle fought by Isaiah—the prophet, not the king, is Jerusalem's really effective champion—against the might of Assyria is regarded as decisive precisely for the reason that it was a battle for peaceful ideals against an empire which was war incarnate. Isaiah's vision of a world at peace (Isaiah xi, 1ff) is the exact antithesis of everything that Assyria stood for; "in the heyday of her power he gave Assyria and Assyria's god the lie," and foretold a real league of nations, an ideal not realized yet.

To the mind of the great prophets war is never Jehovah's delight; it is always His scourge for sin, or tool of

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discipline. The fact that we have outgrown this idea of war as an act of an angry God should not blind us to the greatness of the men who, in a world which lived for and upon war, in which Assyria's ideals seemed to be omnipotent, could hold to the conviction that war was a product not of the will of God, but of the sin of man.

To this ferment of great ideas the Books of the Kings give a background and a setting, all the more artistic because the tellers of these unforgettable stories are unaware of their craftsmanship. They should be read along with the sermons of the great writing prophets, the period of whose lives they cover; so studied, they point the moral that the true knowledge of God and the true service of man always go together; neither can safely be divorced from the other. We in our modern world need to learn this more than anything else; we cannot help a distressed and desperate world to much purpose, just because we have ceased to believe to much purpose in the sovereignty of God.

Books of the Chronicles of the Kings

THOUGH these Books duplicate much of the material to be found in the Books of the Kings, the period they cover is considerably longer; indeed, they profess to go back to Adam, though the first nine chapters of the First Book provide us with little except lists of names. Anything that can be described as historical writing begins with an account of the death of Saul, first king of Israel, in I. Chronicles x.

Were these books "the books of the chronicles of the kings of Judah" mentioned repeatedly in the Books of the Kings? This is scarcely possible, for these "chronicles of the kings of Judah" apparently began with the reign of Rehoboam. The authority quoted in the First Book of the Kings for the reign of Solomon is "the book of the acts of Solomon" (I. Kings xi, 41). Moreover, the fact that II. Chronicles xxxvi, 22, 23, corresponds exactly to Ezra i, 1, 2, and the similarity of style and point of view between the Books of Chronicles and Ezra prove that the Book of Ezra is a continuation of the "Chronicles," and implies a date after the return of Ezra from Babylon (458 B.C.) for the whole compilation. That there were many histories of the monarchy in existence is shown by constant references to other books which have not come down to us: we hear of "the book of Nathan the prophet" and "the book of Gad the seer" (I. Chronicles xxix, 29), the "prophecy of Ahijah the Shilonite and the visions of Iddo the seer against Jeroboam the son of Nebat," (II. Chronicles ix, 29), "the book of Shemaiah the prophet, and of Iddo the seer concerning genealogies" (II. Chronicles xii, 15), "the story of the prophet Iddo" (II. Chronicles, xiii, 22), "the book of the kings of Judah and Israel" (II. Chronicles xvi, 11—this might refer to our "Books of the Kings"), "the book of Jehu the son of Hanani, who is mentioned in the book of the kings of Israel" (cf. I. Kings xvi, 1) (II. Chronicles xx, 34), "a writing from Elijah the prophet" (II. Chronicles xxi, 12), a book written by "Isaiah the prophet" about Uzziah (II. Chronicles xxvi, 22—no part of our "book of the prophet Isaiah" could be described in this way though Uzziah's name is mentioned in Isaiah vi, 1), and finally a book called "the sayings of the seers" or "the words of Hozai" (II. Chron. xxxiii, 19).

When we take into account the references in the Books of the Kings to books of "the chronicles of the kings of Judah" and "the chronicles of the kings of Israel"—neither of which books, as we have seen, can refer to our Books of Chronicles, we are forced to the conclusion that we have in the Old Testament only a comparatively small fragment of a great mass of historical and prophetic literature, much of which must have perished in the destruction of Jerusalem in 586 B.C., and our respect for the industry and influence of the prophets correspondingly increases.

Incidentally, it is interesting to notice that the book we know as "Lamentations" is ascribed to the prophet Jeremiah in II. Chronicles xxxv, 25, and is said to be concerned with the fate of Josiah. There is no clear reference in our Book of Lamentations to the death of Josiah (except possibly in iv, 20); the book as we have it is obviously not concerned with Josiah's untimely end, but with the fall of Jerusalem. A natural inference seems to be that the book was written during the exile by an unknown author, and its ascription to Jeremiah, as well as the suggestion that it was concerned with the tragedy of Josiah, were guesses (of course, they may have been good guesses) made by the editors of the Books of Chronicles.

The two Books of the Chronicles were written, then, by supporters of Ezra after the return from exile, and probably some time in the latter half of the 4th century B.C. It is not necessary, as has been already suggested, to think that all the authorities quoted still survived at that time; the phrase "the rest of the acts of" such and such a king, so often repeated, comes in so mechanically at the end of every reign that it looks like a formula which the editor has copied down from such sources as had survived. Its point is that the writer is well aware

"BRAVERY OF AMULETS." This Arab urchin so smilingly facing stranger and camera is defended against the "evil eye" by the talisman strung round his neck. Superstitious confidence in mascots has existed almost universally down the ages. In Palestine excavations have unearthed quantities of amulets including blue beads and pieces of coral—favoured today by Beduin mothers as protective charms for their children—crescents, scarabs and miniature fish.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

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that his work is neither original nor complete. What was his purpose then? Granted that the Books of Samuel and of Kings were already in existence, why should he have thought it necessary to have written another and, in many ways, much less satisfactory account of the same series of events? For our answer we must recur to the fact that the Chronicles go back, not merely to the birth of Samuel, but actually in a rather dry and perfunctory way, to Adam. His aim is to give an outline-history from the beginning of God's dealings with His people, from a certain point of view.

Seen through the Eyes of the Priests

WHAT was this point of view? The Books of Samuel and Kings were written from the prophetic standpoint; the latter deal more fully with the history of the Northern than with that of the Southern Kingdom first because prophets were more active there; the co-operation of priests is mentioned in several places, but on the whole prophets play the leading part. In the Books of the Chronicles, on the other hand, while we hear a good deal about the prophets and their writings, priests and the ritual of the Temple are everywhere to the fore. David not only desires to build a house for the accommodation of the ark, but makes full arrangements for Temple-worship, arrangements which he leaves to Solomon to carry out (I. Chronicles xxii-xxvi; xxviii, 11ff). In fact, David is regarded as having fulfilled the purpose of his life when he has brought the ark to Jerusalem, and we are hurried on to his death, the rest of the history of his reign being taken up almost entirely with descriptions of his elaborate preparations for the building of the Temple.

All the scandals and troubles of David's reign—except those which followed the numbering of the people—are passed over in silence; we hear nothing of Uriah the Hittite or of Absalom. Solomon becomes king, not as the result of palace intrigue, but by David's direct appointment, and he is designated as king simply and solely to build the Temple. This might be called a falsification of history, if it were not that the writer keeps on referring to other authorities—notably the Books of Samuel and Kings—which would supplement his own work. Certainly, even more than the compiler of the Books of Samuel and Kings—better called, as in the Greek version, "the Four Books of the Kingdoms"—if he is writing history, it is confessedly history with a purpose.

THIS is, of course, true of all the historical Books of the Bible; their chief concern is never with history as the modern historian understands it, but with the meaning of history understood from a certain point of view; the historian always feels himself at liberty to select his facts. A much more favourable view is taken in II. Chronicles xi than in I. Kings xii of the character of Rehoboam, for instance, just because he was subservient to the Temple-priests, though in the following chapter a different picture of his reign is suggested; the combination of two points of view gives a rather muddled effect. It is, on the whole, likely that Rehoboam did, as a matter of policy, make much of the Temple and its priests, for the prestige given him by the possession of the Temple in his dominions would be his chief weapon against Jeroboam.

In II. Chronicles xix, 11, again, Jehoshaphat, one of the "good" kings of Judah, is reported as counselling his people to submit to the priests; Uzziah is smitten with leprosy because he dares to offer incense, as though he were a priest, though he did not belong to the house of Aaron (II. Chronicles xxvi, 16ff). An enthusiastic description of the cleansing of the Temple by Hezekiah is given in II. Chronicles xxix, 12ff (we hear nothing of this in the Books of Kings). Even the exile itself is described as a "sabbath" for the land; as long as "Palestine lay desolate, she enjoyed her sabbath; she kept sabbath, to fulfil threescore and ten years" (II. Chronicles xxxvi, 21). The interpretation of history is throughout not so much prophetic, as ecclesiastical.

Clearly the Books of Chronicles, like those of the Kings, form part of a great literary scheme. Prophets and priests alike went back to the creation of the world, and reinterpreted history as a means of propagating their own ideas. Modern scholarship has proved that in the early Books of the Bible—Genesis to Joshua—three streams of tradition have been combined. Two of these are of prophetic and one of priestly origin. We are concerned with the work of the priests here, and it is important to observe that, in its final form, *it is the latest of the three.* It begins in Genesis i, 1—ii, 3, runs through to the Book of Joshua—taking up into itself the book (perhaps Deuteronomy) found by the priests in the Temple (II. Chronicles, xxxiv, 14ff) and a "Holiness" code of still later origin. From Judges to Chronicles the two streams are not united in the same Books; the prophetic tradition appears in Judges, Ruth, the Books of Samuel and Kings, the priestly strain in the Books of Chronicles, Ezra, and Nehemiah. But from our present point of view the important thing to notice is that prophetic sources were used by the priests; their idea was not to displace, but to absorb them, merely correcting what they thought was false doctrine here and there.

Another Example of Historical Blending

IN order to understand this process, we ought to bear in mind that the practice, almost universal in ancient histories, where traditions regarded as sacred were handled, was not to select what might be regarded as the most authentic source, or even to compose a new narrative from a number of older authorities, but to reproduce such older authorities word for word, and one after the other, only making such alterations as were deemed absolutely necessary. The modern historian is chiefly anxious to get at the facts lying behind his sources; the ancient historian, on the other hand, refused to pick and choose in this way; he was more modest, at least more respectful to older writers. The consequence of this procedure was that we get in the Bible two and sometimes three conflicting accounts of the same series of incidents lying side by side, two Creation-stories (Genesis i—ii, 3, and ii, 4-25) for instance, lying side by side.

The first—really the latest—is concerned chiefly with the institution of the sabbath; in it man is the crown of creation, made after the other animals, and man and woman are created at the same time. In the other story man is created *before* the other animals, and woman is created after man and from man. The religious values of the first story (Genesis i—ii, 3) are clearly much greater than those of the second, and it is significant that Jesus quoted only the first chapter of Genesis and not the second (Mark x, 6ff); we are indebted for this sublime idea of the equality of male and female to the priests who gathered round Ezra (458-444 B.C.) and, in connexion with the Second Temple, set to work to make a Bible, in which they reproduced such traditions as had survived the exile, and supplemented them with their own account. Modern scholars have been extremely severe with

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what has been called their "falsification of history in the interests of a priestly caste"; at any rate they did not suppress traditions which conflicted with their own. Humanly speaking, we are indebted to them for the very existence of an "Old Testament"; writings like the Psalms and the "Wisdom - literature," added later, were appended to a collection of sacred Scriptures already in existence. Every fresh discovery only makes the achievement of these men stand out more splendidly.

Indeed, Ezra has rightly been called the greatest statesman in the history of Israel after Moses. He was not only the founder of the Judaism which has survived the centuries, but was in many ways the true and necessary successor of the great prophets, if their work was to survive. Of course, the work he accomplished also led directly to the decline of prophecy; Haggai and Zechariah are only pale reflections of the great writing prophets who preceded them.

"SARGON THE KING OF ASSYRIA." Conqueror of Samaria, Sargon, who reigned over the Assyrian empire from 722 to 705 B.C., sent an expeditionary force into Palestine under his Tartan, or commander-in-chief, who captured Ashdod. King Hezekiah of Judah then submitted to Assyrian supremacy. This sculptured relief, now in the Louvre, shows Sargon with the Tartan, who faces the monarch, and another high official. Though not mentioned in II. Kings, Sargon is referred to in Isaiah xx, 1: "Tartan came unto Ashdod (where Sargon the king of Assyria sent him) and fought against Ashdod and took it." Sargon was succeeded by his son Sennacherib.

When a Bible is in actual existence, revelation comes to be regarded as complete, and no more prophets are needed except as preachers or exhorters. The same thing has happened in the history of the Christian Church; once the New Testament comes into existence, prophets disappear. This is inevitable, and reflects discredit neither on the prophets nor on the scribes who replace them. At any rate, Ezra succeeded where the prophets failed; we hear little or nothing of any relapse into idolatry after the return from exile. The amazing toughness of Judaism, which is one of the greater miracles of history, cannot be dissociated from the work of the chronicler and his friends. We may regard their insistence on the putting away of heathen wives as cruel and fanatical, but even so we must applaud them for preserving the Book of Ruth, itself an appeal against that policy; we may call their repudiation of Samaritan and Gentile associations narrow and bigoted, if we will, but they preserved the Book of Jonah, that great classic of universalism. Of course, the creation of the Old Testament took centuries to complete; but the preservation of its nucleus round which it was gathered, and the very conception of its possibility, was the achievement of these resolute men, who set themselves in law and Temple-ritual to make the spiritual victories of such men as Jeremiah both concrete and permanent.

The Books of Chronicles are not the most interesting parts of the Old Testament; if we did not possess also the Books of Samuel and Kings, we should, it is true, get a very distorted picture of the history of Israel. But they do not stand alone, and the very men who wrote them saw that they did not stand alone. What we have in these Books is history read through the eyes of men whose generous ambition was to make Israel not one among many world-peoples, but a Church, a kingdom of priests, among the nations.

THEY saw, as clearly as we do, that nationalism in the political sense had destroyed the empire founded by David and Solomon, and they, so to speak, set to work to reconstruct history, using all available means at their disposal, in such a way as to teach this one lesson: Israel's function is to be the priestly nation. For that purpose she must renounce all worldly ambition, be content to be weak and little, and to pay tribute to great and tyrannous empires, spending her strength in obeying the law, let the consequences be what they may. This perfectly practicable policy was surely in the mind of Jesus when He cleansed the Temple; His crucifixion as well as all the worst catastrophes which have happened to His people, might perhaps have been avoided, if the Pharisaic successors of Ezra had been loyal to his ideals.

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Cameos From Second Kings

BOTH style and diction of the opening chapters of the Second Book of Kings are in the finest manner of early Hebrew literature. They contain the records of a series of striking incidents in the lives of Elijah and Elisha, including those masterpieces of concise narration, the Widow's Cruse (compare this story with the one in I. Kings, xvii, 8-16), the Woman of Shunem, and Naaman the Syrian. Realistic presentation of character results from the considerable use of direct speech bringing these people of a remote day to life in a way that no amount of descriptive preamble would do. Elisha's individuality emerges clearly in these chapters. Though he is Elijah's successor he is quite unlike the lonely and heroic Tishbite, except in his devotion to the cause of Jehovah. His sociable nature is revealed by his recorded acts. He is found helping all classes of men and women. Politically important, he achieves the fall of the idolatrous House of Ahab, not alone but through the agency of other men.

ONE of the most vividly narrated incidents indirectly connected with the two prophets is the dramatic story of Jehu's revolt. This is linked up with Elijah's prophecy concerning Jezebel and the vengeance for the murder of Naboth. The body of Joram, Ahab's son, is thrown into the plot that had been Naboth's Vineyard. The swiftness of movement is remarkable. Most effective, from the literary point of view, is the introduction of the watchman on the tower of Jezreel. He reports part of the story as an eye-witness and in three words, "he driveth furiously," suggests Jehu's impetuosity and violence, borne out by the subsequent dialogue.

MANTLE OF ELIJAH

ii, 8—15

AND Elijah took his mantle, and wrapped it together, and smote the waters, and they were divided hither and thither, so that they two went over on dry ground.

And it came to pass, when they were gone over, that Elijah said unto Elisha, Ask what I shall do for thee, before I be taken away from thee. And Elisha said, I pray thee, let a double portion of thy spirit be upon me. And he said, Thou hast asked a hard thing: nevertheless, if thou see me when I am taken from thee, it shall be so unto thee; but if not, it shall not be so. And it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked, that, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven.

And Elisha saw it, and he cried, My father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof. And he saw him no more: and he took hold of his own clothes, and rent them in two pieces. He took up also the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and went back, and stood by the bank of Jordan; and he took the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and smote the waters, and said, Where is the Lord God of Elijah? and when he also had smitten the waters, they parted hither and thither: and Elisha went over. And when the sons of the prophets . . . at Jericho saw him, they said, The spirit of Elijah doth rest on Elisha.

THE WIDOW'S CRUSE

iv, 1—7

NOW there cried a certain woman of the wives of the sons of the prophets unto Elisha, saying, Thy servant my husband is dead; and thou knowest that thy servant did fear the Lord: and the creditor is come to take unto him my two sons to be bondmen. And Elisha said unto her, What shall I do for thee? tell me, what hast thou in the house? And she said, Thine handmaid hath not any thing in the house, save a pot of oil. Then he said, Go, borrow thee vessels abroad of all thy neighbours, even empty vessels; borrow not a few. And when thou art come in, thou shalt shut the door upon thee and upon thy sons, and shalt pour out into all those vessels, and thou shalt set aside that which is full.

So she went from him, and shut the door upon her and upon her sons, who brought the vessels to her; and she poured out. And it came to pass, when the vessels were full, that she said unto her son, Bring me yet a vessel. And he said unto her, There is not a vessel more. And the oil stayed. Then she came and told the man of God. And he said, Go, sell the oil, and pay thy debt, and live thou and thy children of the rest.

THE REVOLT OF JEHU

ix, 14, 16—27, 30—34

SO Jehu the son of Jehoshaphat, the son of Nimshi, conspired against Joram . . . and went to Jezreel, for Joram lay there. And Ahaziah, king of Judah, was come down to see Joram. And there stood a watchman on the tower in Jezreel, and he spied the company of Jehu as he came, and said, I see a company. And Joram said, Take an horseman, and send to meet them, and let him say, Is it peace? So there went one on horseback to meet him, and said, Thus saith the king, Is it peace? And Jehu said, What hast thou to do with peace? turn thee behind me. And the watchman told, saying, The messenger came to them, but he cometh not again. Then he sent out a second on horseback, which came to them, and said, Thus saith the king, Is it peace? And Jehu answered, What hast thou to do with peace? turn thee behind me. And the watchman told, saying, He came even unto them, and cometh not again: and the driving is like the driving of Jehu the son of Nimshi; for he driveth furiously.

And Joram said, Make ready. And his chariot was made ready. And Joram king of Israel and Ahaziah king of Judah went out, each in his chariot, and they went out against Jehu, and met him in the portion of Naboth the Jezreelite.

And it came to pass, when Joram saw Jehu, that he said, Is it peace, Jehu? And he answered, What peace, so long as the whoredoms of thy mother Jezebel and her witchcrafts are so many? And Joram turned his hands, and fled, and said to Ahaziah, There is treachery, O Ahaziah. And Jehu drew a bow with his full strength, and smote Jehoram between his arms, and the arrow went out at his heart, and he sunk down in his chariot.

Then said Jehu to Bidkar his captain, Take up, and cast him in the portion of the field of Naboth the Jezreelite: for remember how that, when I and thou rode together after Ahab his father, the Lord laid this burden upon him; Surely I have seen yesterday the blood of Naboth, and the blood of his sons, saith the Lord; and I will requite thee in this plat, saith the Lord. Now therefore take and cast him into the plat of ground, according to the word of the Lord.

But when Ahaziah the king of Judah saw this, he fled by the way of the garden house. And Jehu followed after him, and said, Smite him also in the chariot. And they did so.

And when Jehu was come to Jezreel, Jezebel heard of it; and she painted her face, and tired her head, and looked out at a window. And as Jehu entered in at the gate, she said, Had Zimri peace, who slew his master? And he lifted up his face to the window, and said, Who is on my side? who? And there looked out to him two or three eunuchs. And he said, Throw her down. So they threw her down: and some of her blood was sprinkled on the wall, and on the horses: and he trode her under foot. And when he was come in, he did eat and drink, and said, Go, see now this cursed woman, and bury her: for she is a king's daughter.

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SENNACHERIB'S ASSAULT ON A CITY OF JUDAH. After the death of Sargon the whole of Palestine rebelled against the Assyrian supremacy. His successor Sennacherib (705-680 B.C.) therefore invaded the country, and in 701 B.C., " entered into Judah and encamped against the fenced cities, and thought to win them for himself " (II. Chronicles xxxii, 1, 2). Though " he was purposed to fight against Jerusalem " it is clear that he did not take the city, but he exacted heavy tribute from Hezekiah, ravaged much of his realm, and captured many Judean strongholds. A bas-relief from Nineveh shows Sennacherib's storm attack on one of these " fenced cities." The slab, part of a series, is to be seen in the British Museum.

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'The Birds of the Heavens'

IN ancient Palestine birds were regarded with a certain amount of interest and sympathy. Throughout the Scriptures appear observations on their more noticeable habits, such as methods of nesting, care of the young, and migration. In Leviticus they are divided into clean and unclean birds, the latter being birds of prey.

As we have already noted when dealing with plant and animal life, identification is often difficult, for the same rendering has sometimes been given by the translator for two or more Hebrew words, *e.g.*, Great Owl; while, on the other hand, several English variants may occur for one and the same bird (*see* Ostrich; Sparrow). Apart from Solomon's "fatted fowl," which may have been geese, no domesticated bird except the pigeon, used in the sacrifice, is mentioned up to the time of the captivity in Babylon.

The birds of Palestine today comprise innumerable and very diverse species, owing to the varying elevation and climate of the country. Birds of prey abound, as they evidently did in ancient days.

Bird	*Scripture References*	*Notes*
Bittern	Isaiah xiv, 23; xxxiv, 11; Zeph. ii, 14	Still common in the reedy swamps of Mesopotamia
Cock, Hen	Matthew xxiii, 37; xxvi, 34, 75; Mark xiv, 30, 72; Luke xxii, 34, etc.	No mention of poultry in the O.T. They were introduced from India through Persia after the Babylonian captivity
Cormorant	Leviticus xi, 17; Deuteronomy xiv, 17; Isaiah xxxiv, 11; Zeph. ii, 14	Classified in Leviticus and Deuteronomy among the unclean birds. In the other passages the translation should be pelican
Crane	Isaiah xxxviii, 14; Jeremiah viii, 7	*Grus communis*, the largest bird now found in Palestine. It winters in N. Africa
Cuckoo	Leviticus xi, 16; Deuteronomy xiv, 15	Mentioned among the unclean birds. R.V. gives *sea-mew* and this is probably the bird indicated, although our cuckoo is common in spring and summer
Dove	Genesis viii, 8; xv, 9; Leviticus v, 7; Psalms lv, 6; Isaiah xxxviii, 14, etc.	The dove and turtle-dove were the only birds admitted as sacrifice. Domesticated in Palestine in very early days, a dovecot being mentioned in Isaiah lx, 8
Eagle	Leviticus xi, 13; Deuteronomy xxviii, 49; Job ix, 26; Proverbs xxiii, 5; Daniel iv, 33, etc.	Several species of eagle inhabit Palestine, but the Bible references are to the great griffon vulture, the emblem not only of Persia and Assyria, but of Rome
Fowl	Genesis xv, 11; Job xxviii, 7; Isaiah xviii, 6	Here allusion is made to birds of prey in general; elsewhere the word is used for any kind of bird
Fowl, Fatted	I Kings iv, 23	A delicacy of Solomon's table; probably geese
Gier-eagle	Leviticus xi, 18; Deuteronomy xiv, 17	The Egyptian vulture, a scavenging bird of the East
Glede	Deuteronomy xiv, 13	Probably the buzzard
Hawk	Leviticus xi, 16; Deuteronomy xiv, 15; Job xxxix, 26	Probably a term including all the smaller birds of prey. Another authority interprets it as the night-jar, or an owl
Heron	Leviticus xi, 19; Deuteronomy xiv, 18	Seven species of heron are common in Palestine
Kite	Leviticus xi, 14; Deuteronomy xiv, 13	Very common in Palestine. The same Hebrew word is rendered "vulture" in Job xxviii, 7. R.V. gives falcon
Lapwing	Leviticus xi, 19; Deuteronomy xiv, 18	The hoopoe
Osprey	Leviticus xi, 13; Deuteronomy xiv, 12	All the smaller eagles may be indicated, or specifically the small fishing eagle
Ossifrage	Leviticus xi, 13; Deuteronomy xiv, 12	The Lämmer-geier, or bearded vulture
Ostrich	Leviticus xi, 16; Deuteronomy xiv, 16; Job xxx, 29; Isaiah xiii, 21; xxxiv, 13; xliii, 20; Jeremiah l, 39; Lamentations iv, 3	In the passages referred to the Hebrew word is correctly translated only in Lamentations; elsewhere it is erroneously rendered as "owl." In Job xxxix, 13, another variant appears, the word being wrongly translated "peacock"
Owl, Great	Leviticus xi, 17; Deuteronomy xiv, 16; Isaiah xxxiv, 11, 15	Rendering of two Hebrew words. In the first three passages noted the Egyptian eagle owl is indicated. In Isaiah xxxiv, 15, the Scops owl may be referred to, but R.V. gives "arrow-snake"
Owl, Little	Leviticus xi, 17; Deuteronomy xiv, 16; Psalms cii, 6	*Athene persica*, still very common in Palestine
Owl, Screech	Isaiah xxxiv, 14	Probably the hooting or tawny owl, still common. R.V. gives "night monster"
Partridge	I Samuel xxvi, 20; Jeremiah xvii, 11	Two species of partridge are found in Palestine
Peacock	I Kings x, 22; II Chron. ix, 21	Imported by Solomon, probably from S. India
Pelican	Leviticus xi, 18; Deuteronomy xiv, 17; Psalms cii, 6	A marsh-inhabiting bird, common about the Waters of Merom. *See also under* Cormorant
Pigeon		Same as Dove (*see above*)
Quail	Exodus xvi, 11-13; Numbers xi, 31, 32; Psalms cv, 40	The migrating birds cross the desert flying very low, are soon fatigued, and thus easily slaughtered
Raven	Genesis viii, 7; Leviticus xi, 15; I Kings xvii, 4; Luke xii, 24, etc.	Included among the unclean birds. Eight species are found in Palestine
Sparrow	Psalms lxxxiv, 3; cii, 7; Matthew x, 29, 31; Luke xii, 6-7	One rendering of a Hebrew word also translated as "bird" and "fowl" and evidently a general name for various small birds
Stork	Leviticus xi, 19; Deuteronomy xiv, 18; Psalms civ, 17; Jeremiah viii, 7; Zechariah v, 9	Listed among the unclean birds. Both the white and the black storks are found in Palestine; the latter is common near the Dead Sea; the former is a migrant
Swallow	Psalms lxxxiv, 3; Proverbs xxvi, 2; Isaiah xxxviii, 14; Jeremiah viii, 7	Two words translated thus. In the first two passages reference is made to our swallow or house martin. In Isaiah and Jeremiah the swift is indicated
Swan	Leviticus xi, 18; Deuteronomy xiv, 16	In the list of unclean birds. R.V. gives "horned owl" which is probably the correct rendering
Vulture	Leviticus xi, 14; Deuteronomy xiv, 13; Job xxviii, 7, etc.	Probably the black kite, a common scavenging bird; in Job, a falcon (R.V.)

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POOL OF SILOAM WHICH RECEIVES THE WATERS OF GIHON

The old Pool of Siloam at the junction of the Kidron and Tyropeon valleys outside Jerusalem's walls fell into disuse when Hezekiah continued the Jebusite tunnel and built a new Pool as a reservoir. In the days when he "stopped the upper watercourse of Gihon (blocked the old tunnel), and brought it straight down to the west side of the city of David" (II. Chronicles xxxii, 30) this Pool of Siloam, pictured above, was about 55 feet square. It is now 18 feet wide, 53 feet long and 19 feet deep. The opening of the tunnel is seen on the left. Its original height in this part has been increased by cutting done in the 5th century A.D.

Photo, Donald McLeish

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TITHE OF THIS FAMILIAR FRUIT WAS OFFERED IN HEZEKIAH'S TIME

Date-sellers are universal street-vendors—as common in Palestine as in England. The fruit, a valued item of diet, is now being cultivated again, especially in the Jordan Valley and near Jaffa, after a long period of neglect. In the days of the Kings and Prophets date palms still grew in luxuriant groves around Jericho. A marginal note to II. Chronicles xxxi, 5, gives "dates" as the alternative reading for "honey," one of the firstfruits brought in abundance by the people when Hezekiah restored the practice of tithe-giving in grateful acknowledgment of God as the giver of all supply and to provide for the maintenance of the priesthood.

Photo, "Daily Mirror"

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THE UPPER POOL AT HEBRON, FENCED CITY OF JUDAH

In Hebron, south-west of the Haram or enclosure of the Mosque and Cave of Machpelah, are two ancient reservoirs—the Pool of David (*see* illustration in page 346) and the Upper Pool. The latter, pictured above, is now known as the Pool of the Glass-blowers, being situated near the quarter of these workers. Since the days of the Crusades Hebron glass has been renowned. In Biblical times the city's excellent water-supply added greatly to its importance as a stronghold. For seven years David made it his capital, before the taking of Jerusalem. During the reign of his grandson Rehoboam, after the division of the kingdom, it was fortified, made "exceeding strong" and garrisoned, with other walled cities of Benjamin and Judah (II. Chronicles xi, 10).

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

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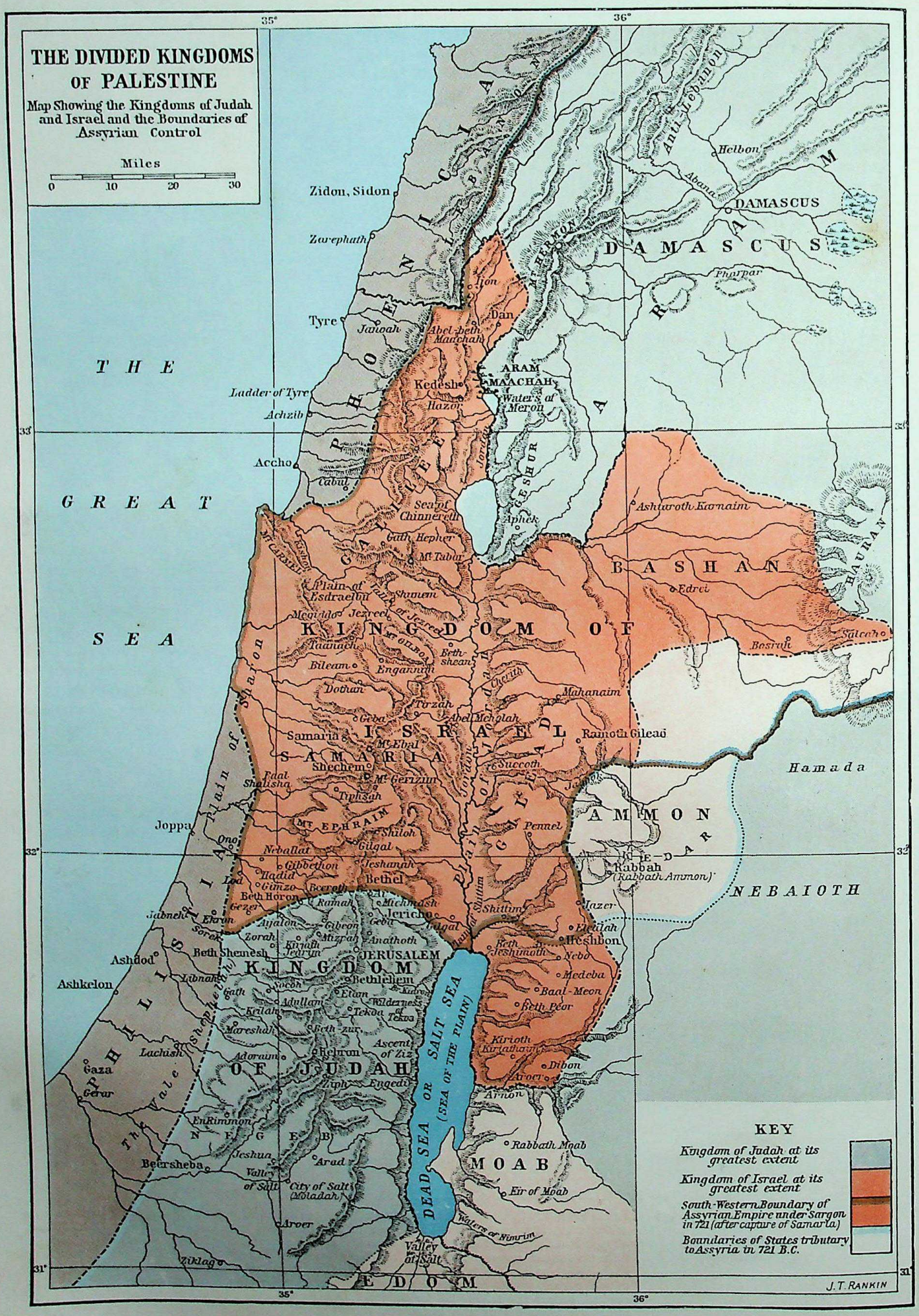
THE DIVIDED KINGDOMS OF PALESTINE
Map Showing the Kingdoms of Judah and Israel and the Boundaries of Assyrian Control
Miles
0 10 20 30
THE GREAT SEA
PHOENICIA
DAMASCUS
ARAM MAACHAH
GALILEE
BASHAN
KINGDOM OF ISRAEL
SAMARIA
AMMON
NEBAIOTH
KINGDOM OF JUDAH
JERUSALEM
MOAB
EDOM
DEAD SEA OR SALT SEA (SEA OF THE PLAIN)
Zidon, Sidon
Zarephath
Tyre
Ladder of Tyre
Achzib
Accho
Joppa
Ashdod
Ashkelon
Gaza
Beersheba
Dan
Kedesh
Hazor
Sea of Chinnereth
Mt Tabor
Samaria
Shechem
Mt Gerizim
Mt Ebal
Jericho
Bethel
Gilgal
Shiloh
Rabbah (Rabbath Ammon)
Heshbon
Ramoth Gilead
Mahanaim
Ashtaroth Karnaim
Edrei
Salcah
Bosrah
Hamada
DAMASCUS
Helbon
Abana
Pharpar
Anti-Lebanon
Mt Hermon
Jordan
Sea of Galilee
Plain of Esdraelon
Mt Carmel
Plain of Sharon
Valley of Jezreel
Valley of Shephelah
Valley of Salt
City of Salt (Moladah)
Rabbath Moab
Ir of Moab
Waters of Nimrim
Aroer
Ziklag
Arad
Hebron
Bethlehem
Jerusalem
Mt Ephraim
Mt Gilboa
Beth-shean
Megiddo
Jezreel
Tirzah
Succoth
Pennel
Jazer
Medeba
Baal-Meon
Beth Peor
Kirioth
Dibon
Arnon
Ziph
Engedi
Ascent of Ziz
Wilderness of Tekoa
Beth-zur
Adullam
Mareshah
Lachish
Gezer
Ekron
Jabneh
Ono
Lod
Beth Horon
Gibeon
Mizpah
Anathoth
Geba
Michmash
Ramah
Gibbeon
Neballat
Beth Shemesh
Zorah
Kiriath Jearim
Socoh
Azekah
Libnah
Gath
Keilah
Beer-sheba
Jeshua
Valley of Salt
Eltekeh
Beth-horon
Ai
Hadid
Beeroth
Ashdod
Ashkelon
Gaza
Gerar
Ziklag
Aroer
Valley of Salt
Shittim
Heshbon
Nebo
Medeba
Kirjathaim
Kirjath-jearim
Eshtaoll
Ashdod
Ashkelon
Gaza
Gerar
Lachish
Beersheba
Jabneh
Ekron
Ono
Lod
Gezer
Beth Horon
Ai
Hadid
Beeroth
Gibbeon
Neballat
Gilgal
Jericho
Geba
Gibeon
Mizpah
Anathoth
Zorah
Kiriath Jearim
Beth Shemesh
Libnah
Gath
Keilah
Mareshah
Adullam
Socoh
Azekah
Eltekeh
Beth-horon
Beth-zur
Hebron
Adoraim
Ziph
Engedi
Ascent of Ziz
Wilderness of Tekoa
Tekoa
Bethlehem
Jerusalem
Kirjath-jearim
Kirjathaim
Kirioth
Dibon
Aroer
Arnon
Rabbath Moab
Ir of Moab
Waters of Nimrim
Valley of Salt
Aroer
Ziklag
Arad
Jeshua
Valley of Salt
City of Salt (Moladah)
Beer-sheba
Lachish
Gaza
Gerar
Ashkelon
Ashdod
Joppa
Ono
Lod
Jabneh
Ekron

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Chronicles I. & II.

I. The Books in Outline

'Behold, they are written in the book of the chronicles'

by REV. CANON S. N. SEDGWICK, M.A.

Rector of Warnford, and Canon of Portsmouth.

THE two Books which follow I. and II. Kings in the Authorized Version of the Bible are the Chronicles, which have been called "The Church History of Jerusalem."

The title "Chronicles" comes to us through Jerome's Vulgate, and represents the name by which, together with Ezra–Nehemiah, they are called in the Hebrew Scriptures "Dibre Hayyamin"—"Events of the Times" *i.e.*, records or annals. In the Septuagint (the Greek translation of the Old Testament) the title is "Paraleipomena," which means "things left out" or "supplements." In the Hebrew Scriptures they do not occupy the same position as in the English and other versions, but are put last in the order of the books; which is some indication of the date of their composition.

Originally I. and II. Chronicles were one book and indeed were joined with Ezra and Nehemiah. It is sufficient to read the last few verses of II. Chronicles xxxvi, and the first verses of Ezra i to discover that they are identical, and the last words of Chronicles, "Go up," are to be found in Ezra i, 3 with their continuation "— to Jerusalem," etc.

Why the complete book, I.—II. Chronicles–Ezra–Nehemiah, came to be halved in the Hebrew Bible, and then the order of the two halves reversed and the Chronicles removed to the end of the list, presents a very interesting question. It may well be that some later scribe used the Ezra–Nehemiah portion to supplement the narrative contained in the Books of Samuel and Kings, omitting the Chronicles portion as it was very largely a repetition of those latter books. As time went on, however, the value of I.—II. Chronicles was recognized, and so they were placed in the Hebrew Bible, but at the very end, and actually as an appendix to Ezra and Nehemiah. The order of the Books in the Hebrew Bible ends with Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah, and the Chronicles.

When Were the Books Written?

IT is plain that the last five books in the Hebrew Bible are placed there largely because they were written later than the others, and the question of the date of the Chronicles is important if we would understand the spirit and motives which actuated its author or compiler. The Books of Kings cannot have been written in their present form till, at earliest, 561 B.C., the year of the release of Jehoiachin (II. Kings xxv, 27) from prison, but Chronicles is written with an atmosphere and tone which could only belong to a much later age (*see* below), and from the allusion to the sixth generation of Zerubbabel's descendants in I. Chronicles iii, 17-24, the earliest date can be fixed at 350 B.C., whilst in Nehemiah xii, 10-11 (a continuation of I. Chronicles vi, 4-15) we have the name of Jaddua, who, Josephus tells us, was high priest in the days of Alexander the Great, which brings us to the possible later date of the Book, c. 250 B.C. This means that there is a difference of some 250 years or more between the dates of Kings and Chronicles, or roughly as much time as separates us from the reign of Charles II.

Seeking the Purpose in Repetition

WHEN we examine the contents of Chronicles, we discover, first, that it is largely a repetition of the history contained in Samuel and Kings, in fact, it contains large sections of those Books quoted almost word for word. It is true that there are equally large omissions of that history. For example, the writer omits almost all reference to the story of the Northern Kingdom (Israel), and concentrates upon that of Judah. In addition, some of the questionable or unpleasant incidents in the lives of his favourite heroes, David and Solomon, and similarly in those of the other kings of Judah are omitted or glossed over, as if the author did not wish to recount anything derogatory to their idealist character.

We can see, quite clearly, what things in his country's story he found delight in. The records of the families, pedigrees and genealogies, with lists of names, occur again and again; everything connected with the Temple and its worship, lists of priests, Levites, porters, choir men and others, are given, and he revels in statistics, not always strictly accurate and perhaps exaggerated. One special point will strike the reader, namely, his references to the music and musical instruments of the Temple. So often does he refer to them, that we make a guess that he was himself a Levite and a member of the Temple choir, and loved the stately worship of the Temple. He believed that music had its part to play in the liturgical worship of God. And he loved the "Law" and was well-versed in it.

What was his object in writing? It can be clearly seen if we remember the enormous change which had come over the nation in the last two centuries. They had passed through their exile and returned to their own country. The Temple had been rebuilt and was now in full use. Above all, the Book of the Pentateuch (the first five "books of Moses") had become "Holy Writ," "the Law of the Lord"—the first commencement of the Canon of the Old Testament. When "Kings" had been written, nearly three centuries

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earlier, there was no such sacred authority; we read of the discovery of some book in Josiah's time (II. Chronicles xxxiv), 621 B.C., which is identified with the greater part of Deuteronomy. But now there was the whole Pentateuch, containing not only Deuteronomy, but Leviticus, the priests' book, as well.

IF the author was to write afresh the history of his people, he had the choice of two authorities, the historical records or the Pentateuch, and to him there was no doubt which was the holier and more authoritative. His intention was to write the history of his people in its right perspective, and therefore, as the Law could not be wrong, he sought to reconstruct the historical records in the light of the Law once and for all given on Sinai.

So he read into past history the religious conditions and beliefs of his own age. He would show his readers how the hand of God was behind everything; where he could, he pointed the moral; and he saw nothing wrong—he had no idea of the modern historian's standpoint—in writing into the ancient records the laws and worship of his own times.

Professor Guillaume has remarked (S.P.C.K. Commentary) how the doctors of Islam did the same thing by reading back into the origins of their religion the conditions and ideas of their own age, so that customs and laws unheard of by Mahomet came to be regarded as sponsored by him, and therefore to be unquestioned.

So the Chronicler shows David and all the other righteous kings of Judah strictly observing the ritual of the Priestly Code, the Passover, the music of the Temple, etc. He omits anything that is discreditable. He refuses to detail the history of the Northern Kingdom (Israel) because, after it broke away under Jeroboam, it was no longer of the true Israel. But he has no idea of falsifying history. Again and again he refers to his authorities, that his readers may read them for themselves.

Reading the past thus from the standpoint of his own day, he showed no conception of the progressive character of revelation, or of the development of religious thought and practice. But he sought in his own way to show God's relation to history. He takes, in fact, a religious view of history. Who shall say it is not needed today? At least, the student can find in Chronicles a book of great value as showing the religious thought that was in men's minds *at the time when it was written—i.e.*, three centuries or less before Christ.

From the point of view of historical accuracy, Chronicles may not always be trustworthy; but the author was honest in his consultation of his sources and naming of them, and it is more than possible that where his details have not been coloured he does indeed supplement the accounts in Samuel or Kings. Compare, for example, I. Chronicles xi, 10-41, with II. Samuel xxiii, 8-39.

But the student will not expect to find exact history in this Book. Suffice it that its author was a deeply religious man, devoted to "the Law of the Lord" and also to the great heroes of his country's story. He could not dream that their lives did not always accord with it, but whilst the Pentateuch was, by this time, regarded as sacred, the historical books were probably not yet canonical, and therefore he felt himself free to deal with them.

He stands before us today as praiseworthy for three outstanding characteristics:

(1) His fidelity to a Law which was the highest the world had ever known; (2) his deep conviction of the close relationship between God and the course of history, especially in the covenant between Him and the Chosen People; and (3) his belief in the value of worship, as seen in that of the Temple. He believed that behind all outward events

"Standeth God within
the shadow,
Keeping watch above
His own."

It will be of the greatest use to the reader if, instead of repeating the history recorded already in the Books of Samuel and Kings, we should review in this section the important *additions* and *differences* to be noticed in the two Books of Chronicles.

THE first nine chapters of I. Chronicles give various lists and genealogies, of the Jewish people from Adam to David, of the royal line of David before and after the Captivity, of various tribes of Israel, more especially Judah and Levi, and so forth. Then follows the second part, consisting of Chapters x—xxix, and dealing in considerable detail with the reign of David.

CHRONICLES: A SYNOPSIS

I.

Genealogies of the Jewish People

	Chapters
The Patriarchs and the Sons of Israel	i-ii
The Royal Line of David ...	iii
The Tribes of Israel	iv-viii
Other inhabitants of Jerusalem ...	ix

The Reign of David

Death of Saul	x
Establishment of David's Kingdom	xi-xii
Removal of the Ark	xiii-xvi
Plans and Preparations for the Temple	xvii-xxix, 21
Death of David and Accession of Solomon	xxix, 22-30

II.

The Reign of Solomon

Solomon's Prayer for Wisdom ...	i, 1-17
The Building of the Temple ...	ii-iv
Bringing the Ark to the Temple	v
Address and Dedication	vi-vii
Solomon's other Works	viii
Visit of the Queen of Sheba and Solomon's Death	ix

Decline and Fall of Judah

The Revolt of Jeroboam	x
The Reign of Rehoboam	xi-xii
Kings of Judah from Abijah to Zedekiah	xiii-xxxvi, 16
Destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple	xxxvi, 17-21

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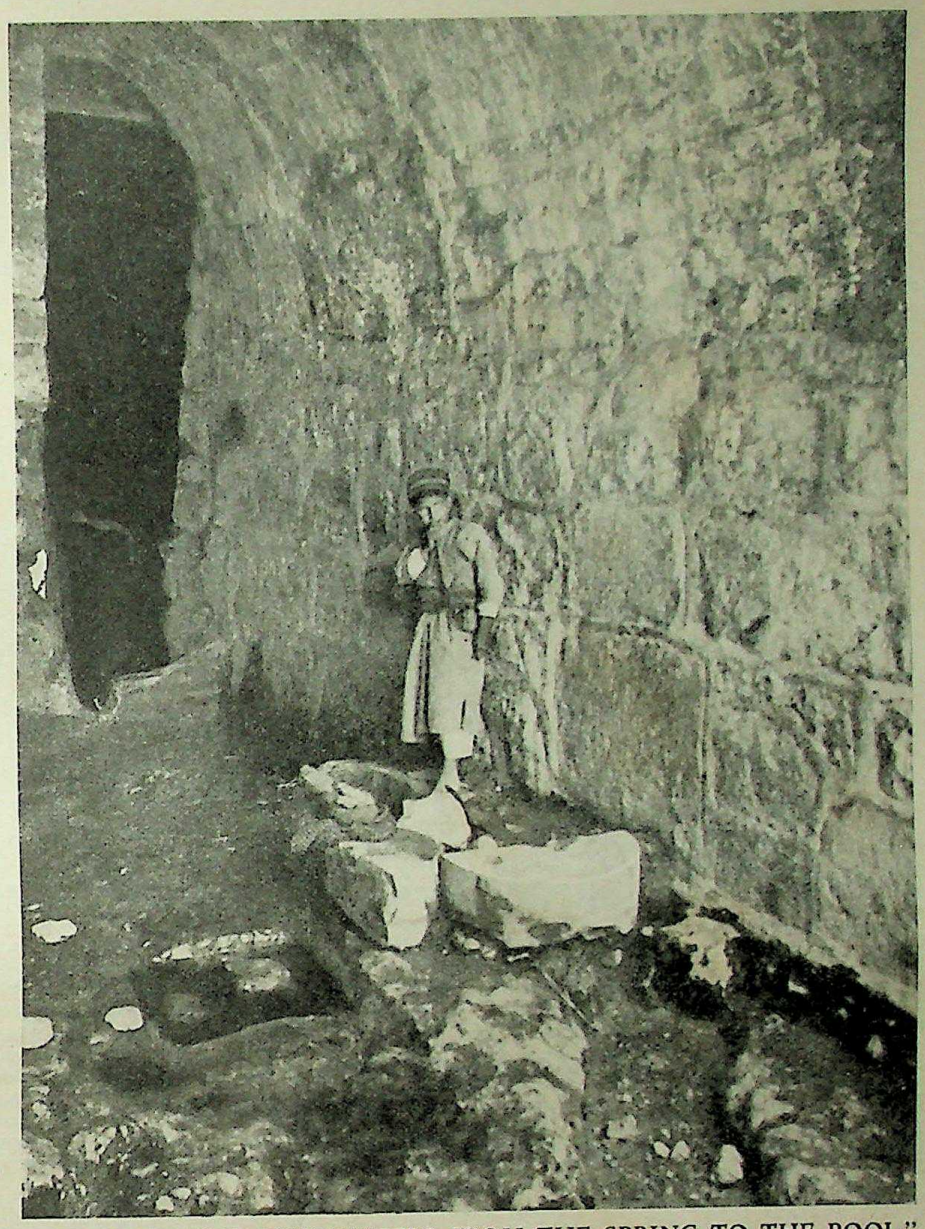
It will be noticed that there is no mention of the author of Judges nor of the early part of Saul's reign. The author focuses attention on David, who is the ideal hero, whilst Saul was but the head of a house which Jehovah had rejected; and as for the Northern Kingdom it had vanished so long ago as not to be worth attention, especially as the Divine purpose, which had selected David, was centred in the Southern Kingdom of Judah. He idealized David's reign, consequently omitting such bad incidents as the taking of Bath-sheba and the murder of Uriah; and again and again he stresses the work of the Levites, to whose number he belonged.

He opens his story abruptly with the death of Saul on Mount Gilboa (I. Samuel xxxi, 1-7), its actual date being about 1010 B.C. Here, fighting against an invading army of Philistines, his three sons lost their lives, and their father, to avoid the degradation of captivity, committed suicide. The chronicler points the moral in his own words: "So Saul died for his trespass which he committed against the LORD . . . and also for that he asked counsel of one that had a familiar spirit" (I. Chronicles x, 13 R.V.).

David is introduced equally abruptly on the scene. There is no mention of his origin or early days, nor of his service with Saul. He is already king in Hebron, and on the death of Saul, "all Israel" invited him to the throne.

There is the briefest allusion to the earlier story in the Books of Samuel in xi, 2 and 3, but David's coronation is followed by the capture of Jerusalem, with Joab's prowess as commander-in-chief, and a list of David's mighty men, "strong with him in his kingdom," says the writer, "to make him king, according to the word of the LORD."



"THERE FLOWED THE WATERS FROM THE SPRING TO THE POOL." Hezekiah continued the Jebusite tunnel, which made the spring water from Gihon accessible to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, at a point striking westwards (shown in the plan in page 375) to the new "Pool of Siloam," which he constructed to receive it at the southern end of the city. The photograph shows the Siloam exit. At the point of divergence he blocked the old tunnel. This precautionary measure prevented the Jebusite system from being used as a possible entry into Jerusalem, and also deprived an enemy outside the walls of access to the water supply.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

Nor are these all whom the author can specify. Chapter xii contains another list of the warriors who joined David at Ziklag, Adullam and Hebron—a list which is peculiar to the Chronicler though probably derived from a very early source. From this we pass to an event which to the writer was of immense interest. It was the removal of the Ark to the new capital. Hitherto, there had been no authorized centre for the worship of Jehovah, but henceforth there would be a national sanctuary. The first attempt, however, failed through the unintentional sacrilege of Uzza, and it is not until Chapters xv-xvi, 3, that we read of its successful accomplishment. The differences between the elaborate account in Chronicles, with its ceremonial and the work of the priests and Levites, and the original account in II. Samuel vi, 11-23, is a typical illustration of the way the author has taken the facts and rewritten them in his own setting; there is again a reference to the Temple music (xv, 16-24), singers and instrumentalists—"psalteries set to Alamoth"—perhaps treble, and "harps set to Sheminith"—bass or tenor (?), and a Psalm of thanksgiving is appended, made up of verses from the Psalter.

David intended to build a Temple (xvii). But he is hindered from doing so by Nathan, the prophet, who brings him God's promise of a dynasty, and that a son of his shall do the building.

A list is given of David's campaigns and officials, chiefly derived from Samuel, and the story passes on

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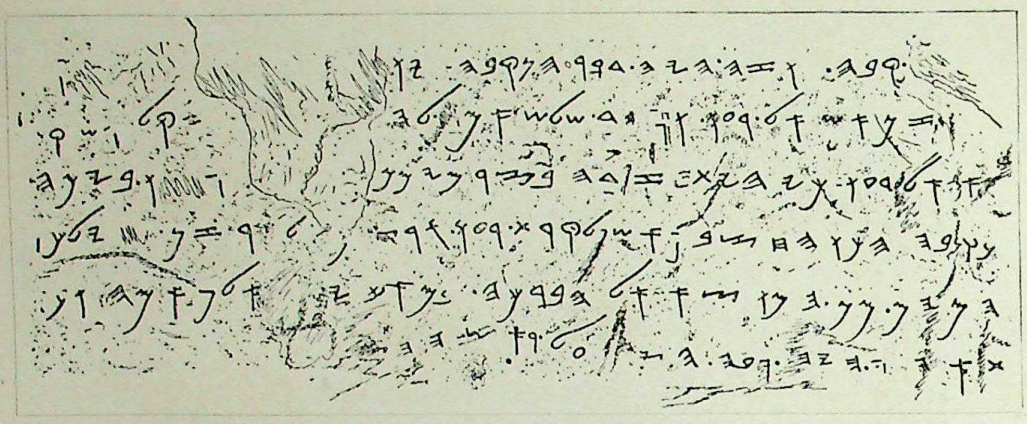

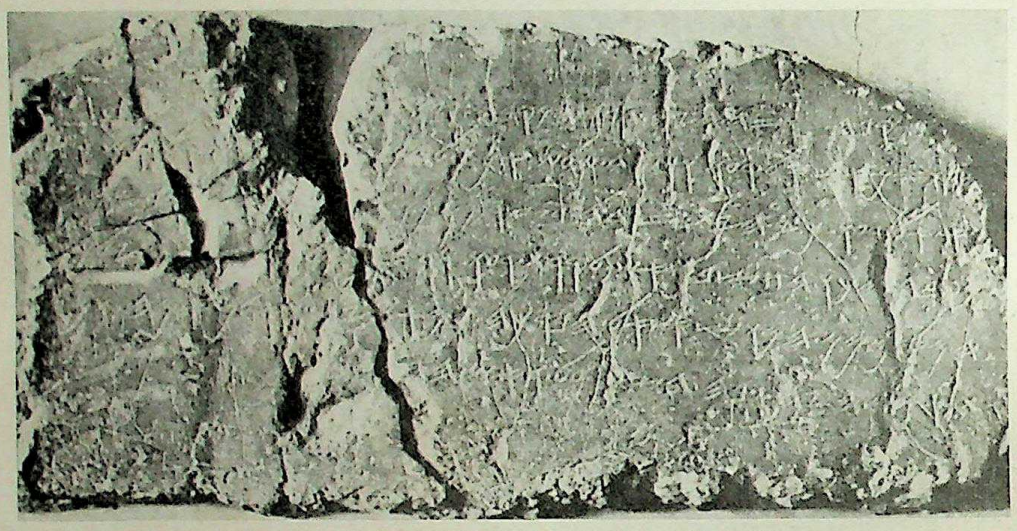

SILOAM'S INSCRIPTION FROM HEZEKIAH'S TUNNEL. The stone bearing the celebrated Siloam inscription, discovered in 1880 on the south wall of the tunnel near the Pool opening, has been removed to the Museum in Istanbul. Above the photograph the six lines of beautifully carved Hebrew characters are clearly shown from a squeeze. They are thus translated: (1) Behold the excavation! Now this had been the history of the excavation. While the workmen were still lifting up (2) the axe, each towards his neighbour, and while three cubits still remained to (cut through, each heard) the voice of the other who called (3) to his neighbour for there was an excess in the rock on the right hand (and on the left). And on the day of the (4) excavation the workmen struck, each to meet his neighbour axe against axe, and there flowed (5) the waters from the spring to the pool for a thousand two hundred cubits; . . (6) of a cubit was the height of the rock over the heads of the workmen.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem; Inscription, Palestine Exploration Fund

to the taking of the Census and its punishment—the Pestilence, which leads to the selection of the site for the building of the Temple. The differences between it and the account in Samuel are noteworthy, and if not due to some unknown source which the Chronicler was using, must be attributed to the altered viewpoint of his age and century. Briefly, it is Satan, not God, who tempts David to number the people. He does so in spite of Joab's objections; but afterwards, realizing his sinfulness, he selects, at God's bidding, out of the three choices offered him as a punishment, the Pestilence. But Jerusalem is spared, and David offers a sacrifice on the very spot where he sees the Angel of Destruction, which afterwards becomes the site of the Temple. It is worth recording that the famous Dome of the Rock, the Kubbet-es-Sakhra, in modern Jerusalem traditionally covers this very spot. The passage, xxii, 2—xxix, 30, is entirely the work of the Chronicler, whatever other sources he may have used. The natural sequence to the previous story is that we should now read of David's preparation for the building of the Temple. His character has now been idealized, and it is but right that he should be depicted choosing the site, and making such enormous provision for the building in money, materials and men, that Solomon had little to do in his turn.

The materials, wood, iron and brass, were obtained and the building entrusted to Solomon. In a beautiful speech (xxii, 6 ff) David solemnly entrusts the work to him, charging him "to keep the Law of thy God," a stress which the Chronicler characteristically makes. He tells his son of the amount of gold and silver at his disposal, prepared "in my affliction," *i.e.*, in my earnest zeal—the almost fabulous sum—£615,000,000 in gold and £412,500,000 in silver, which is not wholly incredible when we remember the huge treasures often held by Eastern monarchs.

But not content with providing the money, etc., David is shown as organizing bands of Levites, priests, musicians, guardians, etc., for the maintenance of the Temple and its services.

These lists of names may sound wearisome to modern ears, but they contain much of interest to the student, and present some point that rivets the attention and sets the imagination at work, *e.g.*, xxv, 4. In the list of Temple musicians, in which the Chronicler shows himself specially interested, come the names: Hananiah, Hanani, Eliathah, Giddalti, and Romamtiezer, Joshbekashah, Mallothi, Hothir, Mahazioth. Read as they stand, they form a complete sentence in Hebrew:

"Be gracious unto me, O Jah, be gracious unto me,
Thou art my God, whom I will exalt and extol:
Thou art my help in hardship;
O grant me many visions of thyself."

Was this an ancient prayer of the Chronicler's, or some odd scrap first written in the margin by a choirman, and then slipped into the actual text by a later copyist? The names occur in the Septuagint and Syriac versions, as well as the Hebrew Bible.

THEREAFTER comes an account of David's military organization, tribal government and administration, and the last two chapters deal with David's closing acts and death. We read of his gathering his assembly, and rising to his feet, old man as he was, to address them in words of genuine piety. With deep religious feeling he calls his throne "the throne of the kingdom of the Lord over Israel," and having settled the

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succession upon Solomon proceeds to give him the plans for the Temple. To the lavish donations of the king, the assembled chiefs and princes add their rich gifts at his bequest, and David, overjoyed at the realization of his deepest and most spiritual desire for his people, closes with a prayer of thankfulness (xxix, 10ff.): ". . . Thine, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty . . ."

So Solomon was crowned at the end of this great religious ceremony, and David died in a good old age full of days, riches and honour.

The first nine chapters of the Second Book of Chronicles deal with the reign of Solomon and offer no very serious additions to the narrative in I. Kings; but the omissions are noteworthy: there is no mention of Adonijah's rebellion, Solomon's marriage with the Egyptian princess, the building of the palace, and the idolatry of his harem. He shines out, first and foremost, as the Builder of the Temple.

At Gibeon, after a great religious assembly, Jehovah appeared in a dream, giving the king the wisdom that he asked for.

Solomon's Temple in the Building

THEN came the first great task of the reign—the building of the Temple. Solomon therefore made a commercial treaty with Huram, king of Tyre, to obtain supplies of wood and skilled labour, in addition to the forced levies which he raised from the Canaanites who still remained in his own country. So the story proceeds with some elaborations by the Chronicler, but with some variations which suggest that he was using a source other than that of I. Kings. (Compare II. Chronicles ii, 3ff. with I. Kings v, 2ff.).

While the description of the actual building of the Temple is largely taken from I. Kings, the Chronicler adds details of his own, either derived from some ancient source, or from Zerubbabel's Temple as he knew it (*e.g.*, the veil, iii, 14, is not mentioned in Kings).

It measured 104 by 35 feet, or 60 by 20 cubits, a cubit being 20.7 inches. (These were internal measurements). It consisted of a "Holy of Holies" 20 cubits by 20, then a nave 40 by 20, outside of which was a porch of the same width, and some 20 cubits long. Before it stood the two brazen pillars, adorned with chapiters, known as Jachin and Boaz.

The description of the dedication of the Temple is largely derived from I. Kings viii and ix, but the part played by the Levites is stressed by the Chronicler as elsewhere. In vii, 1 fire comes down from heaven (a symbol of the Divine Presence), but this is not mentioned in I. Kings viii, 54. There are other interesting variations here. After the dedication comes God's response in a dream of the king for the second time.

After this, the greatest achievement in his reign, we read of Solomon's imperial organization, his fortification of certain cities, his system of forced labour, his annual sacrifices, etc., and the expedition of his and Huram's joint fleet to Ophir.

The visit of the queen of Sheba and an account of Solomon's wealth brings the history of his reign to a close in a blaze of glory, no mention being made of his idolatries or political troubles. "And Solomon slept with his fathers . . . and Rehoboam his son reigned in his stead" (II. Chronicles ix, 31).

Further Details of the Southern Kingdom

IN the concluding section (x-xxxvi) the Chronicler gives much more detail than is given in the Books of Kings, where the history of the two kingdoms is related. Here, as is stated above, the writer omits all reference to the Northern Kingdom except where necessary, and specially concentrates on the reigns of Rehoboam, Abijah, Asa and Jehoshaphat.

REHOBOAM (936-919 B.C.). After the revolt of the Northern tribes the king prepared to regain control by force of arms, but was forbidden by the prophet Shemaiah. He proceeded to strengthen himself against Egypt by fortifying several towns, chiefly south of Jerusalem, which he placed under his twenty-eight sons. Meantime the priests and Levites in the Northern Kingdom made their way into Judah in loyalty to the worship of Jehovah; but later on Rehoboam "forsook the Law of his God" and was punished by an invasion of Shishak, king of Egypt (930 B.C.), whose inscription at Karnak refers to a number of towns in Judah which paid tribute. But on the people's repentance, Rehoboam was told by the prophet that Shishak should not destroy them (x-xii).

ABIJAH (919-916 B.C.). To the brief description in Kings the Chronicler adds a vivid account of a war with Jeroboam. After a typical speech by the king and the blowing of the priests' trumpets, Israel was severely routed. The source of this story is said to be the commentary (midrash) of the prophet Iddo—the first time this word occurs in the Old Testament. It means "an edifying exposition" (xiii).

Asa's Reign in a New Light

NEXT we have Asa (916-875), whose reign in I. Kings xv, is here expanded with vivid detail. The Chronicler looked upon him as a good son of a godly father. He was attacked by Zerah the Ethiopian, but won conclusive victory at Mareshah, after which the prophet Azariah encouraged him to remove the abominations (idols, etc.) and enter into a covenant to serve the Lord. Later, he is attacked by Baasha of Israel and bribes Ben-hadad of Syria with the Temple treasures to help him. For this he is rebuked by Hanani, whom he imprisons. And when at the close of his reign he was diseased in his feet, "he sought not Jehovah but the physicians" (probably magicians).

JEHOSHAPHAT (875-850). Jehoshaphat's was a reign of great splendour to the Chronicler, only marred by the king's unhappy associations with the Northern kings. Jehoshaphat placed garrisons in fenced cities, removed the high places, etc., and sent princes and Levites through the country to teach the people, "having the book of the Law of the LORD with them."

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But he formed an alliance with Ahab of Israel—(the heroic story of Micaiah is repeated from Kings in full)—against Ramoth-Gilead, but Jehoshaphat escapes because of his piety, though he is rebuked by Jehu, son of Hanani "Shouldest thou help the ungodly and love them that hate the LORD?"

This is followed by still greater devotion to God, and later on we have the remarkable account of an invasion of the land by a triple alliance of Ammon, Moab and Edom, when after the king's prayer, a Levite, inspired by the Spirit, declares that God would give him victory without a single blow being struck. Two of the Levitical choirs sang praises, and the enemy forces quarrelled and fell upon one another in the morning "and none escaped" (xviii-xx).

JEHORAM (850-842). The material of this chapter is almost all new. Jehoram is a bad king, being a son-in-law of Ahab. He begins his reign by killing all his brothers and is rebuked by a letter from Elijah (the only reference to the great prophet in Chronicles) who threatened God's judgements. The Philistines and Arabians made a raid on Jerusalem, carried off the royal treasures, and the whole family except Ahaziah (here called Jehoahaz); after which he died, as Elijah had written, "and he departed without being desired" (xxi).

AHAZIAH AND ATHALIAH. Ahaziah (842) has a short, uneventful reign; the Chronicler points out that he lost his life—at the hands of Jehu—because he made alliance with Jehoram of Israel. His destruction was "of God" whereupon Athaliah, the queen-mother, usurps the throne till she is killed in 835 B.C., and is succeeded by Joash, saved in the high priest's house by Jehoshabeath, his wife (xxii-xxiii).

JOASH (835–795). Although he reigned so long, the Chronicles only tell of the repairs of the Temple, and of a campaign against Syria. The account of the former has some interesting and typical additions. (Note *e.g.*, reference to "the tax that Moses laid upon Israel," xxiv, 9, and the method of collecting money for the Temple).

But when the good priest Jehoiada who had brought him up died, Joash relapsed into idolatry. Nor would he listen to the prophets who rebuked him. He even had Zechariah, the son of Jehoiada, stoned (cp. Luke xi, 51) the last of the martyr-prophets in the Hebrew Bible (xxiv).

AMAZIAH (795-786). Another instance of a reign beginning well, but, following a religious decadence, ending in a sequel of disaster. Most of the history is in II. Kings xiv, except for the following—the campaign against Edom. Here Amaziah hired 100,000 troops from the kingdom of Israel, but was advised by a prophet not to use them. (Incensed at this, the Northern troops plundered cities of Judah as they returned). But the victory over Edom proved a religious disaster to the king, for he adopted the Edomite gods and brought them home. His evil ways led finally to his assassination (xxv).

UZZIAH (786-757). Isaiah witnessed to his greatness (II. Chron. xxvi, 22), but after successful campaigns, growing power and national prosperity his reign closes with a conflict with the priests. He attempted to usurp a priestly function and burn incense in the Temple. Azariah the priest rebuked him; and when he persisted, he was stricken with leprosy, and fled from the Temple to live the rest of his life in a "several house" (xxvi).

JOTHAM (757-741). A pious and prosperous reign (xxvii).

AHAZ (741-725). Ahaz is an example of the wicked kings. He apostatized and, following the ways of the kings of Israel, sacrificed to idols. The result is a heaven-sent chastisement, an invasion of the Syrian king Rezin, followed by a crushing defeat at the hands of Pekah the Israelite king. The Chronicler tells a touching tale of how the captives were reclothed and returned to Jericho, in obedience to a prophet's word. Later Ahaz appealed for help against the Edomites to Tiglath-Pileser, the Assyrian monarch whose monuments tell us that he had already subdued and depopulated Galilee (733), "but it helped him not." He is made to stand out as the most terrible example of an apostate king (xxviii).

From Hezekiah to the Fall of Judah

NOW we have the account of a devout and faithful son trying to undo the evil of his father. HEZEKIAH (725-696) began with a moral and religious reformation, amidst the joyful music of the Levites after the cleansing of the Temple. Then a great Passover was held, in which many Israelites as well joined from "Ephraim and Manasseh," and his reign ends with the remarkable deliverance from the army of Sennacherib, king of Assyria (705-680) (xxix-xxxii).

MANASSEH (696-641). In punishment for his idolatry and paganism, he is recorded as having been taken in chains to Babylon by the Assyrians. Captivity produced repentance and consequently a return of the king to his own country (xxxiii, 1-20).

AMON (641-639). A short but reactionary reign (xxxiii, 21-25).

JOSIAH (639-608). In the eyes of the writer Josiah is an ideal monarch. He begins his reforms even *before* the discovery of the book of the law by Hilkiah the priest. This book must have been practically identical with Deuteronomy, and was compiled probably during the reign of Manasseh (692) and then lost sight of. It was followed by a national rededication (thereby recognizing the authority of the Deut. code) and a solemn Passover. But Necho II of Egypt, wishing to pass through Palestine to attack Carchemish, was opposed by Josiah, though warned that it was God's will (xxxv, 21, "for God commanded me to makes haste"), and Josiah was fatally wounded at Megiddo (xxxiv-xxxv).

JEHOAHAZ (608, three months); JEHOIAKIM (608-597); JEHOIACHIN (597); ZEDEKIAH (597-586). The last four reigns are only briefly referred to, and the Book ends with the decree of Cyrus, the founder of the old Persian Empire, who wrested the Chaldean supremacy from Nabonidus and entered Babylon as a conqueror, 539 B.C., permitting the Jews to return to Jerusalem, 536 B.C. (xxxvi).

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Kings & Chronicles

III

The Land of the Books

The Palestine where the Hebrew Monarchs Ruled

by REV. E. O. JAMES, M.A., D.Litt., Ph.D.

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THE consolidation of the Hebrew tribes into a nation with its capital at Jerusalem was brought about largely by pressure from without which necessitated a united front and a concentration of the internal forces. But David lived to see the decline of Philistine supremacy in Palestine, and in the early days of the monarchy the Hittite empire had collapsed, Egypt was too engrossed in its own affairs to be aggressive, while many centuries had to elapse before Assyria and Babylonia became a menace. The Phoenicians, being essentially traders, were mainly concerned with the preservation of their right of way from Tyre and Sidon eastwards for the export of the wood and copper they exchanged for gold from Ophir and perfumes from Arabia. So long as this was guaranteed they were not at the moment disposed to engage in wars of conquest. Therefore, Israel had rest from all its enemies at the end of the reign of David and in the opening years of that of his youthful son Solomon, who succeeded to the throne about 970 B.C., just before the death of his father, and continued his foreign policy.

King Solomon's Prosperous Reign

OUR information concerning this period comes chiefly from literary sources which assumed their present form in later times when the founder of the Temple was regarded as a romantic figure endowed with the plenitude of wisdom and riches, renowned throughout the surrounding nations for his wise sayings, sagacious acts and the magnificence of his court. But making due allowance for the accounts having lost nothing in their telling, it is beyond reasonable doubt that Solomon embarked upon numerous enterprises which included the erection of a new royal city to the north of the "city of David," localized probably at what is now known as the Haram es-Sherif. This he equipped with a royal chapel comparable to Phoenician and Egyptian shrines in design and wealth of appointment, just as he modelled his court on those at Thebes, Babylon or Ashur. The royal residence to the south of the Temple area consisted of several buildings comprising a house for his Egyptian wife, a hall of justice near the palace court, and a sumptuous two-storied House of the Forest of Lebanon, containing in the lower storey forty-five cedar columns supporting the roof of the upper storey, which was used as an arsenal.

By comparison with the mud-brick hovels in which the commoners lived, the complex of royal edifices must have been "exceeding magnifical," and presupposes building operations on a very considerable scale. The timber for the roofs of the great halls and the supporting columns had to be felled in the Lebanon, floated down the coast to Jaffa, and, together with the rest of the materials, hauled to Jerusalem. The stone was excavated from the quarries, cut by a saw and chiselled; bronze was cast in the valley of the Jordan where bricks and pottery were also made from clay marl, though this material in house construction has not proved to be durable, which explains why so many ancient towns and villages in Palestine have entirely disappeared without leaving behind a trace of their existence.

Of Jerusalem itself little remains from the great days of Solomon, but for other reasons. As Professor Macalister says, "Nebuchadnezzar was nothing if not thorough, and Herod, when laying the foundations of his own ambitious structure, would show but scanty courtesy to the work of his predecessors." The eastern wall of the city of David has been unearthed for nearly 400 feet, the original masonry going back to the time when the town had fallen into the hands of the Jebusites in the days of Joshua (Joshua xv, 63). But of the house which David built for himself with the help of Hiram, king of Tyre, nothing remains. Repairs in the breaches of the Jebusite wall believed to have been the work of Solomon have been detected, together with a fortress tower erected above the breach, which is thought to go back to the early days of the Hebrew monarchy in Palestine.

The Royal City of Zion

THE original city was on the hill of Ophel outside the modern city, where a settlement existed in Neolithic times which by 2000 B.C. had grown into a fortified town with walls revealing signs of Amorite and Hittite occupation. Before the Hebrew invasion of Palestine it had become a vassal of Egypt and then a Jebusite stronghold. A double wall was subsequently added to strengthen the fortifications. On the eastern hill David placed the royal city on the site of the Jebusite Zion, and on the mount north of Ophel, within the area of the Haram es-Sherif (the Mosque of Omar, as it is wrongly called), the Temple of Solomon was built. As this region falls within the modern city, it is not available for archaeological investigation, but it appears to have been holy ground before it became the site of the central sanctuary of Israel.

As every vestige of the building and all its contents, including the Ark of the Covenant, have been completely destroyed, it is impossible to know exactly how it was constructed and furnished and what rites were practised in it. It may be that originally it was dedicated to the Sun-god, and indeed it has been suggested recently that it had its origin in a solar eclipse, the site being selected because of the sacred significance of the ancient rock on the summit of Mount Zion in relation to the summit of the Mount of Olives where the rising Sun-god revealed himself. Be this as it may, if Solomon really did build the Temple on the site of an earlier shrine devoted to sun-worship, a reason is at hand for later references to the God of Israel in language which might be applied to an ancient solar deity. But in any case, when it was first erected the Temple at Jerusalem was fashioned after the pattern of the great Egyptian temples through the medium of Phoenician architects and craftsmen who made the temple of Melkart, the god of Tyre, its immediate prototype.

Religious Associations of the Temple Site

THE wealth lavished on its contents was intended to portray the greatness of the new Israelite state as well as to redound to the glory of the God in Whose honour it was built. Moreover, it was doubtless hoped in this way to enhance the prestige of the city in Palestine as well as in the surrounding district. To place it on a site already hallowed by sacred tradition would be a very valuable asset as it would thereby inherit the sanctity of its predecessor, very much as in later ages the Church frequently "adopted" pagan shrines and transformed them into centres of Christian worship. The danger of this procedure lies in the difficulty of dissociating a sanctuary from its ancient cultus, and there were misgivings, apparently, about the building of the Temple at Jerusalem.

In the first place the existence of other "high places" in Palestine—at Gibeon, Bethel, Gilgal, Hebron, Dan, and Beer-sheba—and the erection of a rival temple in the capital on such a lavish scale, would hardly be regarded with much favour among the devotees of the other shrines. Furthermore, the very idea of a "temple" was of

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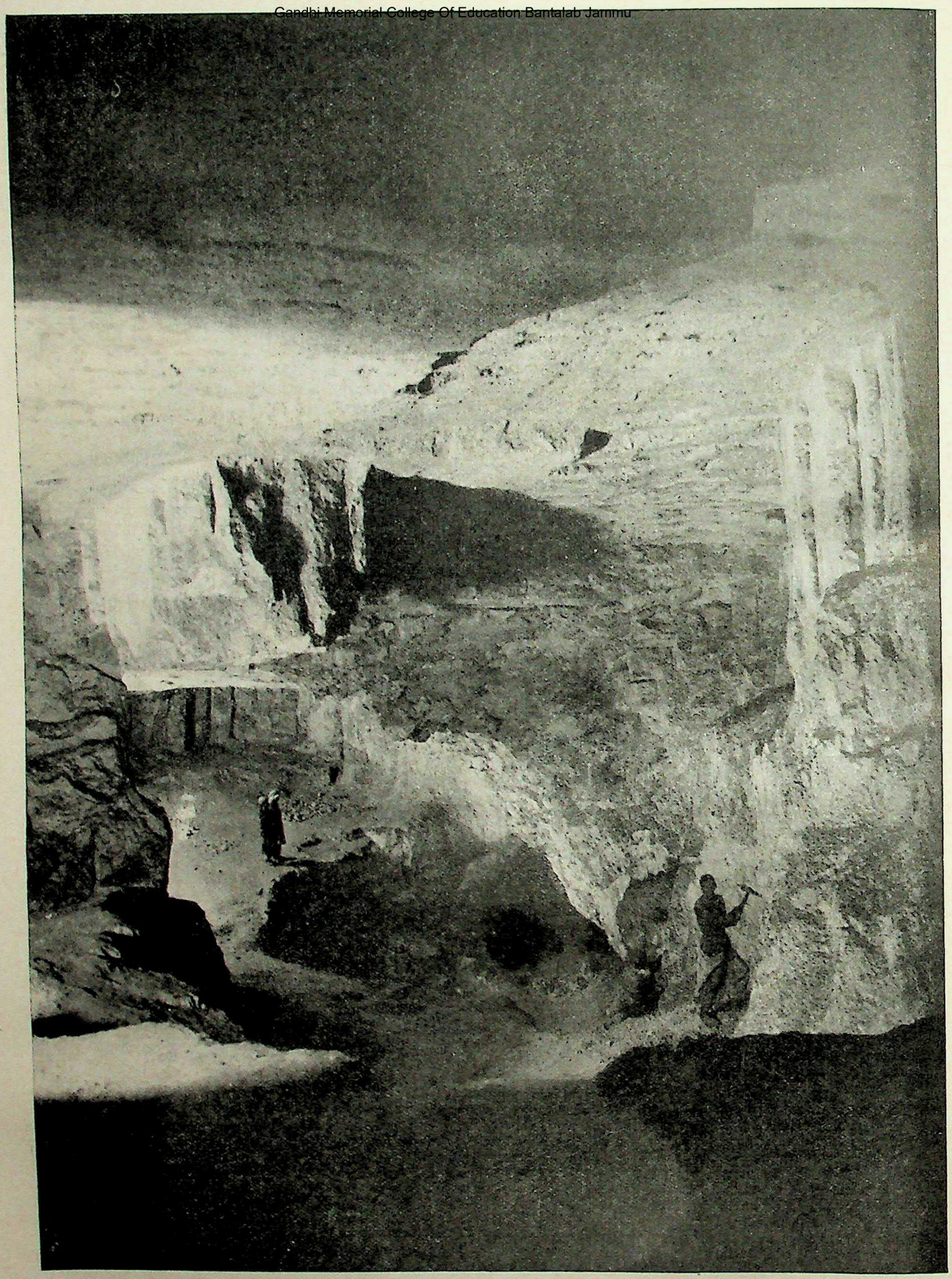

WHERE THE STONE WAS QUARRIED FOR THE TEMPLE. Just outside Jerusalem, between Herod's Gate and the Damascus Gate, is the entrance to Solomon's Quarries. This vast subterranean cavern is now beneath part of the city, but in the time of the king who "told out . . . fourscore thousand to hew in the mountain" (II. Chronicles ii, 2), the quarries were some distance beyond the then existent walls. Experts say that enough limestone has been excavated to build the ancient city and the Temple of Solomon several times. Marks of the tools show how the quarriers went to work.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

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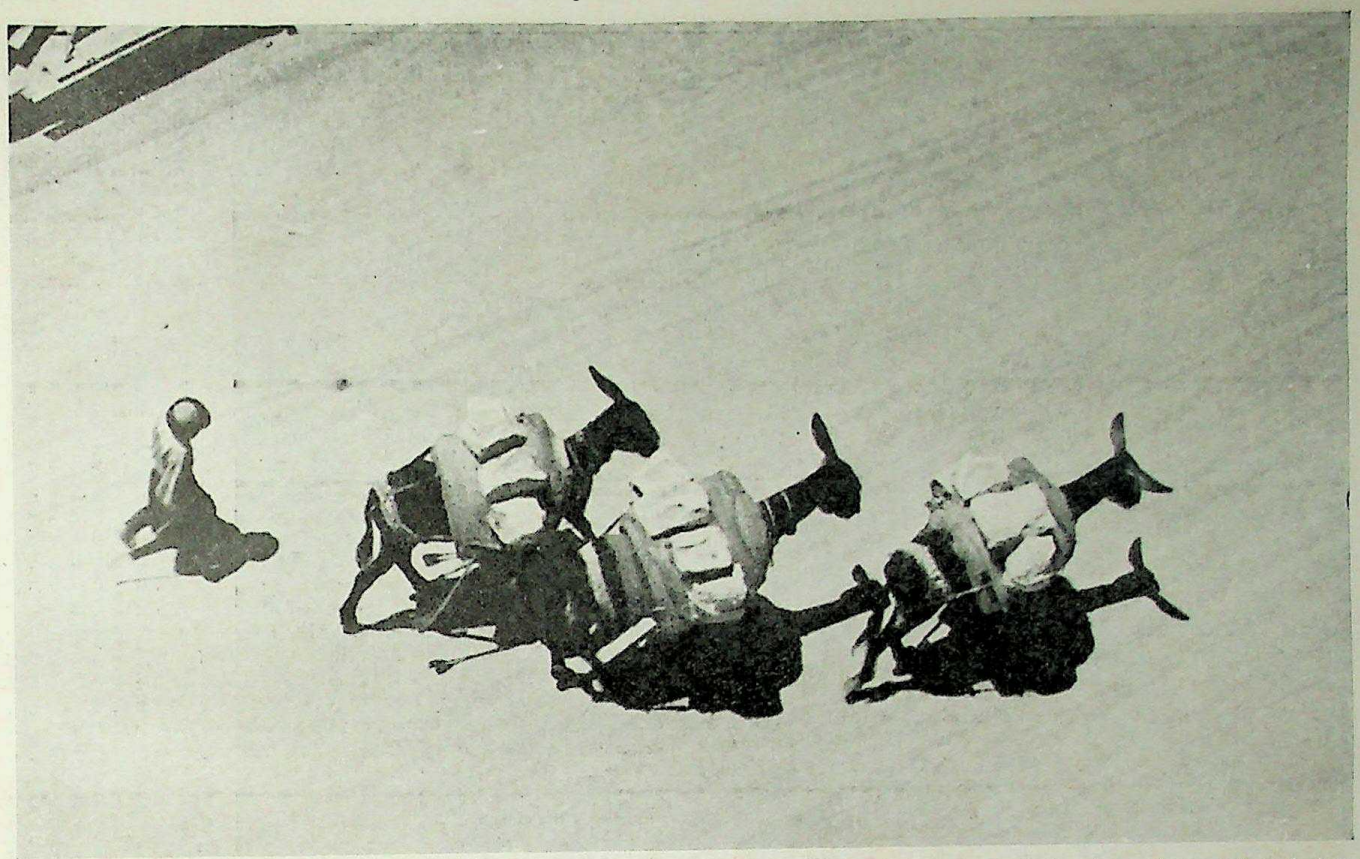

"THEY BROUGHT HEWED STONES." This primitive method of carrying stones from the quarries for the construction of houses in Palestine is still common. The donkey has been from early Biblical times the usual beast of burden for short distances. Doubtless there was a well-organized ass transport service, ruled over by some of the three thousand and three hundred overseers, in Solomon's day, for the conveyance of the "costly stones, and hewed stones, to lay the foundation of the house" of the Lord in Jerusalem (I. Kings v, 17). These limestone blocks are a creamy colour greyed by exposure.

Photo, Press Topics

foreign extraction inasmuch as the only buildings of this nature in Palestine (as distinct from the local sanctuaries) were those of the Philistine gods, the temple of Baal-berith, the guardian divinity of Shechem (Judges viii, 33; ix, 4), and that at Shiloh where the infant Samuel had his vision but where, notwithstanding its associations with the Ark, very corrupt practices appear to have occurred (I. Samuel ii, 12-17), which were scarcely calculated to commend temple-worship to later generations. Moreover, the decoration and furnishing of the new structure could hardly fail to give rise to the gravest suspicions in the minds of those who maintained the monotheistic traditions of Israel.

As at other Semitic and Egyptian temples (*e.g.*, Tyre, Byblos, Hierapolis, Paphos) before the entrance on the east side two sacred pillars 30 ft. in height were set, called Jachin and Boaz, which were probably connected with a solar cult. The seven-branched candlestick, like the lamp at Shiloh, had its counterpart in the lights before the images of the gods in Egypt. Within the court at the south-east corner stood the "brazen-sea," or huge circular basin 18 ft. in diameter, said to have been capable of holding "two thousand baths" (this was doubtless an exaggeration if a bath represented 65 pints; probably 10,000 baths would be nearer the actual capacity and supported by twelve bulls arranged in groups of three, each triad facing towards one of the four cardinal points of the compass. That this structure was used for priestly ablutions, as the Chronicler suggests, is not very likely in view of its size. As similar reservoirs occurred in Phoenician and Babylonian temples to symbolize the "world-ocean" or "abyss" (*Tehom*) out of which the god Marduk is said to have formed the earth after he had destroyed his enemy Tiamat, this was probably its original significance in the Temple of Solomon at Jerusalem, whatever other uses and interpretations may have been assigned to it in the worship of Jehovah.

Symbolic Meaning of the Lavers

THE ten lavers on wheeled carriages, standing five on the north and five on the south side of the building, had some symbolic meaning as they were too heavy for conveying water from the "sea" to the altar. It has been suggested that they represented clouds in the upper firmament (cf. Genesis i, 6, 7), but we have no means of determining their precise significance at present. Smaller examples of the same type of object have been found in tombs at Larnaka and Enkomi in Cyprus and it would seem, therefore, that they were connected with foreign cults.

Another feature of the interior of the Temple was the figures of cherubim on the inside walls, on the doors leading to the Holy of Holies (*Debir*), and supporting the Ark, reminiscent of the winged bull in the Babylonian temples. The derivation of the name is obscure, but they represented supernatural beings who were thought to guard the sacred abodes of the gods and their special preserves (cf. Genesis iii, 24; Ezekiel i, 5-28), like the winged genii which often occur beside the tree of life in Babylonian scenes, sometimes in the act of transferring pollen to fecundate the flower. This may throw some light on their being associated with palm trees and open flowers in the Temple of Solomon (I. Kings vi, 29ff.), while their position in relation to the Ark in the Holy of Holies is suggestive of their other function as the guardian of sacred places and divinities. Under the purifying influence of Hebrew religious thought and practice they lost many of their earlier Semitic associations, and having been brought into the Temple at Jerusalem they became the servants of God and attendants at and upholders of His throne. Hence their position in the Holy of Holies enclosing the Ark between their outstretched wings.

In the detailed description of the equipment of the Temple in the Book of Kings, the most striking omission is the absence of any mention of an altar, though sacrifices are said to have been offered on Mount Zion before the buildings were erected there by Solomon. It is true that the Table of Shewbread is called an altar in I. Kings vi, 20, 22, but clearly it was not used for sacrificial purposes (cf. vii, 48). The Chronicler makes good the omission (II. Chronicles iv, 1), but

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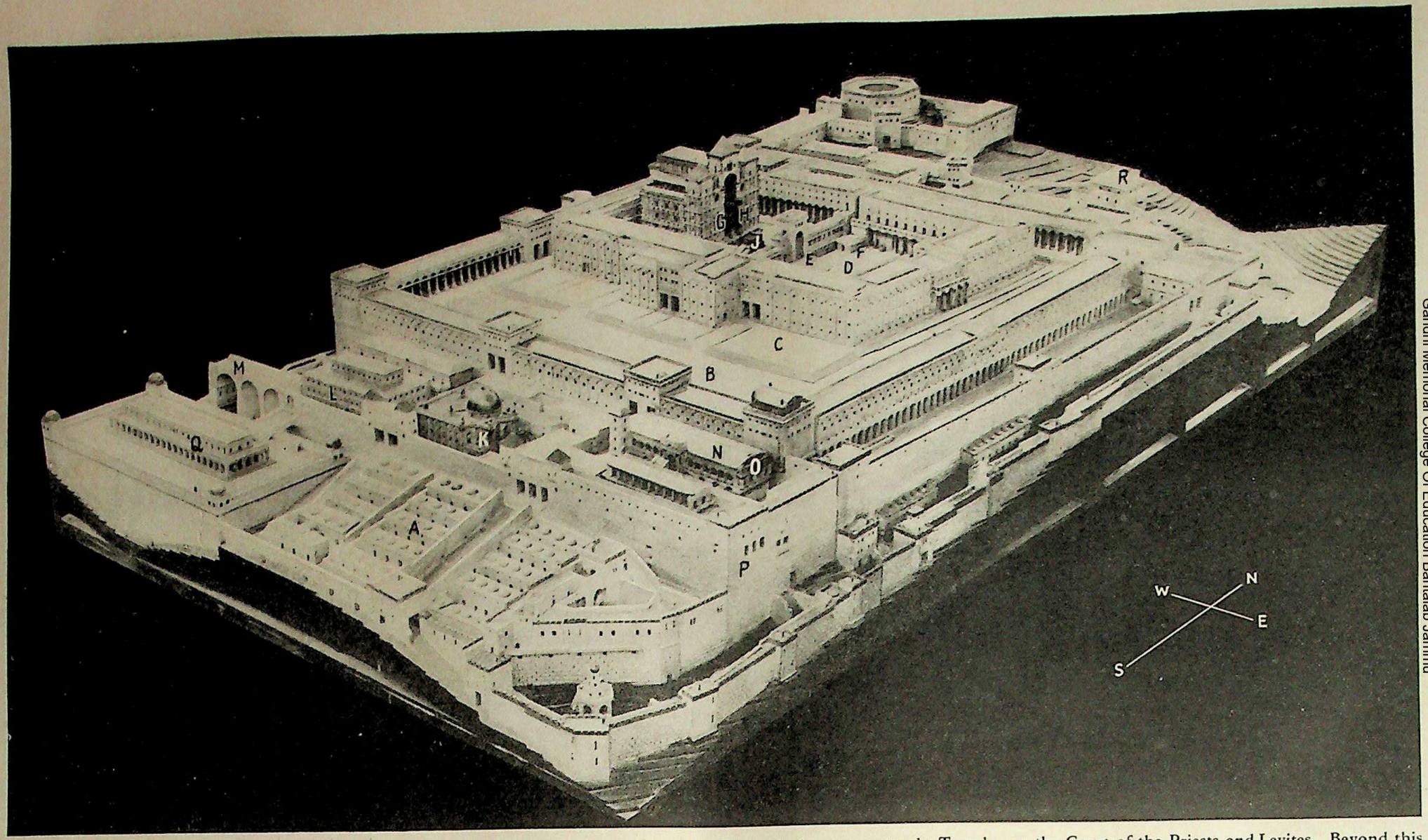

"THE TEMPLE THAT SOLOMON BUILT IN JERUSALEM." From the photograph of the model made by the late Sir Conrad Schick, a good idea can be gained of the Temple and its surroundings standing in the time of Solomon, until the fall of Jerusalem, 586 B.C. Approximately 36 acres of land is represented. South of the quadrangular Temple Area on Mount Moriah the group of buildings (A) was in "David's City" on the slope of Ophel. From this the inhabitants went up to worship in the Temple, entering at the Court of the Strangers (B). Above was the Court of the Israelites (C) which none other might enter on pain of death. The Court of the Women (D) was just inside the main enclosure of the Temple and next to this was the Court of the Men (E). In a corner of the enclosure the small square structure (F) was the Stall of the Lepers, where these unfortunates were segregated. Through the gateway to the Temple was the Court of the Priests and Levites. Beyond this gate only they might penetrate. Two large bronze pillars Jachin (G) and Boaz (H) stood one on either side of the Temple porch. The altar of sacrifice (J) was in front of this. South of the Area, the domed building (K) was the famed Judgement Hall of the Wise King; next to it (L) the armoury or Cedar House. East of the viaduct (M) which Solomon built over the Tyropean Valley, was the Palace and the Queen's House (N and O). The south-east corner of Solomon's wall (P) remains under the present city wall. At the south-west corner lies the Millo (Q), with recreation room built on a bastion over a hollow place. The Sheep Gate (R) was outside the northern enclosure. On the north-west corner the fortress was erected in the Maccabean period and does not belong to Solomon's time.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

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this is a later accretion. Yet in I. Kings ix, 25 Solomon is said to have offered burnt offerings and peace offerings three times a year on the altar he had built. Moreover, it is recorded that in later years (c. 735 B.C.) Ahaz removed a bronze altar in order to introduce one of foreign type (II. Kings xvi, 14).

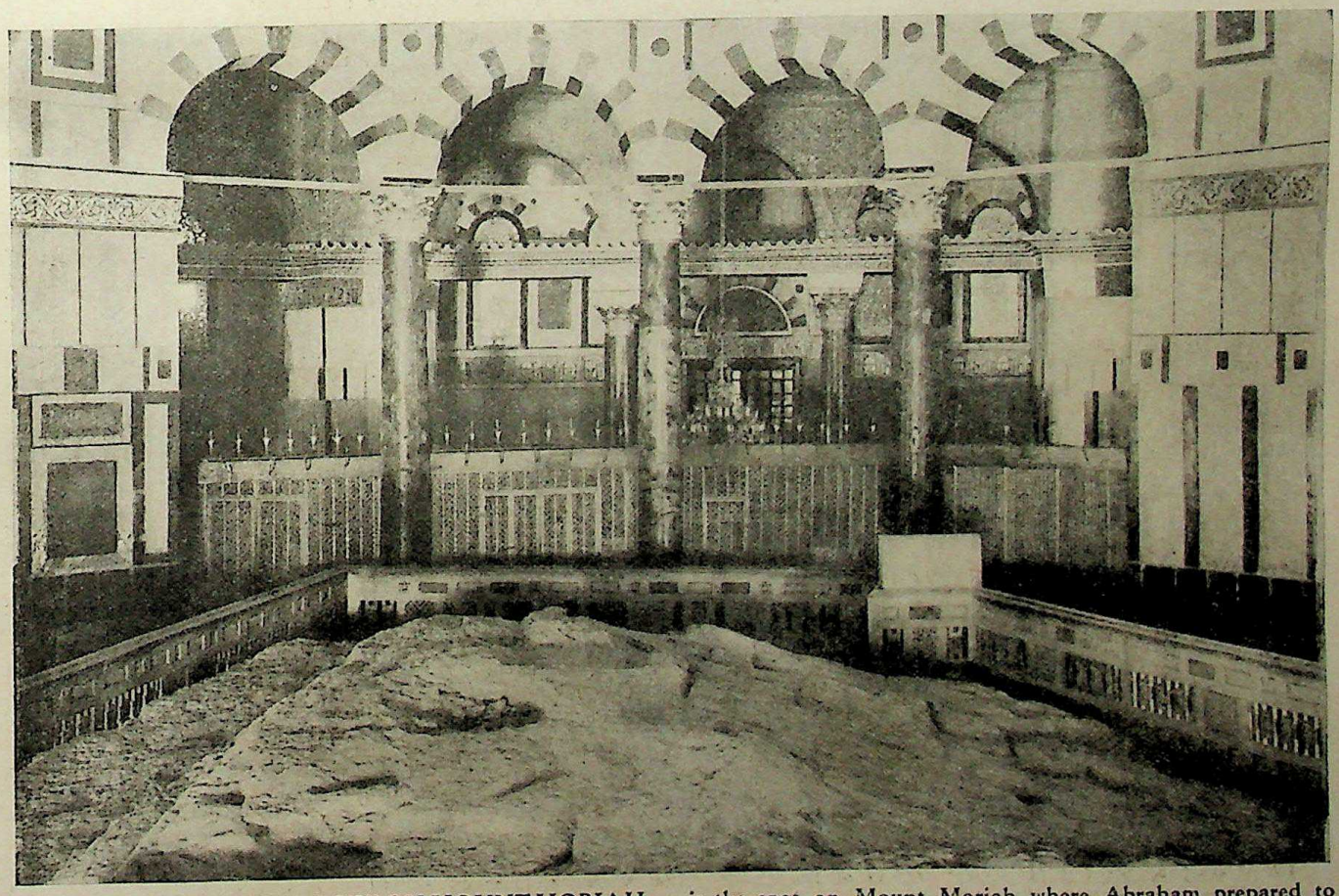
Since it is scarcely likely that such an important event as the erection of an altar in the Temple subsequent to the reign of Solomon would be passed over in silence, it would seem that in some form it was part of the original equipment of the building, though there is no account of its construction in the Old Testament. Some scholars think that the king utilized the ancient rock over which the Temple was erected instead of making an altar of stone or bronze, or that he employed and enlarged the altar of stones set up by David on the threshing-floor of Araunah. Yet a third but less probable explanation is that it consisted of the two bronze pillars, Jachin and Boaz, the fat of the peace-offering being burnt in a bowl-shaped cup at the top of one of them. This was the brazen altar, whereas the whole burnt-offerings were consumed on pyres of wood in the middle of the court (cf. I. Kings viii, 64). The question is much too complicated to be discussed here, but the most likely solution of the problem seems to be that the structure was the natural outcrop of the rock, which from time immemorial has been hallowed as a sacred place and the scene of sacrificial rites, connected possibly with a solar cult.

Alien Innovations in Hebrew Religion

TAKING all the available information together, there can be little doubt that the building of the Temple and the organization of the ceremonial introduced a new conception of worship in Israel which was very much suspect in the eyes of those who upheld the simplicity of the ancient traditions handed down from the time of Moses in the wilderness, as well as by the northern Israelites who saw in the venture a move to enhance the prestige of the capital. The marriage of the king to a daughter of Pharaoh and his commercial enterprises with Egypt and elsewhere inevitably fostered culture contact and the diffusion of religious practices alien to the monotheistic ideals of a section of the nation. Moreover, not content with these innovations, sanctuaries dedicated to such divinities as the Phoenician-Canaanite Astarte, the Moabite Chemosh and the Ammonite Milcom were provided for the foreign wives whom Solomon introduced. That these shrines became a menace till they were suppressed in the reign of Josiah the Biblical writers leave us in no doubt. But despite this retrograde policy, and taking into account the glamour cast over his reign by the later writers, Solomon unquestionably introduced a new era in Palestine characterized by a remarkable development of the arts and crafts which hitherto had made little progress in the country.

In addition to the activities in Jerusalem, cities of importance on the trade-routes between Syria and Egypt —Hazor, Gezer, and Megiddo—were fortified during this reign, and masonry of Phoenician type has been found in these centres which is thought to have been executed by Hiram on his way home from Jerusalem.

At Megiddo the remains of extensive stables for hundreds of horses and a garage for chariots have come to light, "carefully planned," as the excavator, Mr. P. L. O. Guy, tells us, "to meet the requirements of each chariot unit. Double doors, hung on small stone sockets, gave access from the street to a passage with fine lime-plaster pavement, and from this to a row of stalls paved with rough stone to keep the hoofs from slipping. The roofs were upheld by pillars set on large stones to equalize the downward thrust and with holes in the corner to halter the horses, while between each pair of hitching



SANCTUARY OF "THE ROCK" ON MOUNT MORIAH. Part of the magnificent interior of the Dome of the Rock, on the Temple Area at Jerusalem, and of the Sakrah or sacred Rock, over which the mosque is built, are seen in this photograph. According to both Moslem and Jewish tradition this is the spot on Mount Moriah where Abraham prepared to sacrifice Isaac to Jehovah (Genesis xxii, 2), and therefore one of extremely ancient sanctity before David selected the summit for the Temple building. The Dome of the Rock was completed in A.D. 691. It is popularly mis-called Mosque of Omar.

Photo. H. J. Shepstone

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pillars was a stone manger. The largest stable consisted of five units with space for twenty-four horses each, while smaller stables brought the number of horses which could be accommodated at Megiddo up to three hundred." A similar depot apparently was established at Hazor (I. Kings ix, 15, 19).

Notwithstanding the impetus Solomon gave to trade and commercial enterprise, to civil and military architecture, to the centralization and development of religious and social life at the capital, before his death the kingdom was beginning to show signs of disruption, and it only required the removal of his iron hand for the whole structure to crash to the ground.

The building of the Temple, the palace and its adjuncts, the fortification of Jerusalem and other cities, the erection of shrines for the worship of foreign deities, and the maintenance of the royal establishment of horses and chariots, with countless officials and workmen, necessitated heavy taxation, which, coupled with forced labour, reduced the people almost to conditions of slavery (cf. I. Kings v, 13; ix, 20-22; xi, 28). Out of a total population of about 750,000 men, women, and children, from 150,000 to 200,000 men in all probability were engaged for twenty years in the building of the Temple, to say nothing of the innumerable overseers (I. Kings iv, 7-20), so that practically the entire man-power of the nation was occupied in non-economic labour for a considerable part of the year. Granting that a levy was raised out of the Canaanite aboriginal inhabitants (I. Kings ix, 20 ff.), from "all Israel," labour gangs are said to have been dispatched to the Lebanon at the rate of "ten thousand a month by courses" (I. Kings v, 14), which could but have a serious effect on the social and economic life of the country, especially as the accumulated wealth and the ever-increasing taxes and tolls were absorbed by the royal household, and in furthering the king's ambitions.

Financial Strain of Temple Building

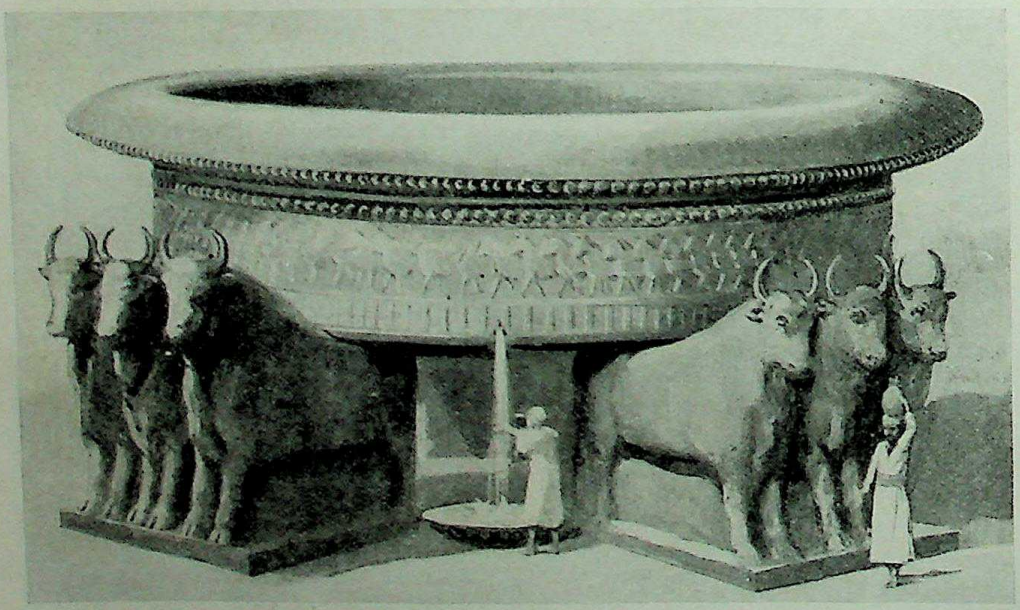
INDEED the national exchequer proved unequal to the strain put upon it by Solomon in all his glory. To maintain his magnificent splendour he was compelled to cede to Hiram, king of Tyre, territory north of the plain of Esdraelon comprising twenty villages in the neighbourhood of Asher (I. Kings ix, 10-14) which were regarded as poor recompense for the cedars and gold supplied. Thus, the process of disintegration began. Either earlier in his reign, or at some subsequent time, Damascus in the north and Edom in the south defected, and with the death of Solomon the northern tribes of Israel broke out into open revolt.

The discontent occasioned by the resplendent but repressive rule of the despotic monarch found immediate expression in the demand of Solomon's superintendent of labour, Jeroboam the son of Nebat, for a redress of the grievances when the new king, Rehoboam, came to Shechem, the capital of Ephraim, to be proclaimed.

An extremely deep-seated antagonism already existed between the house of David and the tribe of Judah and the remaining tribes, which had been accentuated by the policy of centralization at Jerusalem. Therefore, in the circumstances, it only required an occasion such as the assembly at Shechem provided, for the nation to divide itself into two hostile camps, regardless of the inevitable consequences of the disruption of the kingdom. For once the Hebrew state split up into two rival groups, each became a ready prey for the powerful nations on all sides, especially as fratricidal war ensued without any decisive success being obtained on either side.

Corruption and ultimately disintegration became more pronounced in the tribes of

A TWIN PILLAR OF THE TEMPLE. Hiram also fashioned the two great pillars in brass (bronze) which he set up before the Temple "and called the name of that on the right hand Jachin, and the name of that on the left Boaz" (II. Chronicles, iii, 15-17). The description of the chapiters with "nets of checker work" and ornament of pomegranates, given in I. Kings vii, 16-20, enables this reconstruction to be made.



"HE MADE A MOLTEN SEA." One of the finest achievements of Hiram, skilled artificer in metals, was the making of a great brazen laver for the Temple. Used for ceremonial purification, "it stood upon twelve oxen," grouped in threes, looking respectively toward the north, west, south and east: "and the sea was set above upon them" (I. Kings vii, 25). This half-Tyrian Hiram is not to be confused with Hiram, king of Tyre. The latter introduced his most expert craftsman to King Solomon. The reconstruction follows the Bible text.

Lower reconstruction by Mangeant; upper, by Ch. Chipiez

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SAMARIA SET ON A HILL, CROWN OF THE PRIDE OF EPHRAIM

Through this archway belonging to a Roman aqueduct which crossed the valley, is seen the edge of the modern village built on part of the site of Samaria, capital of the kingdom of Israel. About 880 B.C. Omri "bought the hill Samaria of Shemer for two talents of silver," and erected his city on it (I. Kings xvi, 24). Though the position, dominating the highway between Damascus and Jerusalem, seemed ideal for the capital of this great but idolatrous ruler, it possessed the drawbacks of being easily isolated and having no springs of water. The inhabitants depended on cisterns, and famine within the walls was a more terrible enemy than the various armies which besieged the city. Excavations have shown that the palace of Omri and Ahab's "ivory house" stood on the summit of the hill.

Photo: American Colony in Jerusalem

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Domenico Feti, 1589-1624

"BEHOLD, THEN AN ANGEL TOUCHED HIM"

When Elijah reached the wilderness on his way to Horeb, after his defeat of the prophets of Baal on Mount Carmel had placed his life in jeopardy, " he lay and slept under a juniper tree," until, awakened by the angelic touch, he was told to "Arise and eat" of the bread and water by his side (I. Kings xix, 5, 6). It is interesting to compare the picture of the early 17th century Italian painter, Domenico Feti (Berlin Art Gallery), with that of Lord Leighton, reproduced in page 381. It will be seen that though both works are dignified in design the former is the more naturalistic and humanly appealing, while the style of the latter is monumentally correct.

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TO the house of Naaman, mighty captain of the hosts of Syria, but a leper, was "brought away captive out of the land of Israel a little maid" (II. Kings, v, 2, 3). When short-lived peace followed the war, she "said unto her mistress, Would God my lord were with the prophet that is in Samaria, for he would recover him of his leprosy."

Apparently she was happy in her new home, for she did not ask to return to her own land. Any kindness that she received from Naaman's wife —shown in a mood of despair in this painting by F. W. W. Topham — was amply repaid by the suggestion which resulted in the leper's healing by Elisha.

F. W. W. Topham, 1838-1924

"SHE WAITED ON NAAMAN'S WIFE"

José Villegas, 1848-1921

"HEAR THE WORD OF THE GREAT KING, THE KING OF ASSYRIA"

The Spanish painter, José Villegas, well-known in the 19th century for his pictures of Oriental life, ancient and modern, has here dexterously illustrated the scene of Rab-shakeh's blasphemous utterances to three of Hezekiah's men before the walls of Jerusalem (II. Kings xviii, 28-37), when he came with a great Assyrian army to demand capitulation of the city.

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SUMMIT OF MOUNT MORIAH, SACRED AREA CHOSEN BY DAVID FOR THE TEMPLE

This view of Jerusalem from the air, looking almost due south, shows the platform of the Temple Area on Mount Moriah, with part of the "city that is compact together," seen on the right; while in the background to the left, the village of Siloam rises on the Mount of Offence, southern spur of Olivet. The two mosques which now occupy the site of the Temple are the Dome of the Rock—in the foreground of the photograph—and El Aksa, most sacred place of worship to Moslems after the Mosque of the Kaaba in Mecca. The summit of Moriah was the spot prepared by David for the Temple (II. Chronicles iii, 1). There was situated the threshing-floor of the Jebusite which the king bought and on which he sacrificed after the plague had been stayed.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

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"CARRIED AWAY TO BABYLON"

After the sack and destruction of Jerusalem by the overwhelming expeditionary force of Nebuchadrezzar, with whom Zedekiah, vassal king of Judah, had broken faith, the remnant of the people were taken into captivity in 586 B.C. (II. Chronicles xxxvi, 17-20) — "And them that had escaped from the sword carried he away to Babylon."

Edward Bendemann, a German painter of Jewish descent, illustrated the tragic scene of enforced exile with feeling if not with great pictorial art. His picture here reproduced is one of several dealing with the same subject — and having the prophet Jeremiah as central figure—all internationally exhibited with success during his lifetime.

Edward Bendemann, 1811-1889

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Sir Frank Dicksee, 1853-1928

"SHOOT . . . THE ARROW OF THE LORD'S DELIVERANCE"

During the reign of Joash, when the long war with Syria was violently renewed, Elisha, great patriotic statesman as well as prophet of Israel, died. The last recorded act of his life (II. Kings xiii, 14-19) was to test the King—a test by which he divined the future. Joash showed lack of vigour by figuratively smiting the Syrians only three times instead of five or six times: "then hadst thou smitten Syria till thou hadst consumed it: whereas now thou shalt smite Syria but thrice." The picture by Sir Frank Dicksee, a leading exponent in the 19th century of the romantic realistic English school of painting, presents the incident dramatically.

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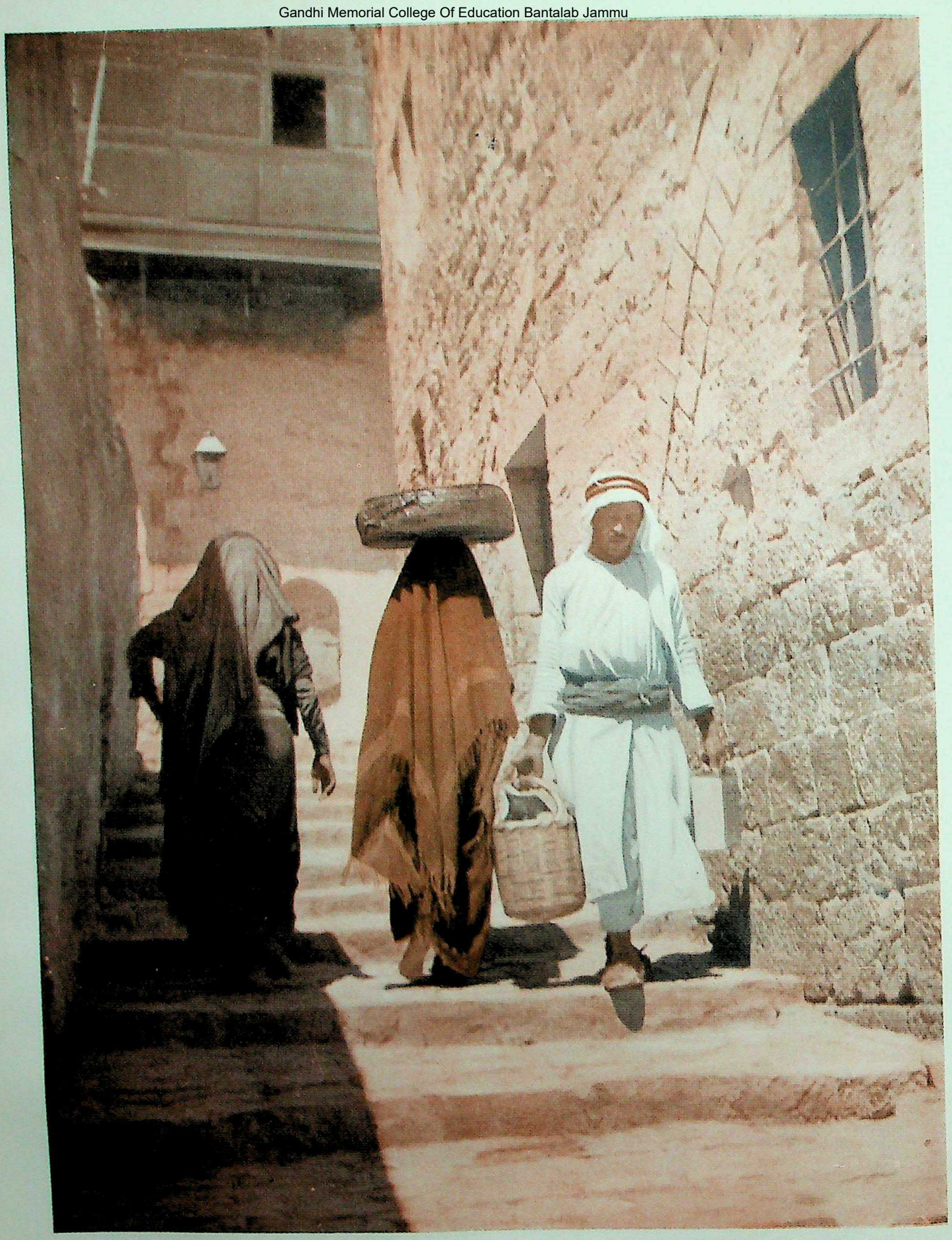

"WALK ABOUT ZION, AND GO ROUND ABOUT HER"

Scenes such as this in the byways of Jerusalem preserve the spirit of its antiquity, but hint at a certain squalor round the corner. Though the city is being rapidly modernized, much of the old part is ill-kept and noisome. The Arabs pictured have been marketing. Different traders still tend to occupy special shopping quarters—the vegetable and other food sellers being apart from the clothiers and shoemakers. Stepped streets are common. This is owing not only to the city being built on hills, but also to the different levels caused by the heaping of debris during the various destructions which the city has undergone, beginning with its fall, 586 B.C., in the time of Zedekiah, last of the monarchs of the Kingdom of Judah.

Photo, Darich Leigh

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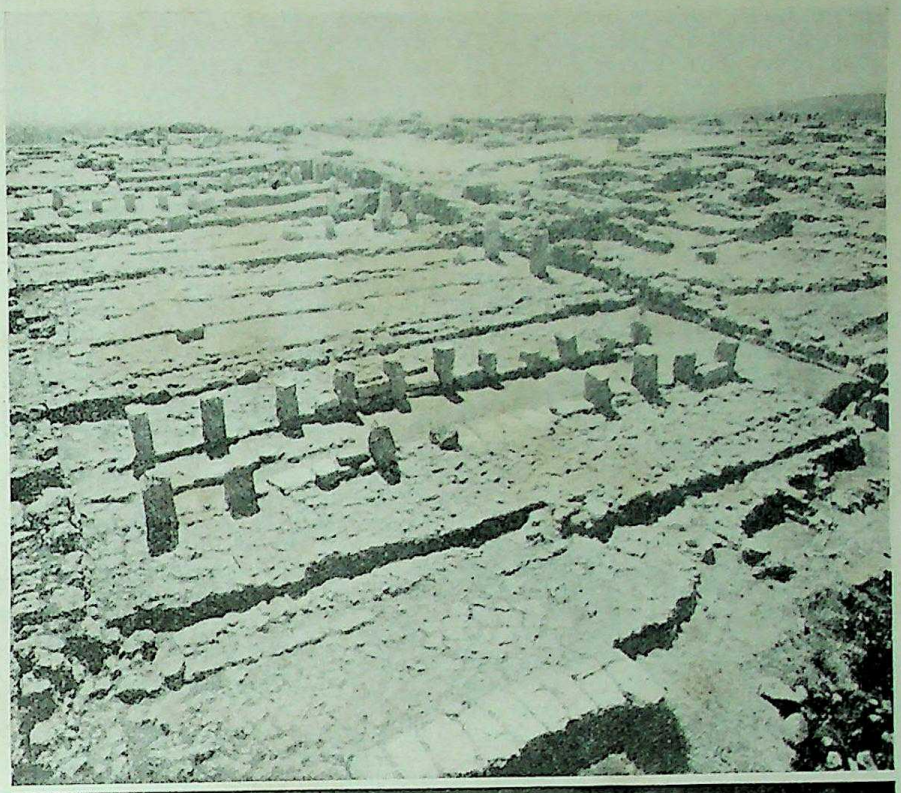
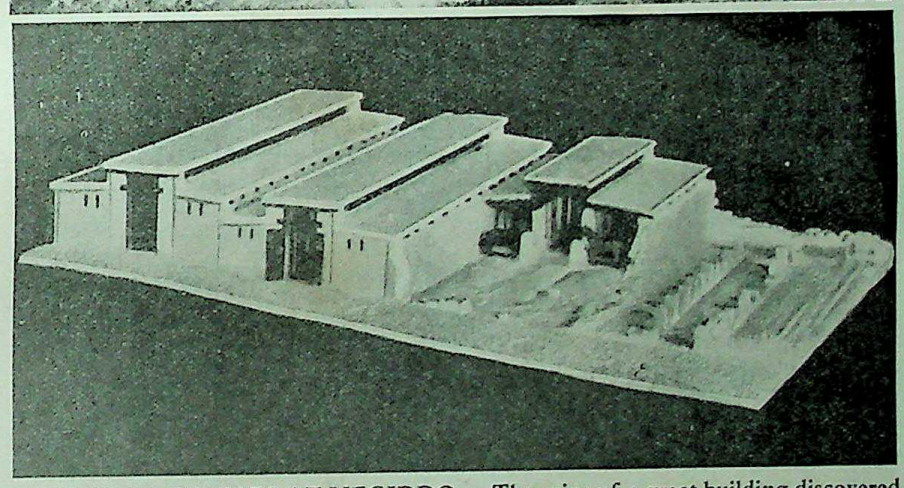
the northern realm than in the more secluded Southern Kingdom because at the start it was in a condition of complete disorganization and more influenced by the aboriginal Canaanite culture which in the long run proved to have a weakening effect. It has to be remembered, however, that the Old Testament writers were in opposition to localized worship because they were thinking in terms of the Josiah reformation of later times. This at least in some measure accounts for their repeated references to Jeroboam as he who made Israel to sin. But, as we have seen, the Temple of Jerusalem at the time of the revolt was quite as much the home of foreign cults as the sanctuaries at Dan and Bethel, where Jeroboam centralized the worship of the Northern Kingdom.

If the pastoral southerners were less influenced by the vegetation cults of Palestine than the northern tribes, the most important religious movements originated in the north during the centuries immediately following the schism. Moreover, the chief centres of worship were traditionally associated with Hebrew ancestors represented as upholders of the simple monotheism of earlier days. Thus, Bethel was connected with Abraham and Jacob (Genesis xiii, 3; xxviii, 19), and Dan with the family of Moses (Judges xviii, 30). Therefore, notwithstanding their pagan associations, where the Canaanite baals had once reigned, Jehovah was now established as the new "tenant" of the sacred place as readily accessible to those who approached Him with the proper dispositions as at Jerusalem. As bulls figured in the Temple of Solomon, so in the northern shrines the same Canaanite-Phoenician emblem recurred. But if the symbol was legitimate in one place, why not in another?





SOLOMON'S STABLES AT MEGIDDO. The ruins of a great building discovered at Megiddo during excavations of the Hebrew city there have been generally accepted as the remains of stables connected with the palace of Solomon, later improved by Ahab when Megiddo became part of the Northern Kingdom of Israel. A reconstruction, shown below this photograph of the site, gives an idea of the arrangement of the units—the stables contained five—each built to hold twenty-four horses in two rows of facing stalls with central passage for chariots.

Retreat from the 'Golden Age'

IT was not until the 7th century B.C. and onwards that the Canaanizing tendency of Jeroboam was made the test of orthodoxy by which succeeding kings in Israel and Judah were judged. Prior to this the centralization of all true religion at Jerusalem did not exist either in theory or fact. It can never have occurred to Solomon that Mount Zion was to be the one and only lawful sanctuary in Palestine. If he had expected the whole congregation of Israel to assemble there, he would hardly have made the brazen altar "too little to receive the burnt offerings and meat offerings, and the fat of the peace offerings" (I. Kings viii, 64). But while there may not have been any valid theological reasons against Jeroboam's action in separating from Judah and the house of David, the schism nevertheless was a tragedy and materially altered the character and destiny of the nation which had established itself as a monarchy in Palestine when there were no serious rivals to hamper its development.

To the great days of the united kingdom under David and Solomon later generations looked back as to a Golden Age. Of the events subsequent to the disruption, as they are recorded in the Old Testament (*i.e.*, the Books of the Kings and Chronicles and the contemporary prophets) and deduced from extra-Biblical sources, intrigue and conflict culminating in destruction and exile characterize the story of Israel and Judah as isolated units.

In the fifth year of the reign of Rehoboam (c. 931 B.C.) Shishak, or Sheshonk, the founder of the 22nd Dynasty in Egypt, invaded Palestine (cf. I. Kings xiv, 25), and in a bas-relief on the walls of the temple of Amūn at Karnak, the god and goddess of Thebes are shown leading a hundred and fifty Jews to Pharaoh who is beating them with his club. The conquered cities mentioned in the inscription are chiefly in the Northern Kingdom and include Tanaach, Megiddo, Beth-shean, Shunem, Adullam, Gibeon, Ajalon, and Aroer, together with Socoh and Arad in Judah.

This suggests a campaign mainly in the north, whereas the Book of Kings makes Shishak an ally of Jeroboam and describes his attacking Jerusalem. This discrepancy has been explained by supposing that Pharaoh wrested from Rehoboam cities he had secured in the territory of Jeroboam, though actually there is no reference in the Biblical narratives to the king of Judah having had a foothold in the northern realm. An alternative suggestion is that Shishak first plundered Jerusalem and the cities of Judah, and then seized the opportunity to

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restore some measure of suzerainty over Palestine as a whole, which his predecessors had formerly enjoyed, and their successors never ceased to claim in theory. In any case, the triumph was short-lived, and except for scarabs, statuettes and pottery showing Palestinian influences, this inscription is the last Egyptian record of any importance so far as the Hebrew monarchy is concerned. But the invasion shows the weakness of Palestine as a result of the schism.

As the war between north and south dragged on through the reigns of the successors of Jeroboam and Rehoboam, Abijam the son of Rehoboam appealed to Damascus for help, which doubtless explains his success against Jeroboam in the Ephraimite hill country, related by the Chronicler in terms of divine intervention (II. Chronicles xiii, 3-20). Shortly after this Jeroboam died and was succeeded by Nadab his son who was assassinated by Baasha while laying siege to Gibbethon in the fertile plain of Sharon, west of Jerusalem, in the territory of Dan; a city captured by the Philistines as one of the fruits of the internal strife in Palestine (I. Kings xv, 27; xvi, 15). The new king set to work to break the Aramaean alliance with Judah and began to fortify Ramah, the modern er-Ram, only ten miles north of Jerusalem. Asa, who had now ascended the throne in Judah took alarm, and sent all his treasures to Ben-hadad I, king of Damascus, to secure once more his help on behalf of the southern province. The Aramaeans thereupon invaded the extreme north of Palestine, and ravaged the country surrounding the sea of Galilee. This put an end to the fortification of Ramah. But the venture gave the Aramaeans important centres in Palestine—Ijon, Dan, Abel-Beth-Maachah and the district around the Lake of Chinnereth—which facilitated their communications with the coast.

Meanwhile the Philistines still retained Gibbethon and while the army under the command of the general-in-chief, Omri, had gone to besiege the city, a petty officer named Zimri conspired to slay Elah, the son of Baasha, and proclaimed himself king in his stead. However, the *coup d'état* failed and Omri marched on the capital, which Zimri fired and perished in the flames when he saw that his cause lacked support. So began the important dynasty of Omri, destined to have far-reaching consequences in the history of northern Israel.

Omri's Samaria Revealed by Digging

IT is curious that in the Old Testament this reign, which according to Assyrian documents gave its name to Palestine as "the land of Omri" for several generations, is passed over with only a casual mention (I. Kings xvi, 23-28), notwithstanding the fact that it witnessed the restoration of much of the former glory of the nation as it had prospered in the days of David and Solomon. But the Biblical writers were mainly concerned with the development of a religious theme and it was only those reigns and events which had a theological significance that really interested them. Therefore, the building of Samaria and the removal thence of the capital from Tirzah about 880 B.C., the outstanding features of this period in Israel, were not the kind of happenings which were calculated to make much appeal to them. Therefore, only a passing reference is made to them in the Book of Kings (xvi, 24), and Omri is dismissed as having wrought worse evil than all who were before him. Archaeological excavation, however, has brought to light the massive walls of Samaria as they were laid in this reign, and has furnished us with a good deal of information concerning the city in subsequent generations.

When the work was begun the surface of the hill which the king purchased for two shekels of silver in all probability was bare rock, since no traces of dwellings or of pottery before the time of Omri have been found at the site, and the only vestiges of human occupation before the Iron Age belong to the Neolithic period. The stone for the palace was quarried from the yellow limestone rock, and the floors of the rooms and the courts were of beaten earth, though some were paved with slabs. Channels were cut under the rooms and drained into a larger canal to provide sanitation. The general plan of the building was that of Phoenician palaces with open courts surrounded by smaller rooms, as in a Spanish *patio*. The wall of the city was built along the south cliff and its massive construction is seen at the two points where it has been unearthed—at the western gate, and on the south side where it is 10 feet thick.

As the town stood on a hill forming a promontory some 300 feet above the surrounding plateau protected on three sides by mountains, it was accessible only from the west. The position of the gate therefore was well chosen to enable it to withstand attack. Thus, Omri was a master builder wise in his day and generation in the selection and construction of his new capital. Moreover, he or his son and successor Ahab, divided the country into administrative districts in order to centralize the organization, as Solomon had done in an earlier period in Jerusalem.

Ahab, whose reign in the Biblical narratives is largely occupied with epics concerning Elijah and Elisha, is represented unfavourably because of his alliance with Phoenicia, but so far as the history of Palestine is concerned he was not an insignificant or unwise ruler. Aware that the Aramaeans constituted the most

CAPTIVES OF SHISHAK FROM JUDAH'S PILLAGED CITADELS. In the fifth year of Rehoboam's reign, that is, about 930 B.C., when "the kingdom divided against itself" presented weak frontiers to invading forces, Shashank—called in I. Kings xiv, 25 and in II. Chronicles xii, 2-9, Shishak, king of Egypt—"took the fenced cities of Judah and came to Jerusalem." Though he spoiled the capital, taking away the treasure of Solomon's Temple and palace, he did not destroy it. An inscription at Karnak confirms the Palestinian invasion and these captives of Shishak, represented on an Egyptian relief, are clearly Hebrews.

Berlin Museum; photo, W. F. Mansell

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formidable enemy, he concentrated his forces against Damascus. To this end he allied himself with the priest-king of Tyre by marrying his daughter, Jezebel, for whom he erected a temple in Samaria for the worship of the Tyrian god Melkart (I. Kings xvi, 32). The queen, however, does not appear to have been content to practise her own religion, but endeavoured to propagate her faith in Israel both by the example of her court and the persecution of the prophets of the God of Sinai. This aroused the indignation of Elijah and those who were struggling to maintain the spiritual traditions of Israel uncontaminated by foreign cults and the unedifying practices connected with them. But regarded from the political standpoint, and viewed in the light of the procedure of those days, the marriage was an astute move on the part of the king, however unfortunate the consequences may have been for the religious life of the nation. Furthermore, Ahab might have argued that Solomon had acted in a similar manner in the heyday of the prosperity of the united kingdom.

The temple to Baal was not the only addition made to Samaria in this reign (c. 875-852). The area of the palace was also greatly increased and the wings carried out towards the west. On this western slope the famous Ivory House (I. Kings xxii, 39) was erected, possibly under the influence of Jezebel, by Phoenician workmen, more extensive in plan and of finer construction than the other buildings. The smooth surface of the stones may have suggested the name given to it, but in the light of recent discoveries it would seem more probable that it was actually furnished with ivory. A platform was formed by a stout double retaining wall 315 ft. from north to south, the outer wall being 2 yards thick, and the inner 1 yard. On this platform the new wing of the palace was built, the inner and transverse walls acting as the foundations of a colonnade of rooms.

Like other Tyrian structures of the kind, the palace was composed of three parts: first, the palace proper; then a great outer court surrounded by a wall lined with small rooms used probably as offices, chariot-houses and stables. Finally, a massive square tower stood at the south-west corner outside the court, guarding one of the entrances. Near the southern extremity the foundations of a complete group of rooms have been found containing a quantity of *ostraka*, or potsherds written on in ink with a reed pen in old Hebrew characters; apparently receipts and other documents relating to business transactions on which are the names of places in western Manasseh whence oil and wine had been purchased and stored in these apartments. Most of the names inscribed on them occur in the Old Testament, *e.g.*, El-Elisha, Abiyau, Baalzamar. At the north end of the courtyard is a large cemented pool or reservoir with two layers of grey cement at the bottom, harder than the underlying rock. It served doubtless for watering horses and washing chariots, and it would be tempting to connect it with the incident at " the pool of Samaria " at which it is said Ahab's chariot was washed after his tragic death, if it were not that the verse (I. Kings xxii, 38) appears to have been added by a later hand to complete the story of Elijah's pronouncement after the murder of Naboth (xxi, 19). More significant, perhaps, is a square rock-cut chamber under the court reached by a trench cut in the rock and roofed with stone slabs to form a tunnel leading from a room in the inner part of the palace. Was this the prison in which Micaiah was confined when Ahab ordered him to be taken back to Amon the governor of the city, and fed with the bread of affliction and the water of affliction till the king returned in peace after the battle against Ramoth-Gilead (I. Kings xxii, 26f.)?

In the reign of Jeroboam II (c. 788-747) a circular defensive tower was added at the south-west corner, together with other additions to the western and northern wings, and minor alterations in the interior plan of the building. The walls of the city in all probability were also strengthened, but these were so completely destroyed by the Assyrians when they sacked the place in 722 that it is difficult to form a correct estimate of the development of the defences in the Israelite period. The streets were narrow, and as most of the business would be carried on in them rather than in shops, they must have been very congested. The houses were mostly of stone and brick, reaching to elaborate proportions in the case of the homes of the wealthier farmers and rulers, with winter and summer quarters (cf. Jeremiah xxxvi, 22; Amos iii, 15). In striking contrast to the single-storey, windowless huts of the peasants, these large dwellings were equipped with two storeys comprizing a lower set of sheltered rooms containing a stove or brazier (Jeremiah xxxvi, 22) for the winter, and more airy upper ones for use in summer (cf. Judges iii, 20).

Furniture was simple in houses in Palestine. Thus, a wealthy woman in Shunem, the modern village of Solam about five miles north of Jezreel, is said to have prepared a little chamber for the use of Elisha when he travelled between Gilgal and Carmel, and to have placed in it a bed, a table, a stool and a candlestick (II. Kings iv, 10). The bed was often merely a rug or cloak, or even a carpet or straw mat, but in richer houses a portable divan raised at one end for the head and sometimes elaborately decorated with inlaid ivory, might be employed. Such refinements were common in Samaria (Amos vi, 4). The table, again, was a raised structure at which the well-to-do sat on stools and chairs, but a mat or skin spread on the ground sufficed in less refined circles (Isaiah xxi, 5). Royal drinking vessels were frequently of precious metals (I. Kings x, 21) but in the dwellings of the people the crockery was very limited, and such as existed had to serve many purposes (II. Sam. xii, 3). Kitchen utensils included hand-mills, baskets, jars, water-skins, baking-troughs, pots, dishes, bowls and forks.

THE WORD OF GOD IN SOME FAMOUS HYMNS

Isaac Watts (1674-1748).
Lord, I have made Thy word my choice,
My lasting heritage;
There shall my noblest powers rejoice,
My warmest thoughts engage.

Charles Wesley (1707-1788).
While in Thy word we search for Thee—
We search with trembling awe—
Open our eyes, and let us see
The wonders of Thy law.

Ann Steele (1716-1778).
Here springs of consolation rise
To cheer the fainting mind:
And thirsty souls receive supplies
And sweet refreshment find.

William Cowper (1731-1800).
The Spirit breathes upon the Word,
And brings the truth to sight:
Precepts and promises afford
A sanctifying light.

Bishop Reginald Heber (1783-1826).
Waft, waft, ye winds, His story
And you, ye waters, roll
Till like a sea of glory
It spreads from pole to pole.

Hartley Coleridge (1796-1849).
The Word were but a blank, a hollow sound,
If He that spake it were not speaking still,
If all the light, and all the shade around,
Were aught but issues of Almighty will.

Sir Henry Williams Baker (1821-1877).
Lord, Thy Word abideth
And our footsteps guideth;
Who its truth believeth
Light and joy receiveth.

Bishop William Walsham How (1823-1897).
O Word of God incarnate,
O Wisdom from on high.
O Truth, unchanged, unchanging,
O Light of our dark sky.
We praise Thee for the radiance
That from the hallow'd page,
A lantern to our footsteps,
Shines on from age to age.

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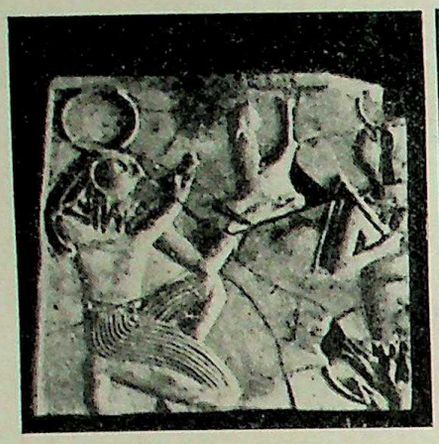

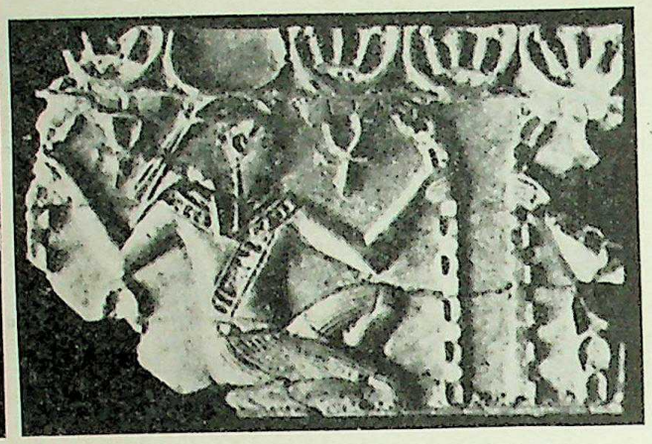

PLAQUES FROM AHAB'S IVORY HOUSE. Discovered on the summit of the hill of Samaria amid the ruins of what was once Ahab's palace, a collection of ivories represents the most beautiful carvings in miniature yet found during excavations of Israelite cities. The plaques illustrated above are examples of the two prevalent styles. That on the left shows Egyptian influence in the delicate workmanship of the finely poised figure of Ra, the sun-god, holding the goddess of Truth. In the other plaque, depicting a god grasping a palm branch, the border of palmettes is derived from Phoenician sources.

The principal articles of food were cereals (chiefly barley) ground into meal and made into bread, but fine wheaten flour was a luxury. Beans, lentils, millet and spelt were in common use, together with such fruits as pomegranates, figs, grapes and the mulberry fig (from the sycamore), but though the date palm grew in the Jordan valley, there is no mention in the Old Testament of dates.

The poisonous "wild vine" or cucumber, gathered by one of the sons of the prophets at Gilgal and put into the pot with deadly effect (II. Kings iv, 39 ff.) was probably the so-called colocynth, or squirting cucumber, which acts as a powerful emetic and purgative. Other vegetables were melons, pumpkins (called gourds) and gherkins. Oil and honey were used in cooking, though there is no evidence of the honey-bee having been employed in agriculture. Milk, mainly from the goat, was a characteristic product of Palestine, and meat (veal and beef for preference) was eaten on special occasions by the rich, but it was seldom an article of diet among the poor except at sacrificial feasts. At the height of their prosperity luxurious living was a feature of the cities as, for example, of Jerusalem in the time of Solomon or of Samaria in the reigns of Omri and Ahab, and from the denunciations of the prophets in the 8th century it is clear that this continued till the end came (Amos vi, 4; Isaiah xxii, 13).

Excess follows in Luxury's Train

AT sumptuous banquets excessive drinking seems to have been all too prevalent, and, indeed, the word for a feast means "drinking." Hence the repeated warnings against the misuse of wine in the Old Testament (Proverbs xx, 1; xxiii, 29-32; xxxi, 4; I. Samuel i, 13; xxv, 36; Isaiah xxviii, 8). The total abstinence practised by the Nazarites (Judges xiii, 7, 14) and the Rechabites (Jeremiah xxxv, 6 ff.), however, was directed in all probability more against the peasant culture of Palestine, with its worship of vegetation divinities, than as a protest against drunkenness. Thus, in maintaining the simple nomad life of the desert as the national ideal of the true Israelite, they not only rejected the use of the vine and all its products, but, in the case of the Rechabites, they insisted on dwelling in tents like their Aramaean ancestors in the wilderness. In the east and south of Palestine, where arable land was scarce, herdsmen continued their pastoral habits unaffected by the agricultural population in the west. In these districts the old pre-conquest tradition survived unchanged, and it was from Tekoa in the far south that the first literary prophet, Amos, himself a herdsman, arose in revolt against the luxurious life of Samaria, and all its excesses, in the days of Jeroboam II.

Details of Dress and Ornament

IN these debaucheries women appear to have played a leading part (Hosea ii, 13; Isaiah iii, 16-26), adorning themselves in gorgeous apparel with a superabundance of ornaments. Like Jezebel, ladies of rank were accustomed to blacken the edges of their eyelids with cosmetics (antimony) to enhance the brilliance of their eyes (II. Kings ix, 30; Jeremiah iv, 30), and to plait and curl the hair in an elaborate coiffure. In the matter of hair-dressing men did not lag behind, and they paid special attention to their beards (II. Samuel x, 4; xx, 9; Isaiah vii, 20; cf. Judges xvi, 13, 19). To protect their heads from the sun a turban (A.V. diadem) was worn by men of position in cities (Job xxix, 14), but sandals or simple shoes sufficed for footwear (Isaiah v, 27; Amos ii, 6; viii, 6). In times of mourning the head was shaved and the feet were uncovered (Micah i, 16; Isaiah xv, 2; xxii, 12; II. Samuel xv, 30). Whether respectable Hebrew women were veiled in the days of the monarchy is not clear, but the essentials of male and female attire were much the same except that the garments of women were richer and more delicate. In the case of men at work in the fields a loincloth probably sufficed, over which a cloak or tunic was thrown at other times; but women always wore under-garments, ladies of wealth superimposing an elaborate chemise and long, trailing robes (cf. Jeremiah xiii, 22, 26; Isaiah xlvii, 2).

In rural districts the daily round was a monotonous routine for the bulk of the population engaged in agricultural pursuits in villages and on the scattered pastures, interrupted only by such events as births, deaths, the weaning of a child, betrothals, marriages, the arrival of a stranger or a guest, the observance of religious and social festivals, notably at the climaxes of the agricultural year, celebrated with dancing and music, feasting and rites.

In the cities, especially on the coastal plain, the progress of civilization brought to urban dwellers amenities and intercourse impossible in the rural districts. The market-place and tribunal just inside the gate of the walled towns became the scene of ceaseless activity and chatter. There the "elders" or heads of leading families "sat" to guard their respective interests, and the king, or his deputy, administered jurisdiction. In this "forum" bargains were made, and the news of the day was discussed. Indeed," the gate was for the city what the flat roof was for the house," and in this little open space the life of the city was concentrated. Moreover, the continual passage of caravans through the more important towns on trade routes stimulated the exchange of ideas as well as of goods, and brought the citizens into touch with the thought and culture of the most progressive centres of the Ancient East, since Palestine was the natural meeting-place of many lines of communication.

Geographically the country was not well adapted to the establishment of a great national development, and, as we have seen, the idea of a despotic centralized monarchy was foreign to the central and northern peoples, with their internal conflicts and external contacts with the neighbouring civilizations. The southern group in the hills of Judah were more happily placed to cultivate a sense of unity fostered by their desert and Davidic tradition centred in the ancient fortress of Jerusalem and the sanctity of Zion, enriched by the possession of the Ark.

IN short, while Palestine was very much "on the map" of the ancient world, it was destined to be a secondary culture rather than the home of an independent civilization like Egypt or Babylonia or Greece. As the land-bridge between Asia and Africa, it was in constant demand by merchants

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statesmen and military leaders, but it was ill-adapted for permanent conquest, being difficult of access by desert and sea, equipped with mountains and ravines suitable for defence and guerilla warfare, devoid of navigable rivers, or wealth, and having a climate presenting many problems for the agriculturist with its violent and often destructive winter rain and dry hot summers. Consequently, outside the plain of Esdraelon and in isolated spots in the central range from Samaria to Hebron, where the cities, vineyards and oliveyards flourished, arable land was poor, and often non-existent, so that while it offered facilities for the trader, and in certain districts was a not uncongenial home for the shepherd, the cultivator from the valley of the Nile or Euphrates was scarcely likely to wish to make a permanent abode there in so unprofitable a region.

After the fall of Samaria the Northern Kingdom became for a time an Assyrian province, but it was inhabited by a mixed population, and in the case of Judah, the Exile was only a temporary measure. Nevertheless, for occasional visits by land or sea Palestine was an excellent market as well as a prey for the adventurer in the political gamble in the Ancient East.

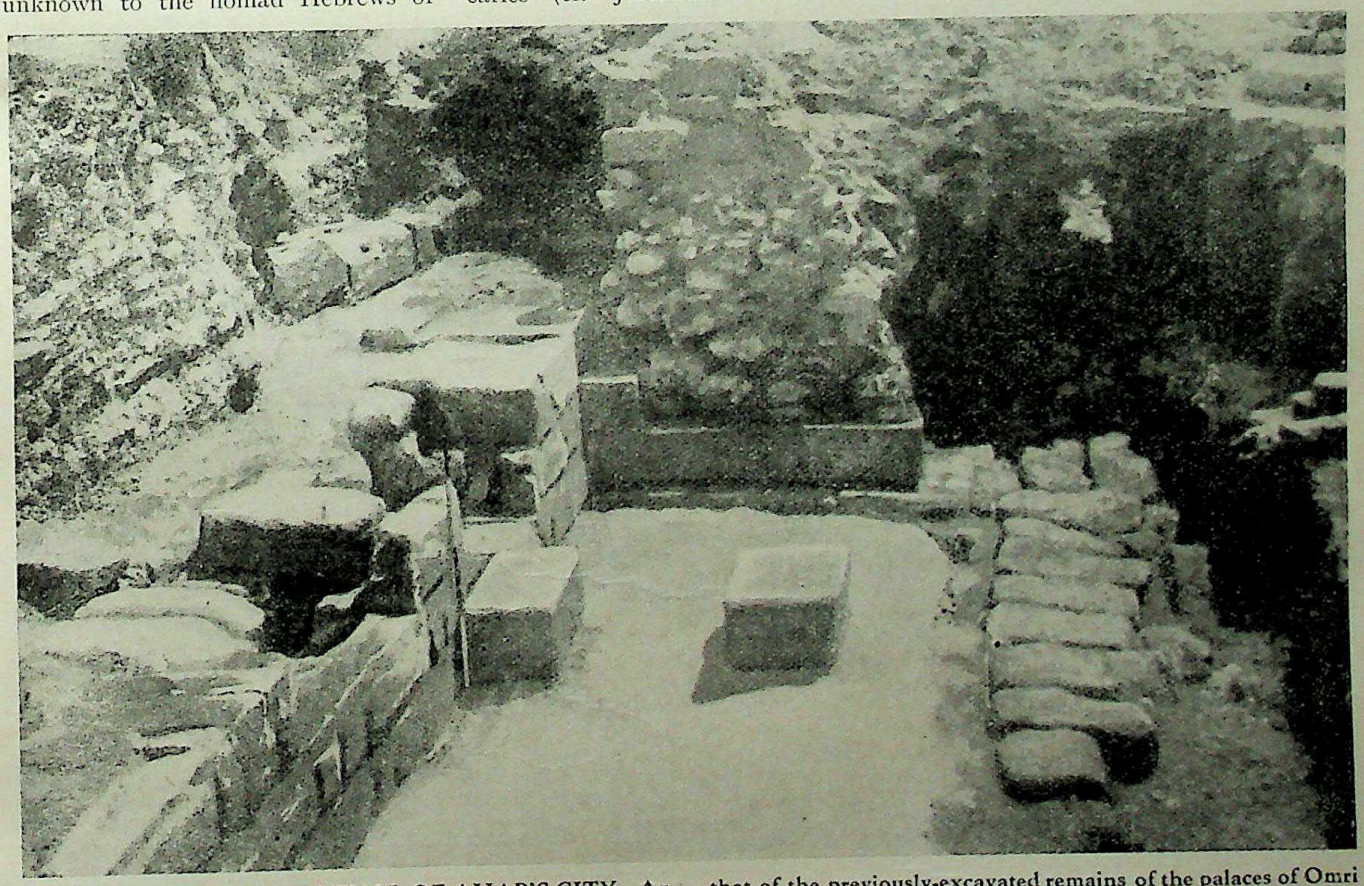
The merchandise which entered the country by the trade routes stimulated technical activities among the settled Israelites in the time of the Monarchy unknown to the nomad Hebrews of early days. In the desert metal-working is almost the only industry, apart from the weaving carried on by the women. In the villages and walled towns, workers in wood made their appearance as skilled carvers using specialized tools (Isaiah xl, 20; xliv, 12f.; x, 15; Jeremiah x, 4), such as axes, saws, chisels, hammers, nails and the compass, which, together with extensive building operations, reveal a considerable knowledge of metal (iron, copper and lead), while the craft of the goldsmith was an ancient one in Palestine.

Segregation of Trades in the Capital City

POTTERS constituted an inferior trade but they supplied a universal need, and lived in settlements in the lower city at Jerusalem (Jeremiah xviii, 2-4), and in the neighbourhood of Hebron and Beit Jibrin, where clay was plentiful and the royal potteries probably were situated (cf. I. Chronicles iv, 23). Bakers occupied a special street in Jerusalem (Jeremiah xxxvii, 21), the fullers had a field outside the city near the Upper Pool (II. Kings xviii, 17; Isaiah vii, 3), and the carpenters a valley in Benjamin (I. Chronicles iv, 14). The practice of medicine was held in high esteem, and there are frequent references in the Old Testament to physicians and apothecaries (cf. Jeremiah viii, 22; II. Chronicles xvi, 12), but while simple methods involving the use of poultices and bandages, and vegetable drugs were adopted, the healing art was necessarily restricted by the limitations of available knowledge.

Trade rather than commerce flourished in Israel in the days of the monarchy. Thus, in spite of the efforts of such kings as Solomon, Ahab, Azariah and Jehoshaphat to foster international enterprise by land and sea (cf. I. Kings x, 22; xxii, 48; II. Chronicles xvi, 2; xx, 36), the foreign merchant (notably the Phoenician) continued to import his wares into Hebrew cities, often in exchange for agricultural produce, cattle and land, though, of course, money was in free circulation. The exports mainly were corn, honey, oil and spices, but as most of the adjacent countries had these in abundance there was no ready market for Palestinian traders to supply. Hence the difficulties experienced by Solomon to maintain his luxurious splendour, so that ultimately he could only liquidate his debts by forfeiting cities.

Such foreign commercial undertakings as existed were mainly a royal prerogative, and the Israelite merchants who occupied certain specified quarters in distant cities were in the king's service, just as in Samaria Ben-hadad, king of Damascus, had bazaars assigned to him (I. Kings xx, 34). Ahab's alliance with Phoenicia by his marriage with Jezebel gave him



WATCH-TOWER IN THE WALL OF AHAB'S CITY. An archaeological find of special interest was the discovery, in 1931, of another section of the main wall of the acropolis on the hill of Samaria. At the eastern corner are the ruins of a tower, shown above. The masonry belongs to the same period as that of the previously-excavated remains of the palaces of Omri and Ahab. It is just possible that this tower was by the "void place in the entrance of the gate of Samaria" where the latter held council of war in state with Jehoshaphat of Judah (I. Kings xxii, 10) and decided to attack the Syrians at Ramoth-gilead.

Photo, Palestine Exploration Fund

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access to an important commercial centre on the coast, but Judah was cut off from the through trade-routes and the Mediterranean, and separated from the Red Sea by the independent kingdom of Edom. While isolation was not an unmixed evil, nevertheless it made the restoration of the former prosperity of Jerusalem impossible, especially as agriculture, the basic factor in the economic life of Palestine, was less practised in the south than in the north.

It was the small farmer cultivating his own land from one generation to another who constituted the backbone of the country and its social organization. The "vinedresser" and the "ploughman," it is true, are spoken of disparagingly (II. Kings xxiv, 14; xxv, 12), but this probably represents a later estimate of agriculture after the return from Babylonia when city ideals were uppermost, and the prophetic fear of the superstitions connected with vegetation cults lingered in the religious thought and outlook of the Biblical writers (cf. Hosea ii). The fact, however, that the calendar was divided according to the seasons, and that the chief festivals were associated with barley harvest (Passover) and wheat harvest (Feast of Weeks) and the great Annual Festival, or Tabernacles (Sukkôth) was held "at the going out of the year" in the autumn when the summer fruits had been gathered, shows that the Israelites were essentially a people of the soil.

Old Festivals in New Guise

ALL these festivals were absorbed by the Hebrews after their conquest of Palestine from the Canaanite cults and transformed to meet the particular needs and significance of their own worship, thereby obscuring their original meaning. Thus, the Feast of Unleavened Bread was joined on to the offering of the firstborn and made to commemorate the Exodus from Egypt and link the spring rite with the desert tradition. The autumnal Sukkôth, or Tabernacles, almost certainly represents the Annual Festival of the Ancient East to renew the life of the divine king on whom the processes of nature and the community depended for their well-being and prosperity, reinterpreted in terms of Judaism.

At Gezer an agricultural calendar has been found belonging to the sixth century B.C., in which the year is divided as follows: two months garnering the fruits; two months seed-time; two months late seed-time; one month pulling the flax; one month barley harvest; one month harvesting other crops; two months gathering the grapes; one month fruit harvest. This sequence makes

IN THE STREET OF THE SHOEMAKERS. Trades were segregated in ancient Jerusalem; bakers, jewellers, shoemakers and others had their own streets. Even today there are traces of such commercial associations in the Arab quarters, but whatever may be the work or business it is mainly carried on outside the shops. So dingy and small are these that even a cobbled passage seems light and spacious. Though the shoemakers do a good trade in heavily-soled footwear, there is a big demand for felt slippers supplied not only to customers for their ease, but also to mosques where an assortment is kept on hire for entrants to put on over street shoes, instead of taking off the latter when on "holy ground."

Photo, Kurt Lubinski

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the cereal harvest begin with the cutting of barley in April (Nisan) and spreads the entire harvest over two months, which corresponds roughly with the Biblical estimate of seven weeks from the Passover to the Feast of Weeks (Deuteronomy xvi, 9).

Sowing followed the ancient custom of broadcasting the seed in the late autumn after the land had been turned up by a light plough equipped with a metal ploughshare (I. Samuel xiii, 20; Joel iii, 10) and drawn by oxen or asses (Isaiah xxx, 24). Subsequently it was harrowed (Hosea x, 11; Isaiah xxviii, 24f). Wheat and barley were sown with greater care, protected by a border of inferior crops, but there was apparently no rotation of produce. The same field was cultivated in the same way for seven years when it had to lie fallow for twelve months (Exodus xxiii, 10ff), but it is possible that attempts were made from time to time to manure it (II. Kings ix, 37; Jeremiah viii, 2; ix, 22; xvi, 4; xxv, 33; Isaiah xxv, 10). When the corn was ready to be gathered it was cut with a sickle and bound into sheaves, gleaners being free to collect the remains left on the ground and in corners of the fields. The crop was then taken, either by hand or in ox-wagons, to the threshing-floor, often situated on the top of a hill, where the grain was beaten out with a flail or rod, or separated by a threshing-sledge studded with large stones and pieces of metal drawn over the ears by oxen (Judges vi, 11; Ruth ii, 17; II. Samuel xxiv, 22; Isaiah xli, 15). To remove the chaff winnowing-fans were employed, the wind blowing away the straw when the mixture of ears and grain was thrown into the air.

VINE-CULTURE was less extensively adopted than the growing of cereals, but where it obtained the grapes were trampled out in a wine-press and the juice left to ferment. The labour involved in removing the stones and building terraces on slopes to prevent the thin layer of soil being washed away in the heavy rains, the erection of a "tower" or "booth," and a press was not attractive to a people who tended to regard work as an evil to be minimized where possible (Isaiah v, 2; Proverbs xvi, 36; Ecclesiastes vi, 7; Genesis iii, 17). But the trouble involved in this department of husbandry brought its own reward in the riotous merrymaking with which the vintage was celebrated (Isaiah xvi, 10; Jeremiah xxv, 30). The production of olive oil required much less labour, consisting merely in gathering the olives in the autumn and treading them in the oil-press, or, in the case of the more refined oils, of pounding them in a vessel before they were quite ripe.

While there were many rich men engaged in agriculture in Palestine working freely on their own land like Saul and Naboth, the peasant cultivators were for the most part poor, possessing little more than "a cow and a cabbage-patch," and struggling against adverse climatic conditions.

HOW MESHA RECORDED THE FORTUNES OF MOAB. The famous Moabite stone, with its royal inscription in Hebrew dating from about 847 B.C., was found on the site of Dibon in 1868 and subsequently broken by Arabs. The fragments were pieced together and the monument is now in the Louvre. On it is related the history of the war with Moab referred to in II. Kings iii, 4-10. Omri of Israel conquered the country and his son Ahab received tribute until Mesha, king of Moab, rebelled. Ahab's successor, Jehoram, allying himself with the king of Judah, endeavoured to suppress the rebellion, but Mesha won a decisive victory.

In the pastoral regions cattle-breeding was the chief occupation, and although the life of Beduin did not preclude some agriculture (cf. Genesis xxxvii, 7), the ancestors of Israel are represented as essentially keepers of sheep, goats and cattle. The tradition survived on the pasture-grounds of Palestine throughout the period of the monarchy, and, as we have seen, it was regarded by a section of the population as the only proper life for a true son of Israel. Those who devoted themselves to the cultivation of flocks and herds might own as many as three thousand sheep and a thousand goats (I. Samuel xxv, 2) on the great pasture-grounds south of Judah and east of Jordan, to which often much cattle and camels were added (Job i, 3). But outside these pastoral areas domestic animals were chiefly confined to cows, which, like oxen, were also used for ploughing, together with the ass which was employed for lighter agricultural work. Horses, which were first introduced from Egypt in the reign of Solomon (I. Kings iv, 26, 28), were not bred in Palestine, and they were regarded with disapproval (Deuteronomy xvii, 16; Isaiah ii, 7), possibly because the maintenance of the royal chariotry was not only a heavy burden on the national exchequer, but also because the kings of Israel and Judah were in the habit of exchanging men for horses (cf. Zechariah ix, 9).

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On the whole, however, both human beings and animals were humanely treated in Israel, judged by the standards of the times. As it was forbidden to muzzle the ox while he was treading out the corn, and commanded to go to the aid of any beast sinking under its load, so slaves enjoyed certain civil rights under the monarchy not granted to them elsewhere in the Ancient East. Their release every seven years probably coincided with the year of fallow for the fields when no ploughing or sowing would require to be done. The only exception to this rule was in the case of Temple menials of foreign stock (Nethinim) who were retained throughout their lives. In the collection of ancient civil laws embodied in "The Book of the Covenant," edited apparently about the 9th century, a person who had been enslaved for debt was ordered to be liberated after six years (Exodus xxi, 2–6) and the creditor was exhorted not to be harsh (xxii, 25f). If slaves were the property of their master, as indeed a man's own wife and children were his "possessions," they were not without their legal rights and often rose to positions of trust and importance in the house in which they served.

The head of the household was the father, who exercised supreme and autocratic control over his family. While polygamy was permitted, in practice plural marriage was the exception save in the case of powerful and ostentatious kings like David and Solomon. According to tradition Abraham, Jacob and Elkanah had two wives, but Isaac and Joseph were content with one life-companion. The father carried out the negotiations with the parents of a girl when a son desired to marry, and arranged the *mohar*, or purchase price to be paid to the householder who was losing a real asset in the person of a daughter. The bride also brought a dowry. Thus, Solomon received the city of Gezer from Pharaoh when he married the Egyptian princess, just as earlier Sarah had brought with her a slave and Rachel a nurse.

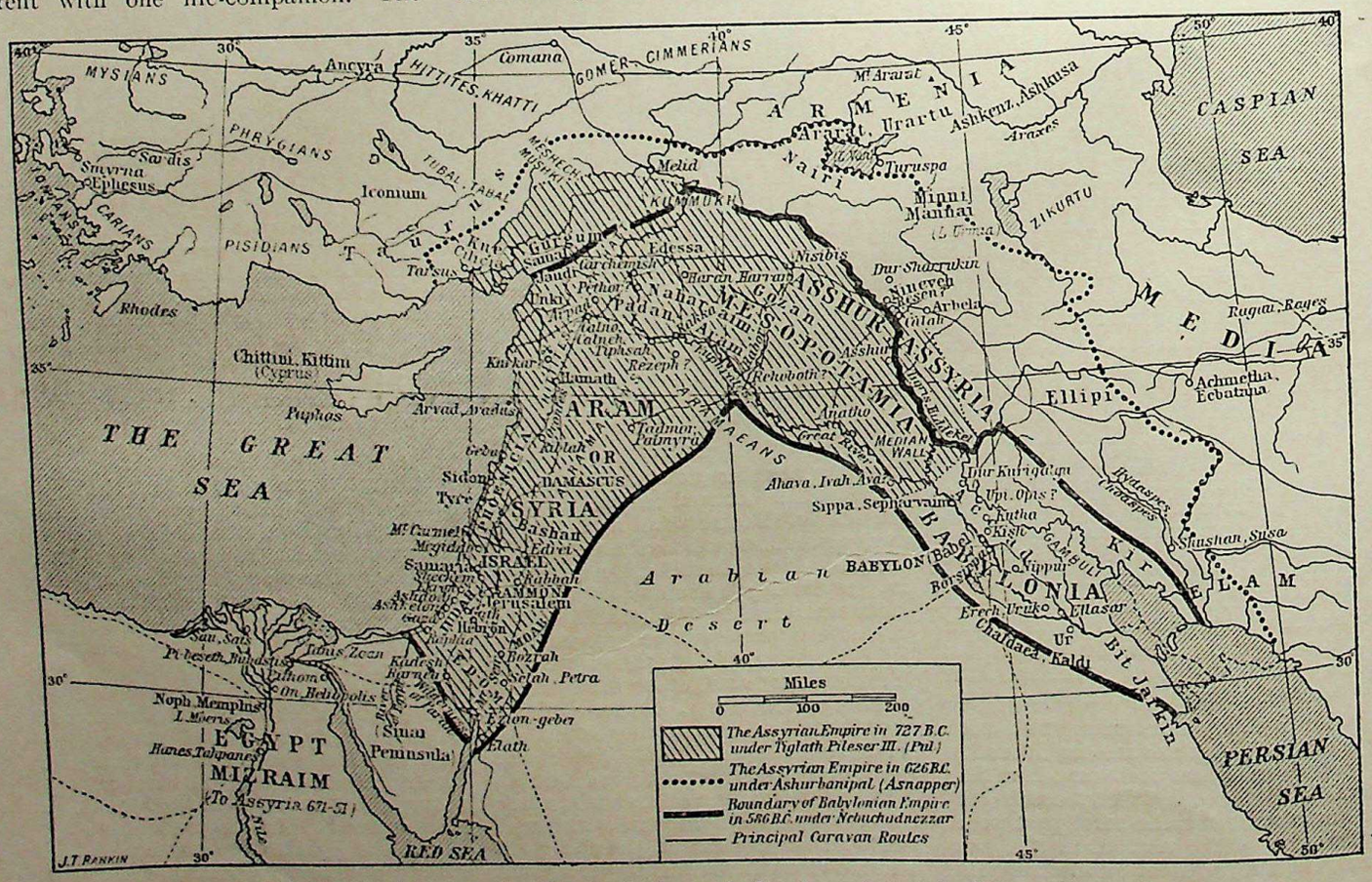
The purpose of marriage being primarily the propagation of the family, a childless wife could be divorced, or the union supplemented by concubinage. To obtain a divorce a man had only to say "she is not my wife, and I am not her husband." As this practice was liable to abuse, the Deuteronomic legislation made a serious effort to prevent undue laxity on the part of the unscrupulous (Deuteronomy xxii, 13-19, 29; xxiv, 1-4; cf. Hosea iii, 1ff., where the prohibition is unknown if the prophet is referring to his former wife, Gomer).

Law Adjusted to Changing Needs

IN the administration of justice and law in general the code in force at the time of the settlement, embodied in the Book of Exodus, remained the guiding principle under the monarchy, supplemented by fresh judgements relating to matters not provided for in the earlier system. In their present form the Hebrew legal enactments have been compiled from many sources of very different ages and cultures. Some of the elements, such as the *lex talionis*, or the principle of retaliation (Exodus xxi, 23f; Deuteronomy xix, 21), was common to all Semitic peoples, and doubtless was taken over by Israel at the time of the Conquest of Palestine. The prescription against multiplying horses, wives, silver and gold in Deuteronomy xvii, 14-20 would seem to belong to the reign of Solomon, while laws about tithes, firstfruits and sacrifices suggest an early phase of Palestinian agricultural life.

REFERENCES in the Decalogue to oxen working in the fields, walled cities with gates, and houses with guests and servants, imply a settled community such as existed in Palestine in the days of the monarchy rather than the life of the desert, while the importance attached to the observance of the Sabbath indicates a still later period, as it was not until after the Exile under priestly influence that the custom became a prescribed institution of divine origin. Therefore, if the original Commandments were given by Moses in simple form, which is not improbable, they were elaborated during the monarchy, and received their present proportions after the remnant of Judah had returned from Babylonia.

This practice of adapting ancient codes to the needs of subsequent ages was very general. In the beginning the Hebrews appear to have been familiar with and based their legislation on the famous Code of Hammurabi, the king of Babylon about 2100 B.C. Similar codes have been found among the Assyrians and Hittites exhibiting the same general principles but with



Boundaries of the Assyrian Empire during and after the period of the Hebrew Monarchy

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local variations. The Old Testament laws conform to this same pattern, less changed in fact than in the Mesopotamian systems because they were operative mainly in an agricultural society of peasants, and among pastoral nomads, rather than in a highly developed urban civilization. But above all things the Hebrews were a religious people, and nowhere is this more apparent than in the compilation and organization of the legal system in the seventh and eighth centuries B.C. under the influence of the prophetic movement.

The various groups of laws enacted at different times and places, and under divers circumstances, were collected together towards the end of the period of the monarchy and given a supernatural sanction by making them ultimately divine ordinances. Whether or not the roll found in the reign of Josiah during the repairs to the Temple was part of the Book of Deuteronomy (II. Kings xxii, 10-20) as has been commonly supposed—a supposition however which has been questioned by certain scholars of repute in recent years—Deuteronomic legislation belonged more to the sphere of religion than to that of jurisprudence, and a predominant interest was the centralization of worship at Jerusalem.

The Rise and Fall of Israel

TO understand the significance of this movement which found expression in the Josiah Reformation, it is necessary to review briefly the events which called it into being. In the Northern Kingdom collapse quickly followed the height of prosperity attained under Jeroboam II (c. 788-747), because, in the words of the prophet Amos, the nation was like an attractive basket of tropical fruit, dead ripe; it was fair to look upon, but within were the germs of decay destined to transform it into a mass of putrefaction (viii, 1-3). Moreover, it had become more and more involved in the politics of other nations, and with the rise of Assyrian supremacy, Damascus and Samaria were doomed. At an earlier period, the alliance of Ahab and Jehoshaphat enabled the Southern Kingdom to defeat the Edomites and build a fleet at Ezion-geber, on the gulf of Akabah (I. Kings xxii, 48), and gave Israel an annual tribute of lambs and wool (II. Kings iii, 4). But from the Moabite stone, the oldest Hebrew inscription extant (c. 850), it appears that it was a short-lived triumph, since Mesha king of Moab expelled the Israelites from his territory after a futile attempt of the combined forces to restore Moab to its former allegiance (II. Kings iii, 27). Thus ended the effort at consolidated action on the part of the Northern and Southern Kingdoms. Henceforth the two realms carried out their respective policies independent of the other.

Jehoram, the son of Ahab, continued the alliance with the Aramaeans, and in 849 and 846 aided Ben-hadad II against Assyrian invasions under Shalmaneser III to complete his previous victories over Syria. From the description of the event on the cuneiform record known as "Shalmaneser's Monolith Inscription," it seems that in the closing year of Ahab's reign (853) the Assyrians first encountered the Hebrews and their allies at Karkar, with serious but apparantly not disastrous results to Ben-hadad's confederacy. This fact doubtless explains the mention of subsequent campaigns on the "Black Obelisk" (now in the British Museum) discovered by Layard at Calah in 1845 and deciphered five years later by Rawlinson. From this inscription it appears that when Hazael ascended the Syrian throne after murdering Ben-hadad (II. Kings viii, 15), and Jehu became king of Israel by conspiring against Joram (II. Kings ix, 14ff), the two usurpers renewed the alliance that had been broken off in the previous reigns (II. Kings vi, 8ff), and together made a stand against Shalmaneser. The confederacy was at once attacked, and, it is claimed, utterly routed. Jehu is depicted in the act of kissing the ground before his conquerors, and it is stated that he delivered "silver, gold, a golden goblet, pitchers of gold, lead, sceptres, javelins," as tribute. Further ventures against Hazael are mentioned on the stele, but internal troubles in Assyria prevented Shalmaneser from capturing Damascus. After the last attempt in 838 no further attacks on Palestine were made for nearly forty years.

If this interval had been employed to consolidate the Northern and Southern Kingdoms they might have remained secure in their isolation. Instead they were torn by local dissensions, political intrigues with Egypt, and internal corruption. The prosperity under Jeroboam II only aggravated the evils by increasing the standard of luxury among the ruling classes, and in consequence the penury and want of the masses. The long struggle with Damascus after many vicissitudes ended at last with victory for Israel (II. Kings, xiv, 28), and in Judah Amaziah defeated the Edomites in the valley of Salt, re-opening thereby the way to the Red Sea.

Growing Signs of National Decadence

BUT elated by his success he challenged Jehoash of Israel to a trial of strength, and, persisting in his folly, he was taken prisoner, a part of the north wall of Jerusalem was destroyed, the Temple and the Palace were rifled and hostages secured (II. Kings xiv, 8-14). Jeroboam II. extended his dominions to the limits of those of Solomon's empire and secured tributes from the subjugated states weakened by the Assyrian invasions of Shalmaneser III, and his successor, Ashurdan III.

The nation, however, was steadily losing its *morale* through the grave social and economic disorders so clearly revealed by the prophet Amos (iii, 10f; v, 11f; vi, 1-7). The palaces were filled with the fruits of violence and robbery, the public tribunals perverted the cause of the poor and helpless, and deeds of inhuman cruelty were condoned. In fact, there was "no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land." There was naught but swearing, and breaking faith, and killing, and stealing, and committing adultery, so that "deeds of bloodshed touch deeds of bloodshed" (Hosea iv, 1f). In an atmosphere so heavily charged with the influence of the indigenous and foreign cults, lewdness and licence were of common occurrence and "the daughters of Israel" shamelessly gave themselves up to degenerate practices (Hosea iv, 11-15).

Prophets & Politicians at Variance

IT was not mere fanaticism, therefore, that led the great religious leaders in both sections of the nation to discern in the departure from the lofty monotheistic ideals of the desert tradition the root cause of the social and moral degeneracy, and to recognize that only through a drastic reformation could salvation be secured. In the rising power of Assyria the prophets saw a divine instrument calculated to sift out the evil elements in the state and restore to the Chosen People of God a true peace and prosperity surpassing that of the earlier days. In their blind self-confidence, however, the politicians turned to Damascus and Egypt, which a later prophet in Judah described as "a broken reed, on which if a man lean it shall pierce his hand."

The accession of Tiglath-Pileser III (Pul) in 745 began a new era in Assyrian history and speedily led to fresh military campaigns in Palestine which caused Israel and Syria to join forces to resist the menace. The king of Judah, Ahaz, was prevented from lending assistance by Isaiah, but, contrary to the advice of the prophet, he entered into a contract with Tiglath-pileser against Rezin of Damascus (Isaiah vii, 4; II. Kings xvi, 7). The destruction of the city (Damascus) is recorded on an Assyrian monument, together with "the land of Naphtali on the border of the land of Omri" which was "brought within the border of Assyria."

The next year, that is, in 733, "the land of Omri and all its people together with their goods" were carried off to Assyria, "Pekah their king they deposed," and Hoshea was appointed in his stead (cf. II. Kings xv, 30). Tiglath-pileser received tribute from Ammon, Moab, Askalon, Gaza and Edom, while from Judah Ahaz brought his contribution and introduced an Assyrian altar in the Temple at Jerusalem, to curry favour at Nineveh. In 727 Shalmaneser V succeeded to the throne and a fresh series of intrigues began. Hoshea opened relations with Egypt and probably allied himself with the king of Tyre in suspending the payment of tribute.

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SENNACHERIB TAKES TRIBUTE FROM JUDAH. This fine Assyrian bas-relief, now in the British Museum, is inscribed "Sennacherib . . . receives the spoil of the city of Lachish." During Hezekiah's reign the Assyrian monarch invaded Judah, capturing many cities and carrying away 200,150 prisoners. Lachish, some 32 miles from Jerusalem, had fallen when "the king of Assyria sent . . . Rab-shakeh from Lachish to king Hezekiah with a great host against Jerusalem" (II. Kings xviii, 17). Hezekiah apparently tried to placate Sennacherib by sending tribute to Lachish. But the invasion was not stayed until the miraculous dispersion of the Assyrian hosts in their camp before the walls of Jerusalem.

Photo, W. F. Mansell

Thereupon Assyria invaded Palestine, conquered the whole of Phoenicia except Tyre, and after a siege lasting for three years, his successor Sargon II captured Samaria, Shalmaneser having died in the meantime (II. Kings xvii, 4ff). Thus, northern Palestine became a part of the Assyrian empire. Over 27,000 of the inhabitants of Samaria are said to have been deported to Halah in Upper Mesopotamia and to the mountains of Media before the city was rebuilt by Sargon, and, as he claims in the inscription on the walls of the royal palace at Dur-Sarraku (Khorsabad), "made greater than it was before." Groups of settlers were imported and soon a mixed population grew up which continued to worship Jehovah as the god of the land (II. Kings xvii, 24-34).

Despite the many fantastic legends that have collected round the Israelite settlers in Mesopotamia, nothing is really known of their fate beyond the fact that many of them survived in the 7th century in the region to which they had been sent, and there remained conscious of their Palestinian inheritance (cf. Jeremiah iii, 6-25; xxxi, 15-17; Ezekiel iv, 4-6). The majority doubtless became merged

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in the existing populations of Mesopotamia. For the later Jewish writers the catastrophe had a deep religious significance. "It was so because the children of Israel had sinned against the Lord their God" (II. Kings xvii, 7).

Judah as Assyria's Vassal

THE southern monarchy survived for nearly a century and a half, and so long as it accepted the domination of Assyria and continued to pay its tribute, it enjoyed peace and prosperity, being too remote to be of any particular interest to the sovereign power. About 711 Ashdod unwisely rebelled (Isaiah xx, 1), and it would seem from an inscription that Judah became implicated, but since the incident is not mentioned in the Old Testament and the province escaped the fate of the rebels, it was probably not a very serious lapse. But after the death of Sargon in 705, the empire began to break up before the rising tide of the Chaldeans under Marduk-apluiddina, the Merodach-baladan of the Biblical narratives.

Isaiah feared all foreign entanglements, but he failed to keep Hezekiah from joining in the widespread revolt (II. Kings xx, 12-19; Isaiah xxxix). Therefore, with the aid of Arab mercenaries, and strengthened by an alliance with Tyre, the king of Judah prepared for battle against Sennacherib, the successor of Sargon. Having "made the pool and the conduit, and brought water into the city" in readiness for a possible siege of Jerusalem, he awaited further developments. In 701, as a result of a general rebellion in Syria, Assyria invaded Palestine, and, according to the "Taylor Prism," now in the British Museum, Sennacherib restored Padi king of Ekron, "bound by treaty to Assyria," and captured forty-six "strong walled cities" as well as smaller neighbouring towns "without number" belonging to "Hezekiah the Jew, who did not submit to my yoke."

The accounts of this campaign in the Biblical narratives (II. Kings xviii, 13-16, 17-20, 23-37; ibid, xix, 1-36; II. Chronicles xxxii; Isaiah xxxvi—xxxvii) represent three different versions of the events, but taken in conjunction with the cuneiform record with which II. Kings xviii, 13-16 is in general agreement, it would seem that Sennacherib first reasserted his authority in northern Phoenicia and set Ithobaal on the throne at Sidon. Tyre remained obdurate and was left unconquered, while the invaders proceeded southwards and received without resistance the submission of Ammon, Edom, and Moab. Askalon was then forced to surrender, the king was exiled to Assyria, and a loyal prince set on the throne.

Returning to Ekron which was reenforced by Egyptian allies, he encountered apparently a formidable army at Eltekeh which he claimed eventually to have defeated. Lachish (the modern Tell Duweir, recently excavated by the Welldombe Archaeological Research Expedition under Mr. Starkey) was the next objective, twenty-five miles to the south-west of Jerusalem. A small force was dispatched to the capital of Judah (II. Kings xviii, 17ff) where Hezekiah was shut up "like a bird in a cage" (*i.e.*, surrounded the city). Forsaken by his princes and mercenaries, he was compelled to place himself in the hands of Sennacherib, who extracted a heavy tribute. Soon a second envoy was sent to demand the surrender of the city and the deportation of its inhabitants, but this time without success. Revolt broke out in Babylon which necessitated the speedy return of the king, but according to the Hebrew account, the immediate cause was the intervention of Egypt under the leadership of Tirhakah, probably the crown prince who, ten years later, succeeded Shabaka as Pharaoh. Anyway, the words of the prophet Isaiah were fulfilled.

This remarkable preservation from almost certain destruction was interpreted as a divine intervention, and strengthened the Jews in their conviction that they were the chosen people of God and Jerusalem was His earthly home, and therefore inviolable so long as He made His abode there. Isaiah, however, like Amos and Hosea in the north, never failed to realize that the mercies of Jehovah were conditional. Hence the serious effort to reform the social and moral evils in this reign which were having such disastrous effects on the national life. Unfortunately, the reformation was only temporary and was followed by a reaction under Manasseh and his son Amon, both of whom "did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord."

The former pagan worship was restored in the Temple precincts, the altars that had been thrown down were reerected, together with a sacred pole, or *asherah*, the symbol of the female divine principle, and other objects connected with the Tyrian god Melkart. Mesopotamian astrology and necromancy were introduced and even human sacrifice (II. Kings xxi, 2-7, 16). By so doing Manasseh strengthened his position with the majority of his subjects who felt that the recent misfortunes were the result of the sacrilege of Hezekiah, as well as with his Assyrian overlords.

'Out of the North an Evil'

HAVING reached its climax Assyria began to wane in the reign of Asshurbanipal, the successor of Esarhaddon, and in less than forty years the mighty empire fell. With the accession of Josiah in 639, a new policy gradually emerged in Judah fostered by the upheavals in the surrounding nations. Barbarian hordes of Indo-European origin known as Cimmerians, Scythians and Bithynians poured into Asia Minor, and spread terror along the shores of the Mediterranean, including the coastal towns of Palestine. Zephaniah interpreted the mysterious scourge as a divine instrument of judgement which would destroy even the inhabitants of Jerusalem and cut off the apostles and princes who were as roaring lions, the judges who were as evening wolves, the light and treacherous prophets and priests who profaned the sanctuary and did violence to the law (Zephaniah i, 4f.; iii, 3f.). Similarly, Jeremiah saw the hand of God in this "evil out of the north" that was breaking forth upon the inhabitants of the land to lay waste the cities (Jeremiah i, 14; iv, 7, 13ff.).

Josiah's Reformation in Church and State

IN this new prophetic movement the high-priest Hilkiah took a prominent part, and the king (Josiah) was favourable towards it. In 621, when Assyrian authority had declined, efforts were made to restore the Temple which had fallen into disrepair during Josiah's minority and the opening years of his reign when the country was occupied with the raids. While the work was in operation the Law-book to which reference has been made above, was found and read before the king by his secretary Shaphan. Realizing how widely the nation had departed from its ancestral faith and sacrificial worship, he determined to put into force at once the injunctions of the book. This involved purifying the Temple of all its superstitious rites and making it the centre of the religious life of Judah. The sacred vessels had to be cleansed, the Asherah and star-cults destroyed, the pagan altars demolished, the chariots of the sun-god burned and his horses at the entrance removed.

The fact that the shrines erected by Solomon outside the city were broken in pieces, together with all other high-places, including the ancient sanctuary at Bethel, shows that Josiah had regained jurisdiction over an Assyrian province, since Bethel was outside the territory of Judah. This may explain, the wholesale expulsion of astrologers, diviners and wizards from the land who, doubtless, were originally of Mesopotamian origin, though even in the valley of Hinnom outside Jerusalem sacrifice was widely practised. This abomination was made to cease, and the fire-pits were defiled.

The reformation culminated in the celebration of a great Passover in accordance with the directions laid down in the newly-discovered Law-book, which until recently was generally thought to have consisted of a portion of the Book of Deuteronomy. Some scholars, however, now place Deuteronomy later than the time of Josiah, and others think that it is earlier. These are matters which lie outside the scope of this article, and whatever view is taken of the precise nature of the book that was found during the repairs, some cause is required to account for the revolutionary religious

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movement that characterized the reign of Josiah.

But the reforms proved to be of short duration like those of Hezekiah, and the policy was reversed by the succeeding monarchs. Moreover, the period of comparative peace ended with the fall of Assyria before the united forces of Babylonia, Media and the barbarian hordes. After the capture of Nineveh in 612—an event described in a recently-discovered Babylonian Chronicle in terms comparable to those employed by the prophet Nahum (iii)—the Assyrians retired to the west and made their last stand in 605 at Carchemish on the upper Euphrates, the former capital of the neo-Hittite kingdom.

Judah Menaced by a New Foe

THITHER their ally Pharaoh Necho II moved his army from Egypt to stop the Chaldean advance and to gather what spoils he could from the approaching conflagration. At Megiddo he defeated and killed Josiah, who as a Chaldean ally had attempted to oppose him en route. Marching on to Riblah, in the Orontes valley, Necho deposed Jehoahaz and appointed Jehoiakim the elder son of Josiah, as his vassal (II. Kings xxiii, 29, 33; II. Chronicles xxxv, 20-25). Meanwhile the struggle on the banks of the Euphrates continued and complete annihilation of Assyrian forces was only prevented by the crown prince, Nab-Kudurusur (in Hebrew Nebuchadrezzar) who was leading the joint army of the Babylonians and Medes, being recalled to Babylon to be enthroned as the head of the Chaldean empire.

In Judah, the prophet Jeremiah, realizing the futility of resistance to this new foe, endeavoured to prepare the nation for the approaching conquest. For him Nebuchadrezzar was the divine instrument raised up to punish the nation for its repeated backslidings, and to trust in Egypt for defence was useless, as indeed proved to be true. This, however, was not a popular message, and the king (Jehoiakim) soon fell a victim to Egyptian intrigues and broke out into open revolt. Some of the neighbouring tribes, Aramaeans, Moabites, and Ammonites, raided Judah, but before the Chaldeans advanced upon Jerusalem, Jehoiakim was killed and thus left his eighteen-year-old son, Jehoiachin, to reap the reward of his folly. Within three months the youth surrendered and was carried away to Babylon together with the nobles, warriors and craftsmen, the Temple was rifled and the treasures were removed. Instead of appointing a strong ruler, Nebuchadrezzar placed on the throne a weak and vacillating son of Josiah, Mattaniah (whose name was changed to Zedekiah), utterly unable to cope with the situation.

Palestine was seething with sedition, and the best people in Judah having been dispatched to Mesopotamia, scarcely anyone was left capable of statesmanship, or even of pursuing a settled policy. The pro-Egyptian war-party were eager for revolt against Babylon, and the recurrent rebellions among the petty states of Syria show that a widespread feeling existed that the new empire was not invincible. Moreover, this opinion was shared by the prophet Hananiah, the adversary of Jeremiah, who was no less insistent than his rival of Anathoth in his appeal to divine authority in support of his predictions. As this patriotic movement gained strength in the fourth year of the reign (594), messengers were sent to Jerusalem from Ammon, Moab, Edom, and Phoenicia to stir Zedekiah to action (Jeremiah xxvii, 3). The king, who was in a very invidious position, withstood at first the insurrectionists on the advice of Jeremiah and the pro-Babylonian minority, but the intrigues continued and in 588 he joined with the Ammonites in a rebellion which brought Nebuchadrezzar's army at once to the walls of Jerusalem before Egypt could come to the rescue.

The main Chaldean forces were centred at Riblah, whence a detachment was sent to besiege the capital. Slaves were enfranchized either as an act of repentance or merely to relieve their owners of further responsibility at a time when provisions were likely to be scarce; an order which was speedily rescinded when the arrival of the Egyptian army temporarily raised the siege (cf. Jeremiah xxxi, 8-22). But the relief was short-lived, and the Chaldeans soon resumed the attack (Ezekiel xxx, 20-26). Jeremiah urged surrender on the ground that the city was doomed by divine decree. This defeatist policy brought upon the prophet the vigorous denunciations of the patriotic pro-Egyptian factions bent on defending the city at all costs, and he was even accused of intending to desert to the enemy at the gate when he attempted to return to his native town (Jeremiah xxxvii, 11ff.). All efforts to silence him having failed, he was cast into a muddy cistern where he would have perished miserably but for the intervention of a slave and the help of the king, who secretly seems to have had a considerable respect for Jeremiah.

Jerusalem Captured by the Chaldeans

FOR a year and a half the city held out despite famine and pestilence, till in July, 586, a breach was made in the walls on the north side. Zedekiah and the garrison fled through "the gate between the two walls," hoping to reach the land of Ammon in Transjordan. Near Jericho, however, they were captured, and the king was taken to Riblah where his sons, together with the nobles, were put to death before his eyes (II. Kings xxv, 7; Jeremiah xxxix, 6; lii, 10). This was the last tragic sight he beheld for his eyes were then put out, and laden with chains he was carried to Babylon to remain a captive till death closed for ever the sad and inglorious career of a man who was more a victim of circumstances than a worker of iniquity. The following month Nebuzar-adan, the captain of the guard, destroyed the walls of Jerusalem, set fire to the Temple, the Palace and the principal houses, and executed eighty of the leading citizens and officials, including the heads of the hierarchy. Of the rest of the inhabitants 832, with the valuables of the city, are said to have been deported to Babylonia, but the remainder of the population were allowed to remain to keep the land cultivated. With this remnant Jeremiah elected to throw in his lot (II. Kings xxv, 21). A Jewish governor Gedaliah, of the family of Shaphan, was appointed to take charge of the survivors, and he made his headquarters at Mizpah, till he was foolishly assassinated by a fanatical patriot (a member of the old royal house), at the instigation of the king of Ammon. Fearing the inevitable consequences of this crime, many of the Jews fled to Egypt where they established themselves in the Delta.

Palestine under the Conqueror's Heel

IT would seem that Palestine was not devastated as some of the records suggest (Jeremiah ix, 10; xvii, 26; Isaiah xliv, 26; Ezekiel xxxvi, 33ff; Leviticus xxvi, 31ff), since the total deportations in 597, 586, and the final group in 581 after the murder of Gedaliah, though variously estimated, appear to have represented only a section of the total population (which can scarcely have been less than 90,000 all told). Therefore, the destruction of the Hebrew monarchy in Palestine, and the cessation of the independent existence of Israel as a political power in 586, did not leave "the waste places of the Land of Israel without inhabitants" (Ezekiel xxxiii, 24, 27). On the contrary, the vine-dressers and the husbandmen continued their accustomed avocations, gathering "wine and summer fruits and oil" (II. Kings xxv, 12; Jeremiah xl, 10). Even the king's daughters are said to have survived, together with priests and elders (Jeremiah xli, 10; xliii, 6; Lamentations i, 4; ii, 10), not to mention Jeremiah and Ishmael "of the seed royal," the murderer of Gedaliah.

Actually Judah became a tiny and neglected province of the Chaldean empire, very sparsely populated and considerably reduced in size by inroads of the surrounding tribes, the Edomites, for example, having annexed the southern district (cf. Psalms cxxxvii, 7; Ezekiel xxv, 12-14; xxxv—xxxvi). Being without proper rulers, it was ill-governed (cf. Lamentations v, 4ff) and the flower of the nation had been deported. Therefore, it was among the exiles rather than the Jews in Palestine that the vitality and corporate life of Israel was maintained. Buoyed up by a great hope, they never lost the conviction that in some mysterious way they were the Chosen People of God.

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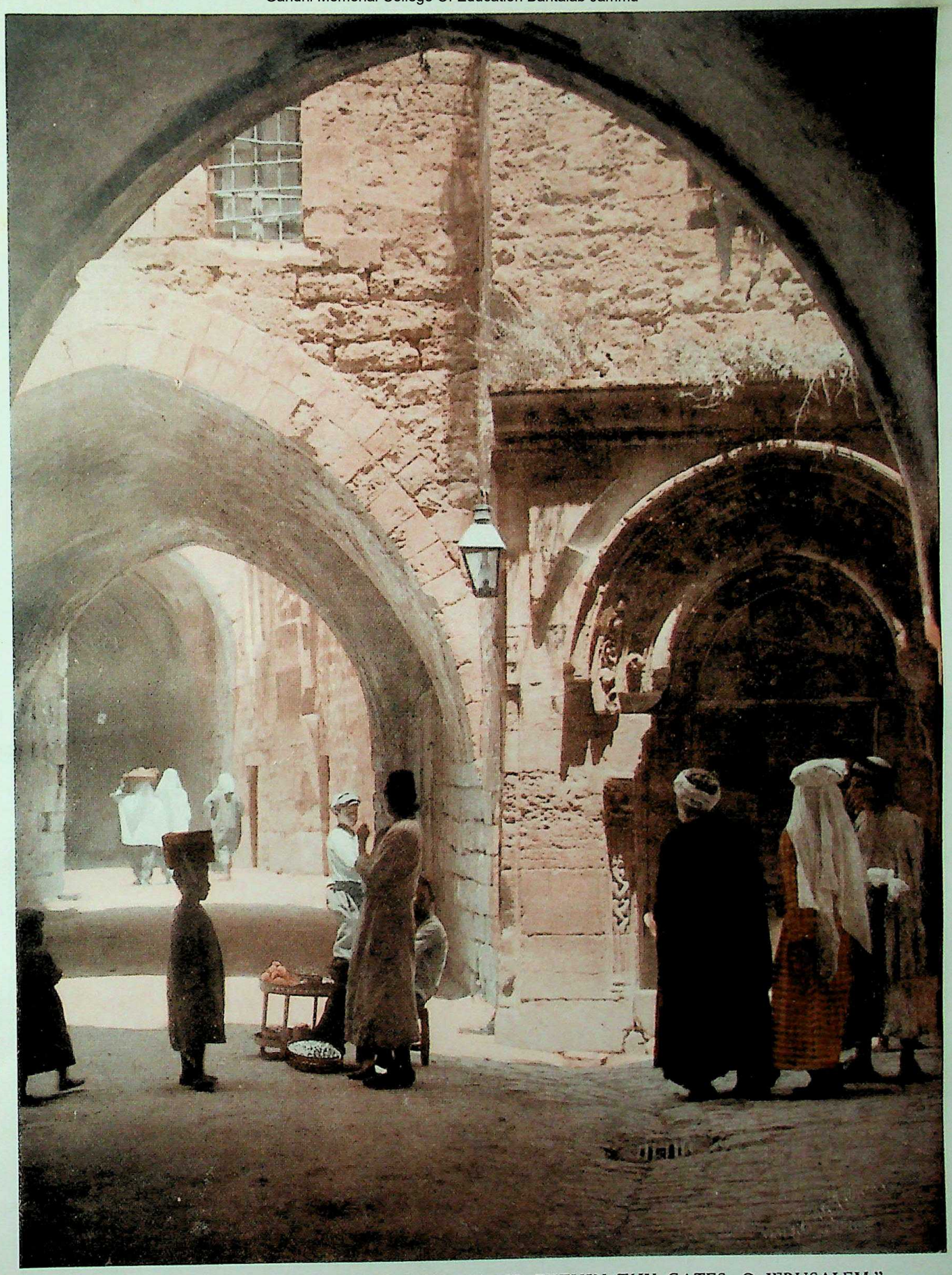

"OUR FEET SHALL STAND WITHIN THY GATES, O JERUSALEM"

Seven gates give entry to the enclosed city of Jerusalem, and there all the main highways in Palestine lead. Travellers from Nablus and Jericho, traffic from the modern residential quarters outside the northern walls, arrive at the imposing Damascus Gate. This photograph is taken from inside, where the angled passage between the two towers is connected by an arch. The masonry belongs to the 16th century, but in ancient times, when all important civic business was transacted "at the gates," such towers stood on either side—guardrooms and watch-towers. Many streets in Jerusalem are partly covered in by extensions from bordering houses, like this one with vaulted roof down which a baker is seen carrying his tray of flat loaves.

Photo American Colony in Jerusalem

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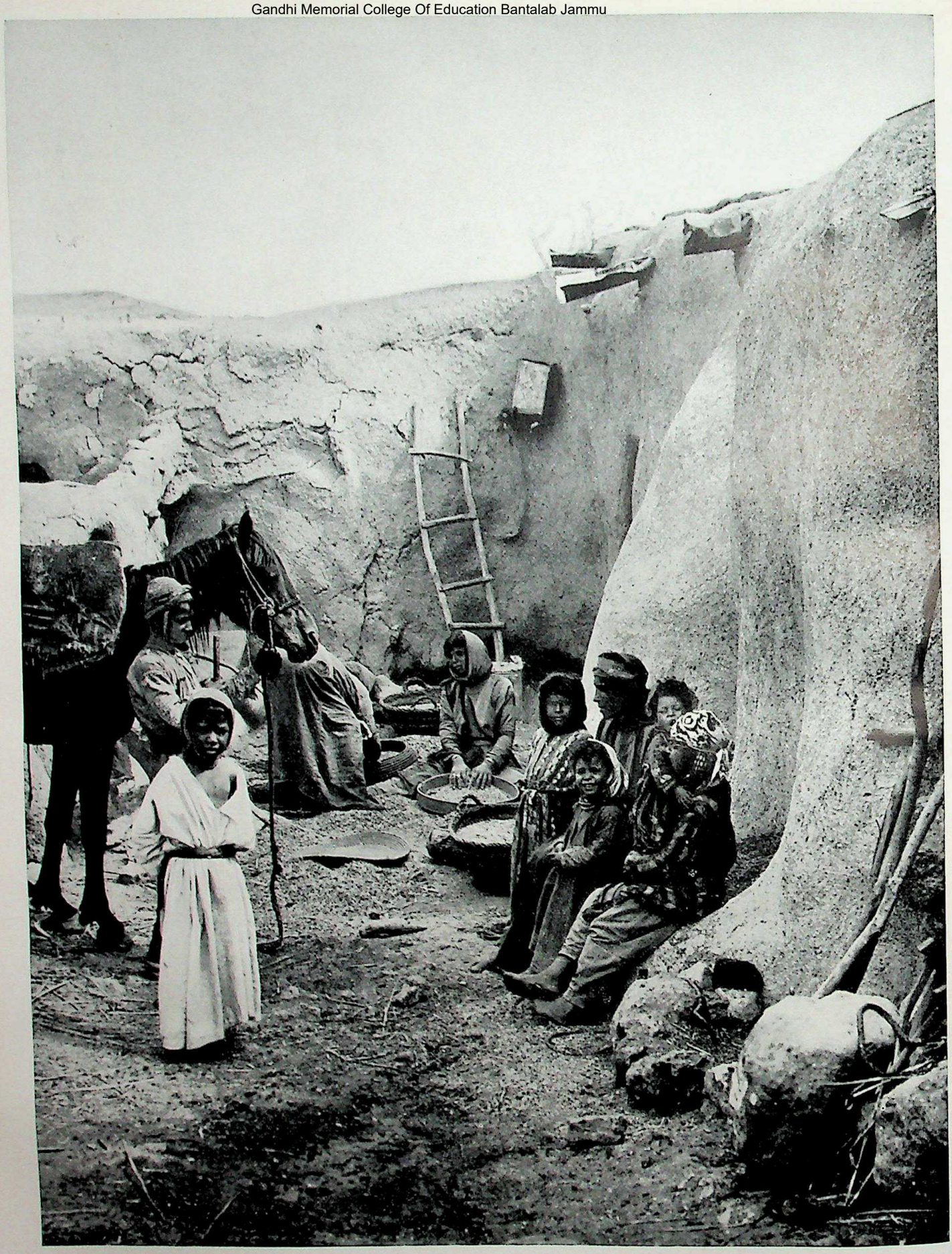

VILLAGERS' HOVELS ON THE SITE OF AHAB'S PALACE

On the north-west slope of Gilboa, the village of Zerin locates the Biblical city of Jezreel where Ahab and Jezebel had another royal residence (I. Kings xviii, 45 ; II. Kings viii, 29) besides their ivory palace in Samaria. The domestic life of the Arab villagers is carried on in the open ; their mud houses are used only as sleeping quarters in cold weather. The entrance to one is shown in the photograph ; it is a doorless opening below the projecting pipes which carry off rainwater. The women are seen sorting grain in baskets. Above the ladder the hanging petrol tin strikes a modern note. It has superseded waterskin and pitcher as a receptacle to be filled at the well.

Photo: American Colony in Jerusalem

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"HOW IS BABYLON BECOME AN ASTONISHMENT"

In the foreground are seen the towers of the Ishtar Gate, the most impressive structure amid the ruins of wonder-provoking Babylon. The Beduin are standing in Nebuchadrezzar's great Processional Way. This went from the north side of his palace—the remains of the throne hall are shown in the background—through the Gate and south to the temple of Marduk. Brilliant re-decoration with polychrome enamel adorned the towers at the time of the Captivity of Judah. These with their spaced reliefs of bulls and dragons—sacred to Marduk—were at first of plain brick. Forty feet of the original structure—the portion which has now been excavated—was sunk and the gate heightened, when Nebuchadrezzar elevated the Way.

Photo. W. F. Taylor

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THE KING'S ARCHERS AS PORTRAYED IN "SHUSHAN THE PALACE"

In the time of Ezra, Susa, once capital city of the Elamites, belonged to the empire under supremacy of the Persians. There was situated the magnificent "Shushan the palace"—in which Nehemiah served as cupbearer and Esther lived when queen—winter residence of the Persian kings. From its excavated ruins was recovered this frieze of enamelled tiles, representing the archers of Darius I (522-486 B.C.), builder of the palace. Like his predecessor Cyrus, he was beneficently disposed towards the Jews, allowing the colony at Jerusalem to complete the rebuilding of the Temple. The frieze, discovered by the French archaeologist, Dieulafoy, is now in the Louvre.

Photo, Giraudon

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Piety and Praise in Chronicles

THE narrative of First and Second Chronicles closely parallels that of the two Books of Kings, and indeed in places they are almost verbally identical. Nevertheless there are differences, for Chronicles is history revised and re-written from a particular viewpoint, with an object in view other than the mere recital of historical facts. It contains, then, amplified or amended accounts of events which have been already described in Kings, and also some few passages which have no counterparts in the latter. Comparison of the two Books reveals the fact that these emendations and additions are almost entirely concerned with questions of church history and religious observance, while several passages descriptive of musical instruments and performances lend weight to the suggestion that the historian may have been one of the Temple musicians.

ALL the extracts from Chronicles that follow illustrate the religious atmosphere of the Books, and also show to what heights of poetry the ancient Hebrews could attain when the subject of their muse was the greatness, glory and majesty of the LORD GOD of Israel.

JOYFUL MUSIC
I. xv, 14—16, 28

SO the priests and the Levites sanctified themselves to bring up the ark of the LORD God of Israel. And the children of the Levites bare the ark of God upon their shoulders with the staves thereon, as Moses commanded according to the word of the LORD. And David spake to the chief of the Levites to appoint their brethren to be the singers with instruments of musick, psalteries and harps and cymbals, sounding, by lifting up the voice with joy.

Thus all Israel brought up the ark of the covenant of the LORD with shouting, and with sound of the cornet, and with trumpets, and with cymbals, making a noise with psalteries and harps.

PSALM OF THANKSGIVING
I. xvi, 1—3, 7—12, 24, 31—34

SO they brought the ark of God, and set it in the midst of the tent that David had pitched for it; and they offered burnt sacrifices and peace offerings before God. And when David had made an end of offering the burnt offerings and the peace offerings, he blessed the people in the name of the LORD. And he dealt to every one of Israel, both man and woman, to every one a loaf of bread, and a good piece of flesh, and a flagon of wine.

Then on that day David delivered first this psalm to thank the LORD into the hand of Asaph and his brethren.

Give thanks unto the LORD, call upon his name, make known his deeds among the people.
Sing unto him, sing psalms unto him, talk ye of all his wondrous works.
Glory ye in his holy name: let the heart of them rejoice that seek the LORD.
Seek the LORD and his strength, seek his face continually.
Remember his marvellous works that he hath done, his wonders, and the judgments of his mouth;
Declare his glory among the heathen; his marvellous works among all nations.
Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice: and let men say among the nations, The LORD reigneth.
Let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof: let the fields rejoice, and all that is therein.
Then shall the trees of the wood sing out at the presence of the LORD, because he cometh to judge the earth.
O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good; for his mercy endureth for ever.

DAVID BLESSES THE LORD
I. xxix, 10—12, 14—19

WHEREFORE David blessed the LORD before all the congregation: and David said, Blessed be thou, LORD God of Israel our father, for ever and ever. Thine, O LORD, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is thine; thine is the kingdom, O LORD, and thou art exalted as head above all. Both riches and honour come of thee, and thou reignest over all; and in thine hand is power and might; and in thine hand it is to make great, and to give strength unto all.

But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort? for all things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee. For we are strangers before thee, and sojourners, as were all our fathers: our days on the earth are as a shadow, and there is none abiding.

O LORD our God, all this store that we have prepared to build thee an house for thine holy name cometh of thine hand, and is all thine own. I know also, my God, that thou triest the heart, and hast pleasure in uprightness. As for me, in the uprightness of mine heart I have willingly offered all these things: and now have I seen with joy thy people, which are present here, to offer willingly unto thee.

O LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, our fathers, keep this for ever in the imagination of the thoughts of the heart of thy people, and prepare their heart unto thee: And give unto Solomon my son a perfect heart, to keep thy commandments, thy testimonies, and thy statutes, and to do all these things, and to build the palace, for the which I have made provision.

BE YE STRONG
II. xv, 1—8

AND the spirit of God came upon Azariah the son of Oded: And he went out to meet Asa, and said unto him, Hear ye me, Asa, and all Judah and Benjamin; The LORD is with you, while ye be with him; and if ye seek him, he will be found of you; but if ye forsake him, he will forsake you.

Now for a long season Israel hath been without the true God, and without a teaching priest, and without law. But when they in their trouble did turn unto the LORD God of Israel, and sought him, he was found of them. And in those times there was no peace to him that went out, nor to him that came in, but great vexations were upon all the inhabitants of the countries. And nation was destroyed of nation, and city of city: for God did vex them with all adversity.

Be ye strong therefore, and let not your hands be weak: for your work shall be rewarded. And when Asa heard these words, and the prophecy of Oded the prophet, he took courage, and put away the abominable idols out of all the land of Judah and Benjamin, and out of the cities which he had taken from mount Ephraim, and renewed the altar of the LORD, that was before the porch of the LORD.

PRAISE WITH GLADNESS
II. xxix, 20, 27—29

THEN Hezekiah the king rose early, and gathered the rulers of the city, and went up to the house of the LORD. And Hezekiah commanded to offer the burnt offering upon the altar. And when the burnt offering began, the song of the LORD began also with the trumpets, and with the instruments ordained by David king of Israel.

And all the congregation worshipped, and the singers sang, and the trumpeters sounded: and all this continued until the burnt offering was finished. And when they had made an end of offering, the king and all that were present with him bowed themselves, and worshipped.

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"I WILL BRING THEM AGAIN TO THIS LAND." Ezra having been granted permission by the edict of Artaxerxes to lead a number of his compatriots from Babylonia to Jerusalem, "gathered together out of Israel chief men to go up" with him (Ezra vii, 28; viii, 31). Learned in the law, probably at the head of a body of scholarly Jewish students in exile, he was zealously desirous of helping his people already returned to Palestine. Leaving his life of ease and taking costly offerings from the king for the Temple, he departed with his followers. As they journeyed they gave thanks to God for deliverance from "the enemy and such as lay in wait," and so came safely to the home of their fathers.

Photo, Press Topics

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Ezra & Nehemiah

I

The Books in Outline

From the Rivers of Babylon to Zion's Holy Mount

by VERY REV. S. C. CARPENTER, M.A., D.D.

Dean of Exeter and Prebendary of Exeter Cathedral; Former Master of the Temple; Author of "Politics and Society in the Old Testament," etc.

THE Captivity in Babylon, which lasted roughly for two generations, or the seventy years which Jeremiah had foretold, is the decisive event in Old Testament history. Just as everything in modern biology is either pre-Darwinian or post-Darwinian, so everything in Hebrew history is either pre-exilic or post-exilic. Or to take two more examples, the sojourn "by the waters of Babylon" made as much difference to the Hebrews as the Reformation made to North-West Europe or the revolution of 1917 has made to Russia.

The difference is sometimes expressed by saying that the Hebrews went into captivity a nation and returned a church. Or it might be said that in Babylon they were converted. What is meant is this. Their religion had been for centuries ultra-national. There was not very much of what we should call personal religion about it. They had in their bones the deep conviction that Jehovah was their God. Further, they had no doubt that Jehovah was a better and more powerful deity than Chemosh or Milcom, the gods of the Moabites and the Ammonites, or any other divine being of whom they had heard tell. Had He not brought them out from the house of bondage in Egypt, made them a great nation, and given them a Law?

This Law was indeed a great and peculiar treasure. One of the things which make us believe that Israel really was a chosen and inspired nation, and that its insignificant little civilization deserved to survive, as it has done, and have a profound effect, as it has had, on the mind of the world, arises out of the nature of the Law. It had an ethical quality which was absent from contemporary codes. Jehovah desired them to be moral as well as pious. Of this the very ancient Decalogue, or Ten Commandments, which is the kernel of the Law, is clear evidence.

Religious Nationalism in the Hebrew State

AT the same time they were what we should call over-institutional in their use of it. Jehovah, they said, had bound Himself to them by covenant. He was their God. They were His people. If they fulfilled their part of the covenant, if they refrained from the worship of other gods, if they offered the proper sacrifices and paid the proper dues, then Jehovah would see them through. He would give them victory in the battle. He would "ease them of their adversaries, and avenge them of their enemies." There was not much private devotion or repentance or desire for personal holiness.

It is true that Amos and other prophets had continually warned them that their nationalism was, as Edith Cavell said, "not enough." They for their part were quite content with it. Amos thundered at their complacency. "The day of Jehovah," to which they confidently looked forward, would not be, when it came, a day of triumph, but a day of judgement, under which they themselves would come like anybody else. In fact, they more than others. "You only have I known of all the families of the earth: therefore I will visit upon you all your iniquities" (Amos iii, 2 R.V.). But they did not believe Amos. They went on believing in their star.

Captivity's Challenge to the Exiles

AT last the time came when it seemed that Jehovah could no longer give them victory in the battle. Instead of being victorious, they were overwhelmed by their enemies. Their beloved city was taken, their Holy Temple was laid waste, and the flower of their population, all the "good figs" of the crop (Jeremiah, xxiv, 5), were carried away into Babylonia. The object of these wholesale deportations by conquerors in ancient times was indeed to break down national religion and national solidarity. It was thought that the deported population, no longer able to worship the national God on the national soil, would lose their old spirit, would intermarry with their new neighbours, would be de-nationalized, and would settle down as peaceful subjects of their conquerors.

For the exiled Hebrews two things were possible. Firstly, they might be won over to the side of the conqueror; they might allow themselves to be merged in the Babylonian Empire, as the Northern Tribes had already become lost among the peoples round Nineveh. They would thus lose their national identity and their national religion. There was much to incline them to this course. It might be thought quite evident that Jehovah their God was not so strong as the Babylonian deities. The natural thing, the obvious thing, was to conclude that their old religion was of no use. It did not "deliver the goods." And that is what some of them did. They became Babylonians in culture, politics and religion.

But there was another course—less natural, perhaps, but more in accordance with the supernatural vocation of this people—and to those who took it is owed the fact that the life of their nation did continue and that their literature is now one of the great possessions of the world. This other possibility was to dig down beneath the surface, to realize the meaning of the

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things which had been said by the earlier prophets, and to find a real religion, a super-national, spiritual religion, independent of either geography or economics, of place or prosperity. We can see in Psalm cxxxvii ("By the waters of Babylon we sat down and wept . . . . How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land ?") how one devout exile was feeling the hardness of the new conditions. It did not perhaps seem to him quite impossible to lift up his voice in the old sacred melodies, but it did seem difficult. The writer of another song, one that happens to occur very soon after in the Psalter, has surmounted this difficulty. He has reached the sublime conclusion that Jehovah is omnipresent and all-ruling. "If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea ; Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me" (Psalm cxxxix, 9, 10).

Not all the exiles, even those who kept themselves from falling away altogether, attained to this splendid faith. Even those who did attain to it nevertheless longed to return. Jeremiah had written to them from Jerusalem (Chapter xxix), advising them to settle down for the present and to work for a living and to seek the peace of the city of their exile, *i.e.*, to be loyal to the Babylonian authorities. They were not ill-treated, and on the whole they did pretty well.

The later stories relating to the period which are contained in the Books of Daniel and Esther suggest that some of them attained to high positions, and it is probable that their national talent for finance, especially when they were surrounded by foreigners out of whom it seemed no sin to make gain, led to a certain measure of prosperity. But they were exiles, and they never ceased to long for a return to their native land.

So far as religion was concerned, there was no Temple, and therefore no sacrifice. But they occupied themselves in collecting and editing their sacred books of Law, History, Prophecy, Psalmody and "Wisdom." In the absence of sacrifice they developed a greater capacity for prayer and other practices of personal religion. The fact that Ezekiel had been raised up to prophesy even in Babylon proved that Jehovah had not forsaken them, and part of Ezekiel's prophecy was a glorious picture of what the restored worship of the Temple would be. "The name of the city from that day shall be, The LORD is there" (Ezekiel xlviii, 35).

Thus they were not altogether unprepared for a summons in the name of Jehovah to return. The first trumpet call of this was sounded by an unknown prophet, whose writings have somehow become attached to those of Isaiah (Chapters xl—xlviii, and perhaps also xlix—liv). His "Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people, saith your God" was the inspiration of the movement. His glowing rhetoric :

> Prepare ye the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low : and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain : And the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together : for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it—

was so splendid, so encouraging, that it pierced through the worldly attractions of comparative prosperity in Babylon, and steeled their resolution to return.

For the first time it had become politically possible. The power of Babylon had been overthrown by Cyrus in 538 B.C. Deutero-Isaiah, a name by which it is convenient to call the unknown prophet, hails him as the deliverer. He even goes so far in one place as to speak of him as "the anointed of Israel." This was more than J. R. Lowell meant by his "Some great cause, God's new Messiah." It was personal. The prophet was sure that Cyrus himself had been raised up by God to bring about the return. Cyrus was not, as suggested in II. Chronicles xxxvi, 23 and Ezra i, 2, a believer in Jehovah. Like any other Gentile king, he had his own gods.

Deutero-Isaiah is full of denunciations of Babylonian idolatry. With fine irony he reminds his hearers that men make fires for themselves with wood. They warm themselves, they cook their food. And then with the remainder of the same tree they make a god and worship it ! So far from being able to deliver their devotees, the gods themselves must be carried from place to place on the backs of weary beasts of burden. They are impotent to save, or to be saved (Isaiah xliv, 10-20 ; xlvi, 1, 2, 6, 7).

Cyrus himself was probably too enlightened to fall

EZRA & NEHEMIAH:

A Synopsis

Ezra's Narrative

	Chapters
The Proclamation of Cyrus	i
The Exiles who Returned	ii
Worship Resumed at Jerusalem ...	iii
Hindrances to the Work	iv
The Decree of Darius	v, 6–vi, 13
Feast of Dedication	vi, 13-22
Arrival of Ezra in Jerusalem	vii
Ezra's Confession and Prayer	ix
Work of Reformation	x

Nehemiah's Account

Nehemiah's Prayer	i
His Arrival in Jerusalem	ii
Builders of the Wall	iii
Workers and Watchmen	iv
Sanballat's Evil Practices	vi
Reading and Hearing the Law ...	viii
Levites' Religious Confession	ix, 4-38
Sealing the Covenant	x
Roll-call of Laymen and Priests ...	xi-xii, 43
Nehemiah's Reformation	xiii

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wholly under this lash. His own religion may well have been of a rather more spiritual kind, and in any case he was a man of more tolerant temper than the Babylonian kings. He was willing to reverse the policy of his predecessors. He may even have thought that it would be a good thing to enlist the prayers of the Hebrews to their God for his own new reign. At all events it was a wise policy, and the Hebrews were not the only captive nation to be repatriated.

There is a certain difficulty about reconstructing the history of the Return. Some of the authorities (*e.g.*, Haggai and Zechariah i-viii, and the actual memoirs of Ezra and Nehemiah, *i.e.*, the parts written in the first person) are contemporary documents. The two Books which have come down to us under the titles of Ezra and Nehemiah were compiled from various sources by one editor, and are really a continuation of Chronicles. They were written long afterwards, and the order and dating of events have become confused. Further, the editors of these books were of what is called the priestly school, and in all good faith they over-emphasized the part played by the priests, and also exaggerated the hostility of the "Samaritans." There is a tendency in Old Testament writers to take for granted that institutions and customs with which they were themselves familiar had existed at the dates about which they are writing. It is as if we supposed that eighteenth-century English churchmen had Parochial Church Councils or sang hymns out of "Ancient and Modern." At the time of the writing of the books the priests were the leading class, and the Samaritans were definitely hostile. Both these facts have been read back into the earlier history.

"TWO BASKETS OF FIGS." Pausing in their task of sorting figs, these Syrian market-women refresh themselves with a taste of their wares. The first ripe figs are the finest, but the peasants distinguish many grades in the fruit, which almost equals olives and grapes in importance. The two baskets recall those of the good and bad figs in Jeremiah's vision, one denoting the worthy remnant of Judah that would return from the Babylonian captivity (Jeremiah xxiv) and the other the evil "residue of Jerusalem" that would be utterly destroyed.

Photo, W. F. Taylor

Answering the Call of the Homeland

THUS, it has been suggested that the early stages of the Return did not amount to very much, that the Temple was really rebuilt for the most part by Jews who had never left the Holy Land, and also, with much more probability, that Nehemiah the layman really preceded Ezra the priest by nearly fifty years. It might be interesting to some readers, but it is impossible for lack of space to go into the whole question here. It must suffice to give the outline of the Old Testament story, using it as far as possible in what may be called a historical way. What is certain is that the Jews resumed their national life amid a good deal of opposition, and built it up with a faith which was politically precarious but religiously very strong.

It appears not only from the Book of Ezra, but from the prophets Haggai and Zechariah, that leaders were at hand in Joshua the High Priest and in Zerubbabel, the son of Shealtiel, a prince of the royal house. Zerubbabel may be the same person as Sheshbazzar, who is also mentioned as a leader, or he may be a kinsman of his. Or Sheshbazzar may have been only a Persian official who was put in charge of the pilgrimage. Anyhow, there were leaders, because movements like this do not take place unless there are some to take the lead. A comparatively small number of the bolder spirits among the exiles volunteered to make the toilsome and dangerous journey. Others, not wanting to leave their commitments in Babylon, nevertheless were ready to subscribe to the funds. Cyrus allowed the gold and silver vessels, which Nebuchadnezzar had carried away from the Temple, to be brought back. Laden with this treasure, and encouraged by hope and

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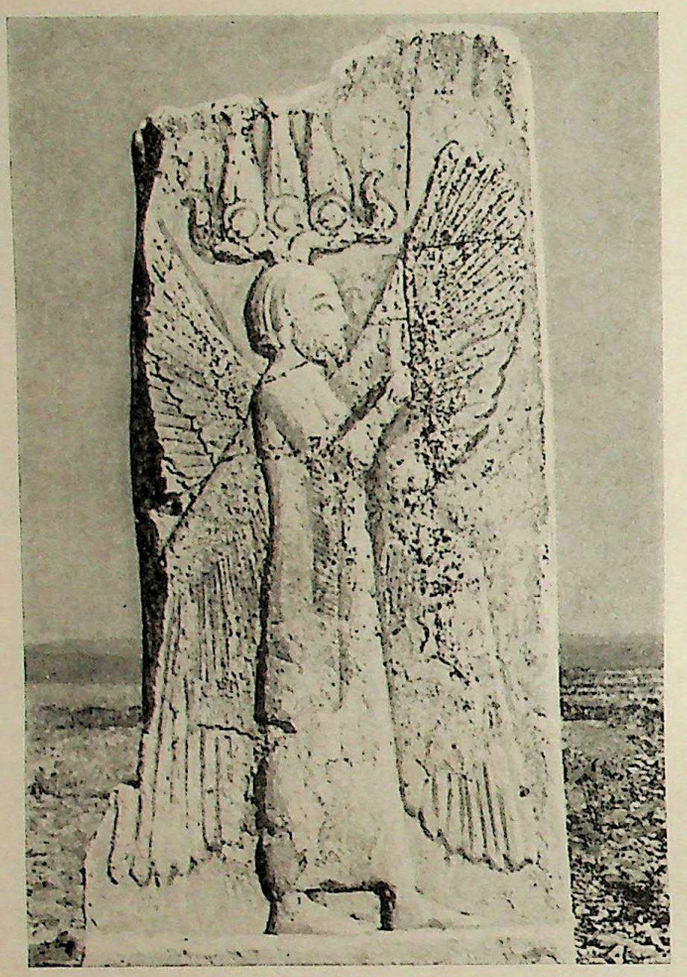

"CYRUS KING OF BABYLON." Having united the Medes and Persians under his rule, Cyrus the Great (558-529 B.C.) added all the Asiatic lands of Assyria and Babylonia to his empire. On a bas-relief from Pasargadae he is apotheosized as a winged figure with crown of goat's horns and solar disks. His humane aspect as liberator of the Jews and restorer of the Temple is presented in the Book of Ezra.

From Dieulafoy, "L'Art Antique en Perse"

a good conscience, they set off. Not a few of the pilgrims may have perished on the journey. Some perhaps turned back before they had gone very far. The distance from Babylon to Jerusalem is, as the crow flies, about five hundred miles, but the natural thing to do would be to avoid the desert, and that would make the actual journey about twice as long. Yet there is a proverbial difference between a faint heart and a stout heart when it is a question of miles.

When they arrived, the first thing they did was to set up an altar and keep the Feast of Tabernacles. The Feast of Tabernacles was a memorial of the period of wandering in the Arabian desert after the Exodus, before they had ever entered the promised land. It was felt that that had been a strenuous and virile period, and the best elements in Hebrew life, *e.g.*, Elijah the prophet, had always been eager to recall the Israelites in times of growing luxury back to the old simplicity. During this Feast it was the custom for the people to picnic for a week in temporary booths and lead the simple life. From henceforth the Feast would remind them not only of the Exodus but of the Return from Exile.

The next thing was to rebuild the Temple. This was the declared purpose of the journey, and this was expressly provided in the terms of the royal permit. Yet they had no houses to live in themselves, and when faced by Haggai's challenge to make a beginning with the Temple, they used, like all half-hearted people, "the argument of the unripe time." They said, "It is not the time for us to come, the time for the Lord's house to be built" (Haggai i, 2 R.V.).

But Haggai said, "I will shake all nations, and the desirable things of all nations shall come, and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of hosts. The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the Lord of hosts. The latter glory of this house shall be greater than the former, saith the Lord of hosts: and in this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of hosts" (Haggai ii, 7-9 R.V.).

Meantime Zechariah was teaching them by reporting the visions he had seen. He saw Joshua, the high priest, standing before Jehovah, clad in filthy garments, and Satan standing at his right hand to be his adversary. It should be noted that Satan here has not yet become the devil of later tradition. He is a cynical being of superhuman capacity who is always ready to believe the worst about mankind, and feels satisfaction when man gets into trouble. This is his nature in the Book of Job (i, 9). As the vision proceeds the Lord directs that the high priest be clothed with rich apparel and that a fair mitre be set upon his head. This is a sign that the good hand of God is with the returned exiles. Another vision shewed the work of Joshua and Zerubabbel, leaders in Church and State, under the figure of a seven-branched candlestick or lamp-stand, fed from two olive trees on either side. These represented "the two sons of oil, that stand by the Lord of the whole earth" (Zechariah iv, 14 R.V.), and indicated "Not by might or power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts."

Obstacles in the Path of Restoration

OPPOSITION came from the "Samaritans." These seem to have been a people of mixed race. They were partly the remains of the old ten Northern Tribes, those of them who had not been deported into Assyria, and also the peoples from elsewhere who had been introduced by the Assyrians (*see* II. Kings xvii, 24). No doubt some of the southern people of Judah who had been left behind after the conquest of Nebuchadnezzar had intermarried with them. The mixed population now wanted to be allowed to join in the work, and on being refused permission they did their best to hinder the work. They "weakened the hands of the people of Judah, and hindered them in building." They may have also tried to stir up the authorities against the builders. At all events, Tattenai, the Persian satrap of Syria, demanded to know by what right they were building. A search was made in the royal records and it was found that permission had been given by Cyrus. Nevertheless, opposition continued right on into the period of Nehemiah.

The exact course of events is rather obscure, and there is some confusion between the accounts of the building of the Temple and of the city walls. But

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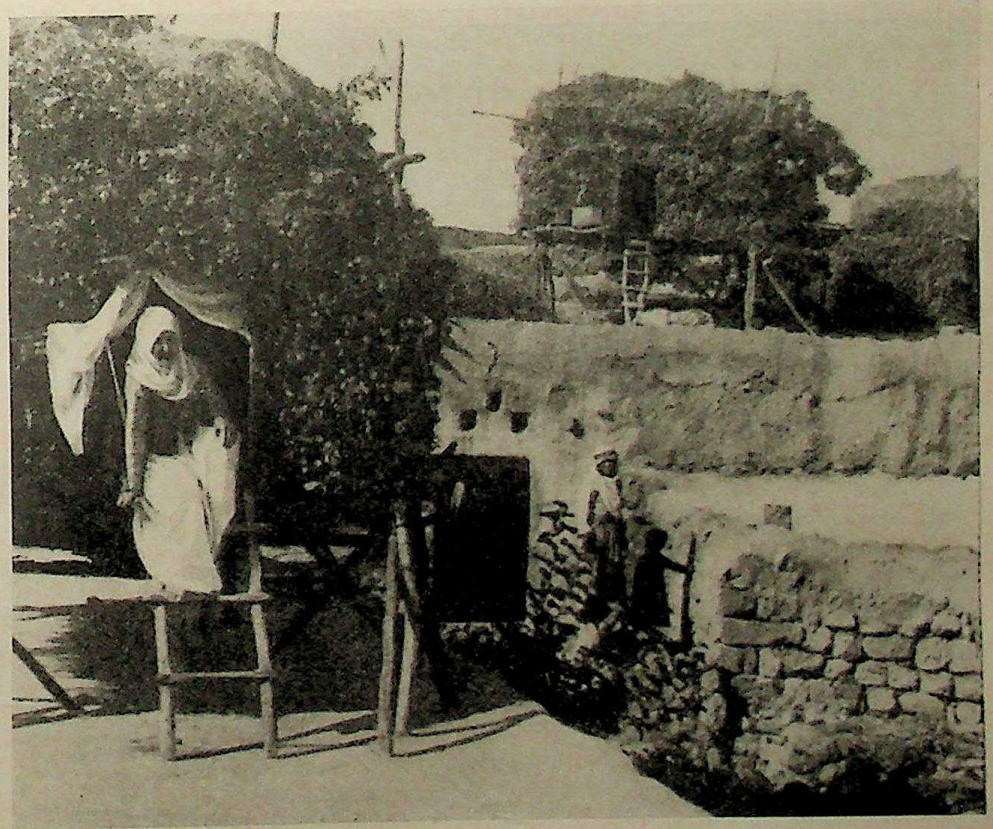
thanks to the encouragement of Zerubbabel, Joshua and the prophets, Haggai and Zechariah, the Temple was built and dedicated in 516. The old men—there cannot have been very many of them—who remembered Solomon's Temple, had wept aloud when the foundations were first laid. That had been built by a great king for a powerful people. This was the work of a feeble little company of returned exiles, repatriated by the whim of a tyrant, suffered by him to rebuild their ruined sanctuary and to re-establish the ceremonies of their religion. Others shouted aloud for joy, a joy shared by all when the work was finished.

The dedication of the new Temple took the form of a gigantic sacrifice, a hundred bullocks, two hundred rams, four hundred lambs. The custom of animal sacrifice seems strange to us, but the idea was that the blood was the life of the victim and the life of the victim represented the life of the offerer. In primitive days there had been human sacrifice. The story of Abraham and Isaac seems to date from the time when the most enlightened people, those who had most of the spirit of God in them, first began to feel in their conscience that human sacrifice was intolerable. God was not really like that. He could not really desire the sacrifice of a son. In this way came in the more humane, but, of course, still imperfect, way of offering animal life. It was an expression of a true instinct. Man does not want to come before God empty-handed. He wants to give that which has cost something. Hence the ancient, world-wide custom of sacrifice, a custom which Christianity satisfies in another way. The Cross of Christ and the Christian altar have taught the world that sacrifice is still essential, but that God does not need the blood of bulls and lambs. We now have boldness, as the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews says, to enter into the holy place by the blood of Jesus, by the way which he dedicated for us, a new and living way.

The Dedication was followed by a Passover. Seven days they ate unleavened bread, and on the seventh day the priests slew the lambs, and the people ate the Passover in memory of the day when Jehovah had brought them out of Egypt. The hand of the Lord, they said, is not shortened. He has now renewed His mercies and brought us back once more into our beloved land. They kept the feast with joy, for the Lord had made them joyful.

From that time the Temple stood until it was rebuilt by Herod the Great. It was the centre of their religion and of their national life. Psalm after Psalm testifies to its hold on their affections. It was "a fair place, and the joy of the whole earth." They "waited for the loving-kindness of God in the midst of the Temple." They were puzzled by the inequalities of life. It was "too hard for them to understand, until they went into the Sanctuary of God. Then understood they the end of the ungodly." It seemed to them "better to be a doorkeeper in the house of their God" than to dwell amid sinful luxury. They lifted up their eyes unto the hill of Zion, "whence came their help." Their best wish for their children was that they might be "as the polished corners of the Temple."

THERE were outer courts, a Holy Place, and a Holy of Holies. In old days it had been impossible to suppress altogether the custom of sacrificing at a number of sanctuaries or "high places" all over the country. The main reform of the reforming King Josiah was the centralizing of the cult. The law of the one sanctuary, as laid down in the Book of Deuteronomy, was enforced by him. From the day of the Return there was no more difficulty. The Temple and the Temple alone reigned in the heart of the nation. Three times a year the adult males from all parts of Judah went on pilgrimage to their "Zion."



"DWELL IN BOOTHS IN THE FEAST OF THE SEVENTH MONTH." While studying the Law of Moses, Ezra with the scribes, priests and Levites, found that the Feast of the Tabernacles was due to be celebrated. Nehemiah therefore issued the proclamation: "Go forth unto the mount, and fetch olive branches, and pine branches, and myrtle branches, and palm branches, and branches of thick trees, to make booths" (Nehemiah viii, 15). The people joyously erected on their roofs leafy shelters—after the manner of these recently photographed in Palestine during the feast which commemorates the journey from Egypt.

Photo, W. F. Taylor

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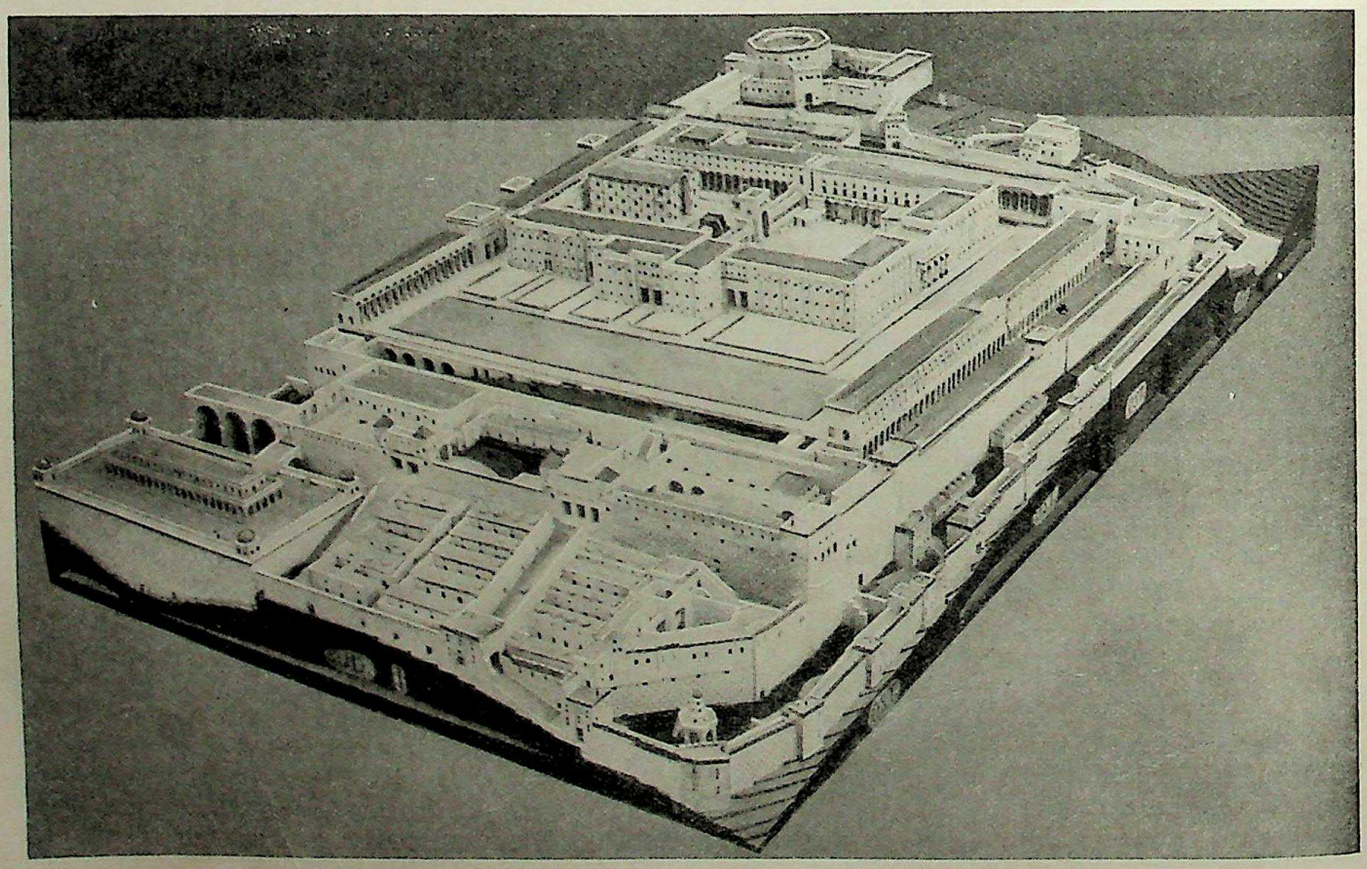
and one of the songs which they sang as they went up was "I was glad when they said unto me: we will go into the house of the Lord. Our feet shall stand in thy gates, O Jerusalem."

Nearly sixty years after the first Return, and very likely much later than this (the Book of Ezra is content to say "After these things, in the reign of Artaxerxes, King of Persia") Ezra appears in the story. He was a priest and also a scribe, *i.e.*, learned in the Law. He was one of those who helped to codify and arrange the legal and liturgical system. Moses had been the founder, and there had been gradual accumulations through case-law and the development of custom. Ezekiel had done something of this arranging work in Babylon. Ezra continued it. There was Law, there was History, there were Psalms and Proverbs, all needing to be set in order.

Ezra and Nehemiah are a contrast. It sounds trivial, but it is a characteristic difference that when things went wrong with Ezra he plucked off the hair of his head, and of his beard (Ezra ix, 3), but when Nehemiah was faced with opposition, he plucked out the hair of his opponents (Nehemiah xiii, 25). Ezra was a priest. He would not set out until he had secured the presence of some of the sons of Levi to go with him. He began his journey by proclaiming a fast, and he was ashamed to ask of the king soldiers and horsemen, because he had said to the king, "The hand of our God is upon all who seek him, for good."

When Ezra arrived, he was distressed to find that the holy seed of Israel had intermarried with the people of the land. In the name of all he made a public confession of the sin. It seems strange to us that the language of his confession, which has often been borrowed by Christian people for the purpose of expressing their own penitence, relates only or mainly to this single fault. Yet it must be remembered that they were a small population, charged with a great vocation. When a higher civilization intermarries on a large scale with a lower, the stock always deteriorates. The better does not seem to elevate the worse, but is dragged down by it. As for the Jews, "the wealth divine they had in charge" might have perished, if they had not kept it from contamination by the semi-heathen people around them.

THE policy of Ezra was not universally accepted. The charming story contained in the Book of Ruth was actually written to oppose his policy. It was a manifesto, in the liberal interest. It was written to draw attention to the fact that among the ancestresses of the great King David, hero of Israelite tradition, was the Moabitish woman, Ruth. But the policy of Ezra, in which Nehemiah concurred, was that which eventually prevailed. It had some unpleasing consequences. The strict nationalism of the Pharisees which we find in the Gospels was the outcome of it. But it may well be that Christianity would not have



THE SECOND TEMPLE BUILT IN JERUSALEM. After the long years of the Babylonian Captivity, the Children of Israel, allowed by Cyrus to return to Jerusalem under Zerubbabel, began to rebuild the House of the Lord (Ezra iii, 8). Finished and dedicated in 516 B.C., the actual structure was a meagre one compared with Solomon's glorious edifice, as may be seen if the photograph of this model by Sir Joseph Schick is compared with that shown in page 448. The palaces and houses belonging to David's city, here represented below the Temple Area, were in ruins when this temple was built.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

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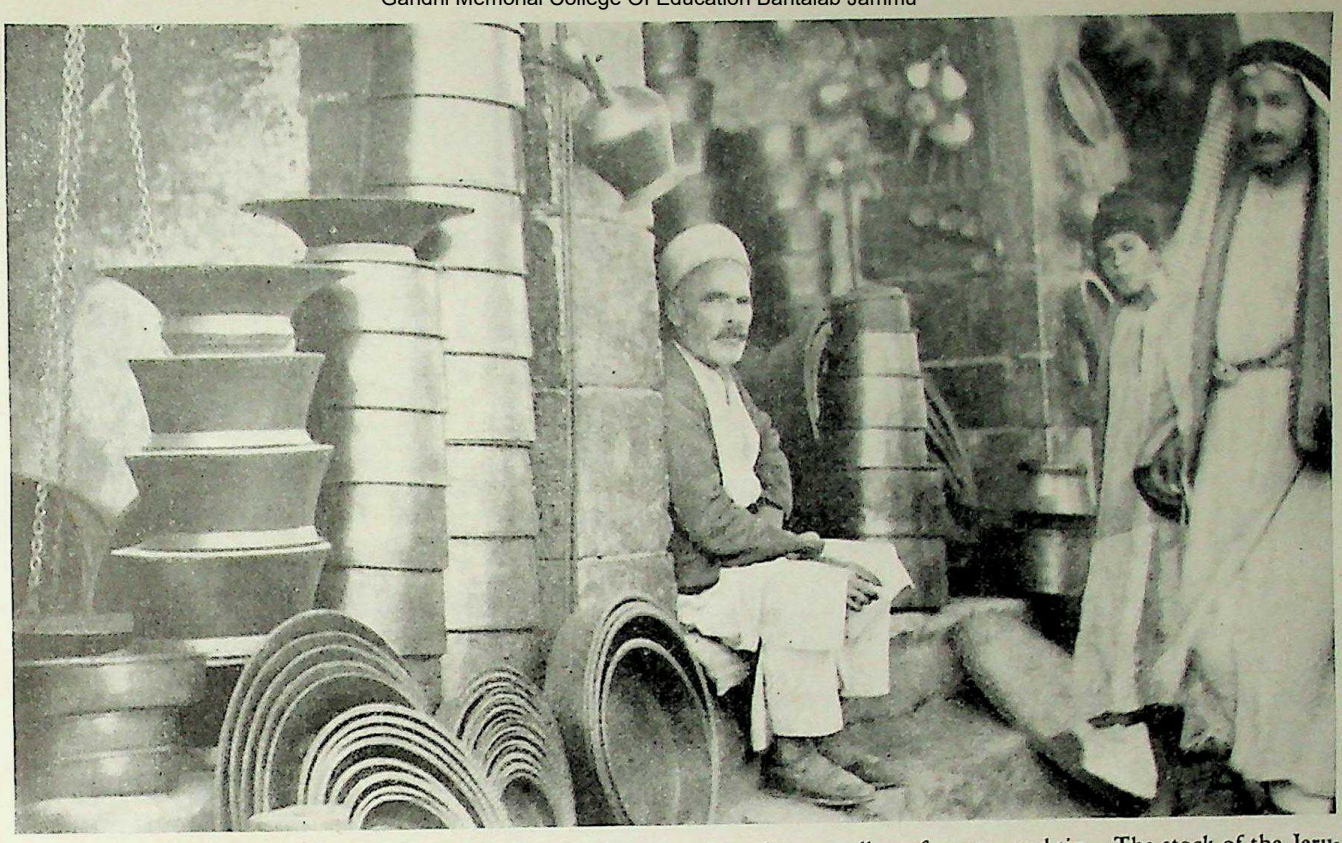

"VESSELS OF FINE COPPER." Among the offerings for the Temple entrusted by Ezra to the safe keeping of twelve priests who went up with him to Jerusalem, were "two vessels of fine copper, precious as gold" (Ezra viii, 27). Found in Lebanon, but not within Palestine, pure copper had a value above bronze, alloy of copper and tin. The stock of the Jerusalem copper store pictured above is traditional in its shapes. Such pots and pans were used in prosperous households from ancient Hebrew times. The metal "basons" for Temple service were probably similar to the bowls stacked on the left.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

become the possession of the world if the Jews had not maintained that which led up to it. We constantly owe much more than we think to those who in previous generations held on to what they had in trust and were called narrow-minded. Ezra at all events had the courage of his convictions, and he prevailed. He persuaded those who had entered upon these mixed marriages to put away their foreign wives.

Next we hear of Nehemiah. It is tempting to believe that he must really have come before Ezra, because it seems hardly likely that the thing which Nehemiah the soldier, clothed with government authority, found so difficult, had already been done so easily by Ezra the priest. Nevertheless, according to the Book of Nehemiah, he appears twelve years after Ezra in 445. We do not know what happened in the interim, if there was one, but it is certain that Nehemiah found the walls in ruins, the Samaritans bitterly opposed to any project of rebuilding them, and that Ezra, in spite of his success in the difficult matter of intermarriage, could give no instruction on the Law before the arrival of Nehemiah. This looks as if Nehemiah really laid the foundation of reform in this matter, and Ezra carried on.

Nehemiah was cup-bearer to the king of Persia, Artaxerxes. He was on duty at Shushan or Susa, the king's winter residence, when he had bad news from Jerusalem. The Temple had long since been rebuilt and was still standing, but it seems that there had been some attempt to rebuild the walls and gates, and that these had been broken down and burned, probably by the Samaritans. The prayer wrung from him by this grievous news is very characteristic. He was a man of conspicuous piety, an ardent patriot, and his outlook was what we should call ecclesiastical. He thought in terms of "the beloved community." His prayer reveals complete confidence in the covenant made by the Lord with Moses. "These are thy servants and thy people, whom thou hast redeemed by thy great power and by thy strong hand." He determined to ask for leave of absence from the king.

Two interesting points emerge in the manner of his doing this. "I had not been," he says, "beforehand sad in his presence." An oriental who is in distress shows it plainly by his demeanour. On the other hand it was not the thing for a servant to exhibit signs of mourning in the presence of his master. Nehemiah took the risk. The king happened to be in a good temper and asked the reason for his sadness. Nehemiah, with a silent prayer in his heart "to the God of Heaven," took his courage in both hands and begged not only to be allowed to go to Jerusalem, but to have building materials granted for his use. The oriental despot was liable to sudden fits of generosity, and Artaxerxes gave leave.

AT Jerusalem Nehemiah first surveyed the ground secretly by night. His aim was to build the walls, and he knew that there would be opposition from the Samaritans, to whom he was determined to allow no share in the work. Chief among the adversaries were Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the Ammonite. They laughed him to scorn. "What is this thing that you do? Will you rebel against the king?" We hear of them at intervals throughout the book. But Nehemiah had character and firmness, and he had his

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royal authority. He had thought out a practical plan for parcelling out the work among families and he persuaded the leading Jews to make a beginning—"Come and let us build up the walls of Jerusalem, that we be no more a reproach. And I told them of the hand of my God which was good upon me: as also of the king's words which he had spoken unto me. And they said, let us rise up and build."

The work began. Sanballat mocked them. "What do these feeble Jews? will they fortify themselves? will they sacrifice? That which they build, if a fox go up, he shall break down that which they build." Human nature does not change, and there is a strong instinct which causes mean-spirited people to disparage and even to hinder a work from which they have been excluded themselves. Nehemiah was both pious and vigilant. He trusted in God and the goodness of his cause, and he set half his men to wait under arms, while others worked at building.

The hostility of the Samaritans was not the only difficulty. Some of the richer Jews had turned money-lender and had victimized their fellow-citizens. Poor men had mortgaged their fields, their vineyards, their houses, to pay the king's taxes and to buy food. They had even been compelled to sell their children into slavery. Nehemiah took up the work of social and economic reform. He protested to the rich men, and "contended with them." The Law was merciful to the poor man, and forbade the exacting of usury from fellow-Jews. Nehemiah had unthinkingly done this himself, though not to excess. He had also out of his own pocket redeemed many slaves, and had entertained many guests at his table every day. He put it to them now that with so much work to be done, and with opposition from without, it was no time for internal dissension. He himself was ready to lead the reform. Would they not cut their losses, and forgive the debts? They agreed, and took an oath before the priest. Thus scandal was averted, and suffering relieved.

Nehemiah's Perseverance Wins the Day

SANBALLAT then resorted to a trick. He invited Nehemiah to a conference. "Let us meet together in one of the villages of the plain of Ono." Nehemiah smelt mischief, and replied "I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down." Sanballat then threatened to report to the king of Persia that Jerusalem was plotting to set up a monarchy. Nehemiah had no difficulty in disproving this. There had been no idea of any such thing. Sanballat then had the ingenious idea of bribing one of the Jerusalem priests to suggest to Nehemiah that his life was in danger and that he would be well advised to take refuge in the Temple. Nehemiah saw through that too. It would have been an act of cowardice, and also an act of sacrilege.

In spite of all this, and perhaps to some extent because of it, because opposition is stimulating, the wall was finished, and the city was at last secure. It only took fifty-two days, but it must be remembered that it was the work of many hands, and the materials were all at hand. Nehemiah's next step was to place a rota of guards on the walls, and to increase the population of the city by gathering in some of the people from the neighbouring villages.

Then suddenly Ezra reappears. This is puzzling. Where had he been? He reads aloud to all the people the Law of Moses. He seems to have read a few verses at a time, and then scribes expounded the meaning. One of the passages that Ezra read was the command to keep the Feast of Tabernacles. The people ran to the Mount of Olives, and gathered branches to make booths for themselves on the roofs of their houses. So for seven days they kept the Feast, and each day the Law was read again.

Solemn Dedication of the Rebuilt Walls

THIS done, they observed a national fast. For three hours the Law was read aloud, and for three hours they stood, confessing their sins, and acknowledging the merciful providence of God, in past centuries and to that day. One by one they solemnly set their seals to a renewal of the Covenant with God. They engaged themselves to keep from contact with heathenism and heathens, and to perform all the obligations of their faith. The walls were then dedicated, with such rejoicing, and such music, that "the joy of Jerusalem was heard even afar off."

Twelve years elapse. Nehemiah had returned to Susa. When he came back to Jerusalem, he found laxity everywhere. The high-priest had become a kinsman to Tobiah the Ammonite, and had admitted him to a lodging in the Temple itself.

Nehemiah indignantly cast him out, together with his household stuff, and caused devout priests to purify the chamber. The Levites had not received their stipends. He appointed treasurers, and provided for the proper payment of the stipends. He denounced the sabbath-breakers, who traded on the day of rest. He rebuked the Jews who had been party to this, and drove the outside traders from the gates. He found that Jews had again intermarried with Gentiles, and that their half-caste children could not speak in the Jews' language. "I contended with them, and cursed them, and smote certain of them, and plucked off their hair."

The curtain then falls on this simple, straightforward, ecclesiastically-minded man. His eye was single, and the path to him seemed straight. It was his mission to rebuild the walls, and to preserve the holy seed from heathen corruption. He did it roughly, but there are situations when roughness seems the only remedy. He could not forbear to curse his enemies. "Remember them, O my God, because they have defiled the priesthood and the covenant." For himself he says with unquestioning faith, "Remember me, O my God, for good."

Thus ends the simple chronicle of the restoration of a people's life. Their holy Temple has been rebuilt, their beloved city is once more encircled by stout walls. The scene is set for the last Act.

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Ezra & Nehemiah

II

The Story of the Books

Diaries that Describe the Return from the Babylonian Captivity

by CANON P. W. H. KETTLEWELL, M.A.

Vicar of Buckland, Aylesbury, Bucks; Lately Head Master of St. Andrew's College, Grahamstown, South Africa; Author of "Ruth," "Ezra," "Nehemiah," etc.

SOME three hundred years after the Reformation in England Dean Milman published his "History of Latin Christianity." He could look back nineteen hundred years and see the growth of Christ's Church, and he could find plenty of material on which to base his writing. And somewhere about 300 B.C. the same sort of thing happened in Judaea.

Somebody whose name we do not know conceived the idea of a history of the Jewish Church. He had material to hand, notably the Books of Kings. But there were also at his service temple records, genealogies, decrees of bygone kings, and for the latter part of his work, two "diaries" by Ezra and Nehemiah. So he set to work, but not at all as a modern author would set to work. It was rather a matter of using scissors and pastepot. He would cut out extracts from his various authorities and paste them together, adding words of his own to connect the various passages, recasting decrees of foreign kings in Jewish form, and emphasizing such things as suited his purpose, for example, Temple regulations and priestly ordinances. He would deliberately omit anything that seemed foreign to his purpose. For example, when using the Books of Kings he omits as far as possible the History of the Northern Kingdom of Israel. In the Book of Ezra he omits a period of sixty years, going on to a new incident with the expression "after these things" (Ezra vii, 1). All this seems strange to the modern mind. Such work would not be tolerated today. But there is nothing dishonest about it. Every one of his readers knew that he was compiling and not writing an original work, and were quite used to this type of literature. The Historical books of the Old Testament were similarly compiled. Our author called his work "Chronicles," which work in a later age was split up into I. and II. Chronicles, Ezra and Nehemiah.

Differences in Literary Style

NATURALLY in such a work there will be differences in style and character of writing. Some of his extracts will be from authors who wrote before the days of Ezra and their characteristics will naturally differ from those of Ezra's period. Even in our own two books the same sort of thing is apparent. Nehemiah's diary is more scholarly than Ezra's and shows later influences. Parts of the books were even written in the "Lingua-Franca" of the Near East, Aramaic, and not in Hebrew. In such a compilation, mistakes are sure to occur. Our compiler was no great historian; he is a religious writer whose object is to trace God's work in a particular people. He traces this work very roughly from Adam by means of genealogies, but soon limits it to the Empire of David and afterwards to the Kingdom of Judah and to the Jewish people after the destruction of the kingdom by Nebuchadnezzar. Therefore anything irrelevant to his purpose is left out, and what seems relevant is put in, sometimes quite wrongly. The best example of this is the letter to Artaxerxes (Ezra iv, 7-23), which had nothing to do with the matter in hand, the rebuilding of the Temple, but refers to an interruption in the rebuilding of the City Walls at a later date.

But even in a work of this kind the individuality of the compiler is apparent. His work reflects the ideas of his own age. He lived under a theocratic system, *i.e.*, God is King and his representative is the High Priest, who, with his Council, governs the nation in accordance with the Mosaic Law. Naturally, then, the work makes much of the Temple and priestly organization. We may even feel that he was a Levite because he makes so much of the Levites and their assistants (Nethinim). At any rate, such a theory fits in well with the whole structure of his work wherein history is used as a proof of his theology, wherein the development of Judaism gives full opportunity for the introduction and emphasis of priestly regulation with which the compiler is very familiar.

Fixing the Date of the Books

THE fixing of an accurate date to many books of the Bible is very difficult, sometimes impossible, but in this case there can be little doubt. The story of Ezra and Nehemiah covers a period which can be definitely fixed. The "first year of Cyrus" (Ezra i, 1) was 538 B.C. "Darius the King" (Ezra vi, 1) began his reign in 522 B.C. The Temple was completed in 516 B.C. Artaxerxes I (Ezra viii, 1) reigned from 465 B.C. to 425 B.C. and during that period the mission of Ezra and the two visits of Nehemiah occurred. Further, one Jaddua, the High Priest, 351-331 B.C., is mentioned (Nehemiah xii, 22) and there is no valid reason for suggesting that this is an interpolation. Lastly "Darius the Persian" (Nehemiah xii, 22) is Codomannus who began to reign in 336 B.C. and in whose day Alexander put an end to the Persian Empire.

Obviously the author wrote after these events, probably some years later. He uses the expression "King of Persia" (Ezra i, 1, etc.), whereas had he lived under Persian supremacy he must have said simply "The King" or "The Great King." Again he speaks of "the days of Nehemiah" (Nehemiah xii, 26) as of a period long past. But he shows no knowledge of the effect on Jewry of the partition of Alexander's Empire, though indeed he shows no knowledge of the struggle between Persia and Greece of the earlier part of the 5th century B.C., nor of Alexander's conquest (333 B.C.). But these two events did not directly affect his own people or the history of Judaism, whereas the effort of the Syrian kings to introduce Greek culture into Judaea brought about the heroic resistance of the Maccabees and form a vital part of the history of the Jewish Church. Hence one may safely assign as date of his work somewhere about the year 300 B.C.

(It is of interest to note that the Greek Bible, called the Septuagint, contains two Books of Esdras, as does the English Apocrypha. Of these II. Esdras is our Book of Ezra; I. Esdras consists of extracts from Chronicles, Ezra, and Nehemiah.)

When we read the psalms of the Exile (cxxxvii, etc.) we are apt to get a false idea of the fate of the Jews deported by Nebuchadnezzar to Mesopotamia. It is

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far from the case that the captives were continually deploring their exile and were living in deplorable conditions. The stories contained in the Book of Daniel reflect a truth, namely, that many Jews rose to positions of eminence and regarded Mesopotamia as their home. This is true of Nehemiah himself (Nehemiah ii, 1). Moreover, the Book of Ezra makes it quite clear that only a minority were willing to undertake the difficult task of repatriation (Ezra i, 4, 11). This minority we should describe today as extremists, people devoted to their country and their religion, who could never be happy on foreign soil.

Political Motives that Facilitated the Return

THIS devotion to God and country had been kept alive during the "captivity" by prophets, notably by Ezekiel and that most spiritual of all the prophets, sometimes called the second Isaiah, because his prophecies came to be incorporated in the Book of Isaiah. Hence in the heart of the Persian Empire there was a discontented population which Cyrus, when he succeeded to the throne of Babylon in 538 B.C., was prompt to recognize as dangerous. If he let these people have their way, was it not at least possible that a contented population in distant Judah might become a useful bulwark of Empire against possible aggression from the South ?

Consequently he issued an edict (recast in Jewish phraseology in Ezra i), calling for volunteers who were ready to return to Judah, and inviting subscriptions in money or in kind from Jews unwilling to return. He himself, as it were, headed the subscription list by presenting to the volunteers the treasures removed from the Temple by Nebuchadnezzar. This gift is indicative of the main object of the returning party, namely, the restoration of the Temple in Jerusalem.

A leader was found in Zerubbabel (the Sheshbazzar of Ezra i, 8), a descendant of the royal house of David. He got together a caravan of some forty thousand people who in due course arrived in Judah via the Euphrates valley and Syria. Their first business was the restoration of the Temple (ii, 68). The great Brazen Altar of Sacrifice was " set upon his bases " (iii, 3), and it is at once evident the part the priests and Levites were to play. Joshua, the chief priest, is the colleague of Zerubbabel and the Temple officials (iii, 2, 4) take a prominent part in setting up the altar and observing the Feast of Tabernacles.

Ezra's Contribution to the Narrative

AFTER this the foundations of the Temple were laid on a very modest scale. For amidst the general rejoicing there rose the sorrowful complaint of the few aged men who could remember the Temple which had been destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar (iii, 12 ; cp. Haggai ii, 3) amongst whom may have been the prophet Haggai. Then trouble began chiefly from the Samaritans, who were descended from the settlers introduced by " Esarhaddon, King of Asshur" (iv, 2 ; cp. II. Kings xvii, 24) (it was really Sargon) and the remnant of the Israelites after the destruction of the Northern Kingdom. They had adopted what the Jews regarded as a degraded form of Judaism (II. Kings xvii, 28) and now they asked to be allowed to join in the restoration of the Temple and were somewhat abruptly repulsed (iv, 3). They at once began making difficulties and intriguing against the Jews at the court of Cyrus (N.B. iv, 6 to the end belongs to a later period) and managed to hold up the work until the reign of Darius. Apparently enthusiasm had died down in the face of opposition and it required the preaching of Haggai and Zechariah (v, 1) to rouse Zerubbabel and Joshua to restart the work.

Then follows a typically oriental touch. Tatnai, satrap (governor) of the country west of Euphrates, wants to know by what authority the restoration was being resumed and refers the matter to the Persian government. Everybody had forgotten all about it ! Darius ordered a search of the archives and the original decree of Cyrus was found at Ecbatana. Whereupon Darius issued a decree not only permitting the work to proceed but ordering Tatnai to contribute towards it out of government funds (vi, 8). So the work was finished in the sixth year of Darius, 516 B.C., and a solemn Passover was observed.

There follows a long gap in the history (vii, 1. " After these things," is 458 B.C.). Things had not gone well in Jerusalem and those who had returned with Zerubbabel had proved incompetent to face their difficulties. So Artaxerxes was induced to send a mission under Ezra to put things right. He gave liberal help to the mission and offered an armed guard, which was declined (viii, 22). The expedition arrived safely in Jerusalem and Ezra at once begun to revive the Temple worship. He attributes the lamentable state of affairs to disloyalty to Jehovah, instanced in particular by the fact that many Jews had contracted foreign marriages. Ezra insists on the repudiation of these heathen wives and secures an undertaking that they shall be put away. With this the Book ends.

What We Learn of Nehemiah's Mission

IN spite of Ezra's mission things were not going well in Judah and alarming reports reached the Persian capital. The truth was that the restoration of the Temple was not enough : Jerusalem itself must be put into such a state as would make interference by surrounding tribes impossible. Now at the Persian court a young Jew, Nehemiah, was a high official. He purposely appeared at court looking worried and miserable so that Artaxerxes enquired about the cause. Nehemiah explained and begged leave to go and re-fortify (" build," ii, 5) the city. The king gave him leave and provided him with power to requisition material from provincial governors and sent him off with an armed escort, to the disgust of the enemies of Judah (ii, 10).

On his arrival he made a secret survey of the ruined walls and proceeded with his plans for their restoration. The " adversaries " were contemptuous, remembering how they had succeeded a few years back in putting a stop to any such attempt (Ezra iv, 7). But the leading families got to work on the walls, the priests and Levites under Eliashib being given the usual prominence (iii, 1, 22). This caused the " adversaries " to interfere seriously and Nehemiah had to appoint an armed guard (iv, 13) and to arm even the men actually engaged on the work (iv, 18). They tried to get Nehemiah into their power by treachery, and found many in Jerusalem itself ready to second their plots (vi, 18). They accused him of trying to make himself king (vi, 6) whereas he was loyally carrying out his office as lieutenant-governor (Tirshatha), and as such completed the fortification.

Meanwhile he had to face internal troubles. The old evils of the later monarchy had revived ; there was much corruption and oppression : in particular the rich had got the poor into their power. The poorer classes had

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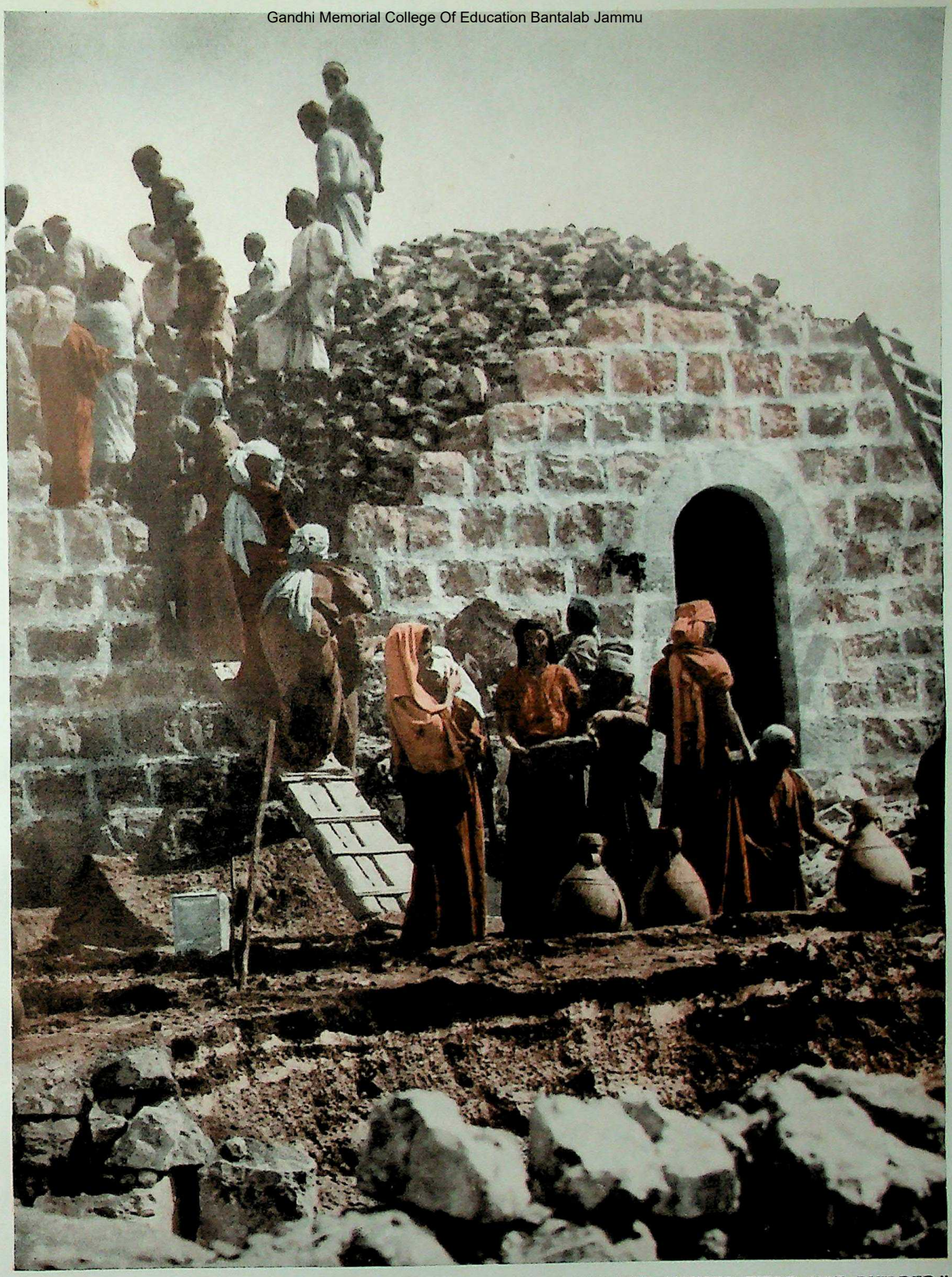

"THE CITY WAS LARGE . . . BUT THE HOUSES WERE NOT BUILDED"

When Nehemiah, as related in his own account in the Bible, had finished the tasks of building the new walls and fortified gates of Jerusalem, the space within had to be planned and dwellings erected for those " that went up out of the captivity " (Nehemiah vii, 4, 6). Material was to hand—ready-hewn blocks from the ruins of David's city and limestone from the neighbouring quarries. Everyone assisted; the master of the house gathered all his servants to the work, even as in modern times the construction of an Arab village home is a labour for the community. Women, passing by in the evening to the well, set down the weighty water-pots and helped by carrying up the squared stone blocks to the men on the wall.

Photo. H. J. Shepstone

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Ernest Normand

"BUT MORDECAI BOWED NOT"

When Esther had become the queen of Ahasuerus, "Mordecai sat in the king's gate" (Esther ii, 21) among the royal servants, a position which enabled him to hear tidings of what went on in Shushan the palace, and to warn his adopted daughter of danger threatening her husband. At about the same time Haman was promoted to the position of Grand Vizier; and everyone, except Mordecai, hastened to bow before him, according to the king's command. Ernest Normand's painting illustrates the incident of Mordecai's refusal to do reverence, an incident which led to Haman's hatred and final fall through jealous spite.

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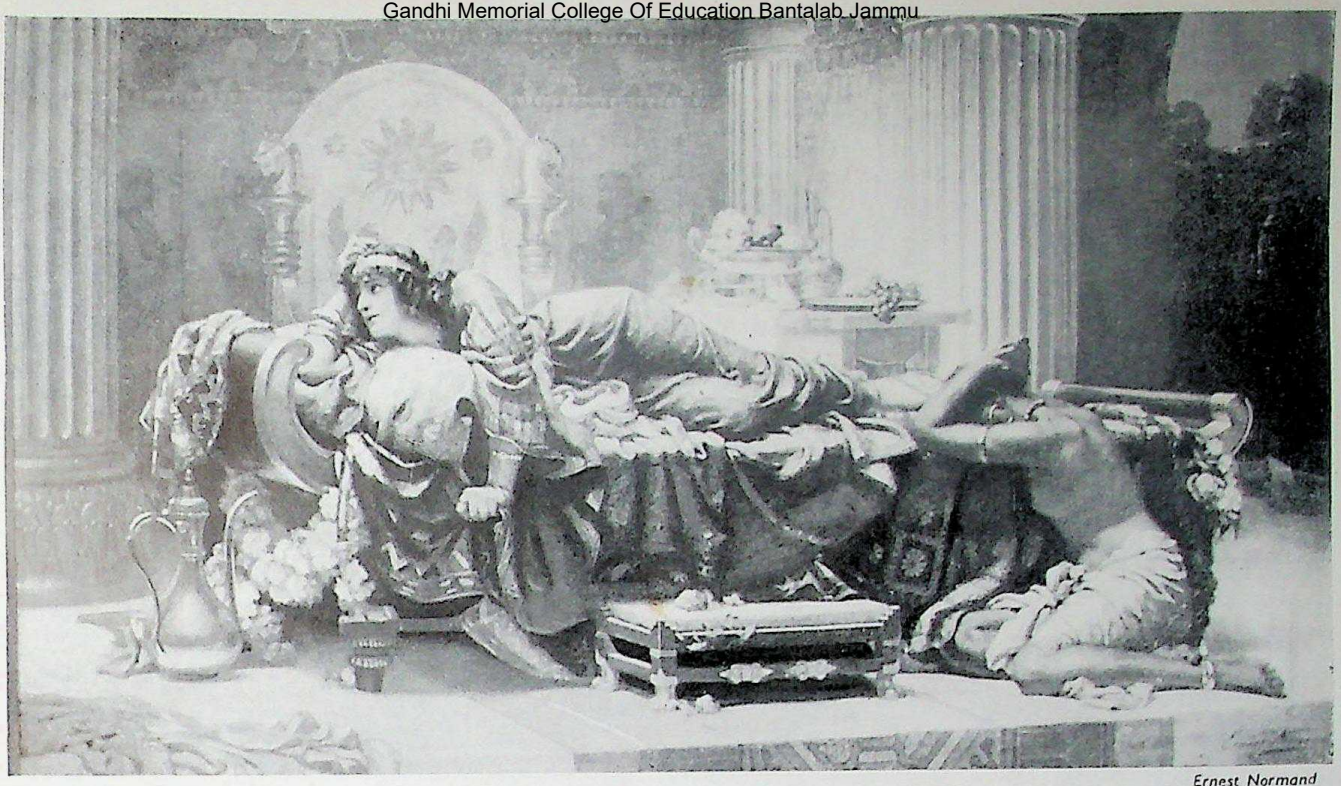

Ernest Normand

"QUEEN VASHTI REFUSED TO COME AT THE KING'S COMMANDMENT"

José Villegas

"THE MAN WHOM THE KING DELIGHTETH TO HONOUR"

Ahasuerus, reminded by a chance reading of the court chronicles of the great service which Mordecai had rendered him without reward, asked Haman what should be done for one whom the king wished to honour. The Grand Vizier, thinking that he himself was to be the recipient of the honours, suggested those which were conferred on his enemy Mordecai. The latter is depicted by the Spanish painter, José Villegas, attired in the royal apparel and mounted on the king's horse, when he is being proclaimed through the streets of Susa by the humiliated Haman. The upper picture, Vashti Deposed, from the painting by Ernest Normand, shows the queen, whose divorce was the prelude to Esther's story, in apprehensive but unrepentant mood.

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A CARAVANSERAI BY THE HIGHWAY IN THE DESERT

In the empire of Darius and Artaxerxes a great system of main roads connected all parts with the administrative capital, Susa ; and along these roads, at regular intervals of 13½ miles, were inns or caravanserais. At these relays of post horses could be obtained, and in the spacious courtyards was accommodation for caravans. These inns must have resembled the Arabian khans of more modern times—still to be found, though less and less frequented as mechanical transport takes the place of "lading asses" and camels for long distances. It is, then, easy to imagine Nehemiah, travelling from Susa to Jerusalem with the permit of Artaxerxes—putting up at wayside inns like the one pictured, an ancient khan in Iraq.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

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"COME AND LET US GO UP TO THE MOUNTAIN OF THE LORD"

When the ancient city of Jerusalem stood on Ophel the inhabitants had an uphill walk to the Temple, built on Mount Moriah, immediately above it—though more or less on a level with later constructions of the capital. This pathway through a jungle of prickly pear on the slope of the Tyropoeon (Valley of Dung), a little west of Ophel, leads to the Dung Gate, beneath the south-western corner of the Temple Area. The minaret on the right of the photograph marks the edge of the Area platform, and the archway of the existent Gate is seen in front of it. The Dung Gate mentioned as repaired in Nehemiah iii, 14, was probably on the south-west part of the city wall. The direction of expansion of the walls has been northward.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

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"EZRA THE PRIEST BROUGHT THE LAW"

Carrying the Law, the picture in the Johannesburg Gallery by the distinguished English painter Sir William Rothenstein, illustrates the manner of bringing the scroll inscribed with the Pentateuch from the "ark," or receptacle in which it is kept, to the reading desk in the synagogue. The men depicted are wearing the talith or praying shawl, striped with blue-black on white. The scroll, from which project the decorated handles of the rollers, is wrapped in a "mantle of the Law." The Mosaic institution of reading from the Pentateuch was restored by Ezra, who formulated the principle (Nehemiah viii, 6-8) that laymen might read and teach from it as well as members of the priestly order.

Sir William Rothenstein

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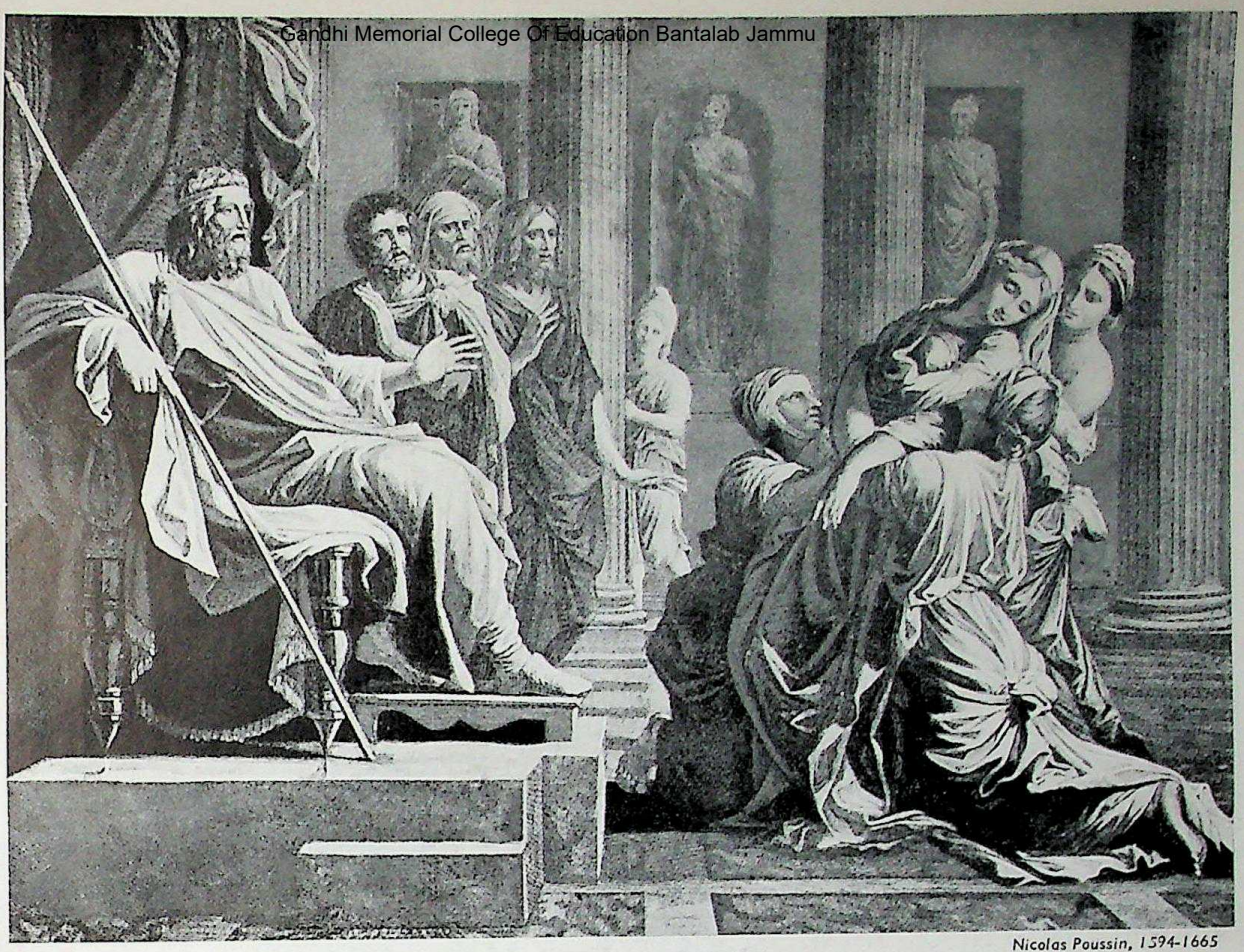
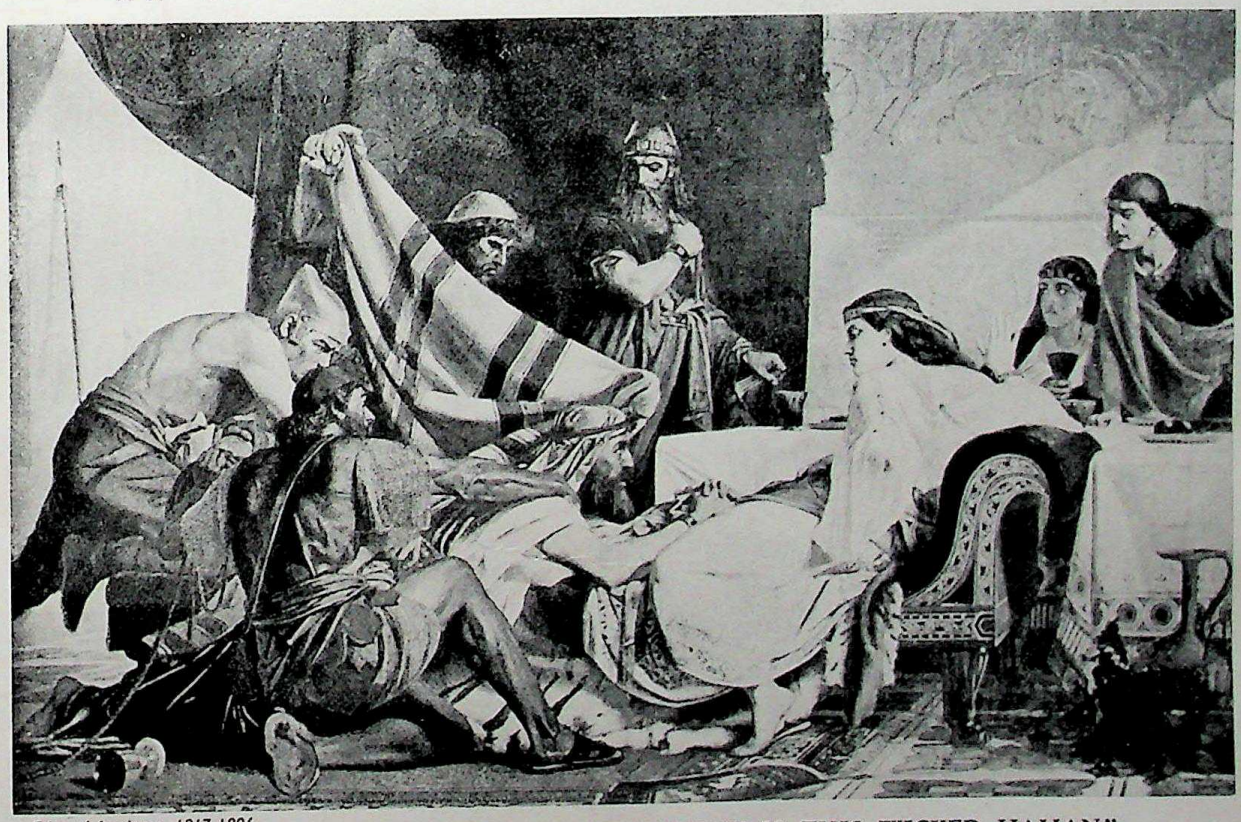


Nicolas Poussin, 1594-1665

"HOW CAN I ENDURE TO SEE THE DESTRUCTION OF MY KINDRED?"



Edward Armitage, 1817-1896

"THE ADVERSARY AND ENEMY IS THIS WICKED HAMAN"

Esther's romantic story is one which has greatly appealed to painters of Biblical subjects. The lower scene in this page, academically depicted by Edward Armitage, is the queen's banquet in Shushan the palace. Haman has been denounced before Ahasuerus and been condemned. "As the word went out of the king's mouth, they covered Haman's face" (Esther vii, 8). The French painter Nicolas Poussin portrays an appealing Esther in a courtly setting. At risk of her life she has come, unsummoned, before the despotic Ahasuerus, to ask him to reverse Haman's cruel letters ordering the massacre of all Jews in the king's realms (Esther viii, 6). That the king held out his golden sceptre in token that she might speak and afterwards granted her petition we know.

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"ALL MANNER OF BURDENS WHICH THEY BROUGHT INTO JERUSALEM"

Beduin and peasants, coming to or from Jerusalem, are always bearing burdens themselves or accompanied by some pack-animal—donkey, mule or camel—laden with produce for sale or purchases made in the markets. This traffic is unchanged since Nehemiah's time, when he protested against its continuance without rest on the Sabbath day (Nehemiah xiii, 15). The woman seen on the left wears the peasant dress of dark blue cotton, girded for walking, and as usual she is carrying her goods on her head. Two of the three men are distinguishable by their headdresses as Beduin. In the clothing of the third East meets West with loss of dignity. Over his cotton shirt, or kamise, he has put a European jacket, and on his head a tweed cap.

Photo, Fox

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borrowed from the rich in order to meet expenses of living and to pay their taxes (v, 3, 4). Their land, an almost sacred possession to the oriental, was heavily mortgaged and they themselves had often been seized for debt and treated as slaves, which was in opposition to the spirit of the Mosaic Law which put a strict limit to such procedure (Deuteronomy xv). Priests (v, 12) as well as nobles were guilty, but Nehemiah secured reform and debtors were given a new start. Example is better than precept. Nehemiah wanted to prevent the rich making money out of their brethren, and so himself refused to touch his salary as Tirshatha, which was a charge on the public funds (v, 15). He then issued regulations for guarding the city gates and set going a scheme for increasing the population of Jerusalem (vii, 4; xi, 1-21).

So far the narrative comes from the diary of Nehemiah, as is shown by the use of the first person. Henceforth the compiler uses other sources. Ezra is the prominent character in the religious reforms now set on foot. His work previous to Nehemiah's mission was not very successful, but now, under more favourable conditions, he, being "priest and scribe" (viii, 1), is eminently fitted for the work in hand. For two days there was a solemn reading and exposition of the law followed by a celebration of the Feast of Tabernacles (viii, 13-18). This was followed by a public confession of their sins by the whole population, led by Ezra and the Levites, at the end of which a solemn "covenant" (ix, 38), binding the nation to observance of the Mosaic Law, is signed and sealed by Nehemiah and others. The rights and privileges assigned to the priests and Levites form an important part of this covenant. A solemn dedication of the city wall follows and Nehemiah's mission is finished and he returns to the Persian court.

History's Finish in the Old Testament

A STRONG personality was removed. His policy had been to keep the Jews as a race apart, dedicated to the service of God, ruled by His High Priest, living strictly under the Mosaic Law, just as until recent years Islam lived under the law of the Koran. As soon as he was gone, abuses recurred. Intercourse with the heathen began again, one of them, Tobiah, establishing himself within the Temple precincts with the consent of the High Priest, Eliashib (xiii, 4). Intermarriage with foreigners was resumed. The "portions" due to the Levites were paid irregularly, the Sabbath was profaned, particularly by commercial transactions. And so after a lapse of twelve years, 433 B.C., Nehemiah again applied to Artaxerxes for leave of absence and hurried to Jerusalem. He sternly put a stop to these abuses. The thoroughness with which he acted is demonstrated by his expulsion of the son of the new High Priest, Joiada, who had contracted a foreign marriage (xiii, 28).

So, somewhat abruptly, ends the history of the Jewish people so far as the Old Testament is concerned. The prophecies of Haggai and Zechariah throw considerable light on the story of Nehemiah. But after that we have to turn to the Apocrypha for some account of the struggles of the nation prior to the coming of Christ.

To the modern reader there is much in these books that is repellent. The rejection of the Samaritans' request to be allowed to help in the building of the Temple (Ezra iv, 2) is harsh and rude. The putting away of all foreign wives and their children is almost inhuman (Ezra x, 3). But the same is true of other Books of the Old Testament, which, after all, must be expected to reflect the customs and thought both of the times of the writer and of the age about which he is writing. And our compiler has one idea firmly fixed in his mind—the necessity of keeping the Jewish race pure and undefiled in order that God may reveal Himself to man in them.

Religion's Debt to the Hebrew Diarists

LITTLE wonder that reformers like Ezra and Nehemiah were strict about it. They knew the history of their people and traced their calamities to idolatry, that is to say, to the fact that intercourse with foreigners had meant a weakening of their religion, the introduction of heathen worship and the accompanying immoralities, and the entanglement in foreign policy which brought in its train the enmity of great powers like Egypt and Assyria. They believed intensely that their nation was chosen of God and that God had revealed Himself therein and would further reveal Himself. They had learned their lesson. The captivity had cured the nation of idolatry. True indeed of those who returned to Judah, but not of the majority who stayed behind and were merged in the peoples of Mesopotamia. So the leaders of the return were swift to check any dealings which would expose the people to the dangers of the past. They must be a people "set apart" for the Divine purposes. The devotion to their God is plain enough from the prayer of Ezra (ix, 6) and the prayers of Nehemiah (Nehemiah i, 5; cf. the prayer in Nehemiah ix). The result is plain in the later history.

The people were able to retain their religion and their individuality against the effort to superimpose Greek culture, and in the face of the power of Rome. Owing to the devotion of Ezra and Nehemiah the Jews remained a "peculiar people." Their expectation of future and further revelations of God crystallized into their conception of Messiah, mistaken though it was. The spiritual ideas of the second "Isaiah" conveyed in his prophecies about the perfect servant of Jehovah who was to come, were overlaid by ideas of a temporal kingdom and the restoration of the royal house of David, in the person of Messiah. The Kingdom as preached by Our Lord was an ideal naturally developed from Isaiah, but rendered incomprehensible by the rabbinical teaching of the two or three centuries before the Christian era.

But the fact remains that they maintained their nationality and national religion until, in the fulness of time, One of the house of David appeared who should "Save His people." Then the usefulness of this little nation was over and its members were scattered over the earth.

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Ezra & Nehemiah

III

The Land of the Books

Persia and Palestine under the 'King of Kings'

by REV. A. MORTON PRICE, B.D.

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WITH the exception of the period between the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuzaradan in 586 B.C., and the conquest of Babylon by Cyrus in 538, no period of Old Testament History is so obscure as that covered by the books of Ezra and Nehemiah. At first sight we have a fairly full account of that period in these books, but a closer examination reveals the facts that the books are late in composition and untrustworthy, or even contradictory in detail, and that they provide at best a sketchy outline of the events of the period. For example, the books of Ezra and Nehemiah purport to cover the events of the years 538-432 B.C.—a period of 106 years; but in the middle of that time there is a complete blank between the years 515 and 458, that is, for more than half the period covered. The compiler dealt solely with events which seemed to him of importance, and for the rest he telescoped history to make the slow working of half a century appear the work of a few days. So it is necessary, before we can discover what is the background of the books of Ezra and Nehemiah, to state the sources from which our information is obtained, and come to some conclusion as to the historical value of the various sources involved.

Literary Sources for the Period

WE may start with the books themselves. These are quite obviously composite; the change from first to third person brings that home to even the most casual reader. This is not the place to enter into a minute analysis of Ezra and Nehemiah, and we may be content simply to state the results of such an analysis. The sources from which the books are made up may be divided into four heads, as follows:

(1) Portions of the memoirs of Ezra and Nehemiah, viz. Ezra vii, 27-ix, 15; Nehemiah i, 1-vii, 73a; xii, 27-43; xiii, 4-31. These are written in the first person, and are thus contemporary documents of great importance both for the events of the period and the background of those events.

(2) There are other parts of the books which, while not actual memoirs of the chief actors, seem to be based on these memoirs. These also are of considerable historical importance, but must be used with greater caution than the memoirs themselves. They seem to be based entirely on the memoirs of Ezra, and not on those of Nehemiah. The following passages fall under this head—Ezra vii, 1-10; x; Nehemiah vii, 73b-x.

(3) There is also a considerable mass of later material, which comes from an unknown source (viz. Nehemiah xi, 1—xii, 26; xii, 44—xiii, 3), or from the hand of the editor or compiler (Ezra i—iv, 7; vi, 19-22). These are of very doubtful historical value, and are probably some two hundred years later than the events with which they deal.

(4) The remaining portions of the books (Ezra iv, 8—vi, 18; vii, 12-26) are in Aramaic, being apparently taken from an Aramaic history of the period. These also have some historical value, although the edicts contained in this source can hardly be verbatim copies of the imperial decrees.

We are not confined, however, to the use of these two books alone for information about the period of the Return. We also have direct contemporary evidence in the prophecies of Haggai and Zechariah (Chapters i-viii), and probably also in that of Malachi. Certainly the date of the last named is a vexed question in Old Testament criticism, but I am accepting the position that Malachi was a contemporary of Haggai and Zechariah, and so may be used as evidence for the state of affairs in Judah about the year 520 B.C. With these prophets may also be included parts of Isaiah lvi-lxvi (Trito-Isaiah, as this portion is sometimes styled), and certain oracles in the Book of Ezekiel.

Besides this direct evidence, we may also learn something of the attitude of the age from the books of Chronicles, since those books were written just after the period of the Return, and by one whose point of view was that of the new Judaism which arose with the re-establishment of the Temple. About this time also there came into force the portions of the Pentateuch known as the "Priestly Code" (P). From it we may learn something of the ideals and needs of the people who accepted it as their law, and of the conditions of life under which they lived.

Testimony of the 'Greek Ezra'

THIS exhausts the evidence of the canonical books of the Old Testament. But we have other sources of information about the period with which we are dealing, although their value is comparatively little as they are based on the canonical books. The first of these authorities is the 1st Esdras of the English Apocrypha, sometimes called the "Greek Ezra." This is an amplified and rearranged version of the canonical Ezra. It sometimes seems to retain a purer text than the Hebrew Ezra, but it can hardly be relied upon in its divergencies from the canonical book, although some scholars claim that it gives a more coherent picture of events. Dependent upon I Esdras is the historian Josephus of the 1st century A.D., who deals with the period of the Return in his work "Antiquities of the Jews," book xi. In the main he follows his source very closely, but adds his own embellishments to the story, or sometimes seems to follow a divergent tradition (compare "Antiquities" xi, 3 with I Esdras iii-iv). His remarkable exaggeration of the numbers of the returned exiles to 4,628,000 shakes our faith in his general credibility, and as a source of historical information he may be set aside. In any case, for information on the background of the events of the times he is quite negligible, as he gives merely a bare outline of events.

Contemporary Documents from Egypt

WHEN we turn from literary to non-literary evidence we find a great scarcity of archaeological remains which have a direct bearing on the period—at least so far as Judah and Jerusalem are concerned. Epigraphic evidence relates to the wider circumstances of the Persian Empire, but not to the narrower conditions of Judah. There is, however, interesting information given us by the Aramaic papyri written about the beginning of the 5th century B.C., and found on the site of an old Jewish fortress at Elephantine (Yeb) in Egypt. Some of these are copies of dispatches sent from Yeb to Palestine, and are, of course, as contemporary documents, of the highest historical importance. Unfortunately their scope is limited, but they throw some illuminating side-lights on the conditions of life in Judah at the time.

Such, then, are the sources from which we may build up a picture of life in the community living around Jerusalem in the 6th and 5th centuries before Christ.

First of all there are the memoirs of two of the principal actors, together with the oracles of various prophets who laboured during the period under review. This is direct evidence. There is also the indirect evidence of books written about this time, and coloured by the feelings and circumstances of the time. Lastly, there is the evidence of archaeology, meagre in relation to the small world of Judah, but serving to provide a word-picture in which Judah may find its place.

The period of the books of Ezra and Nehemiah falls within the wider background of the Persian Empire; and, therefore, a sketch of that wider

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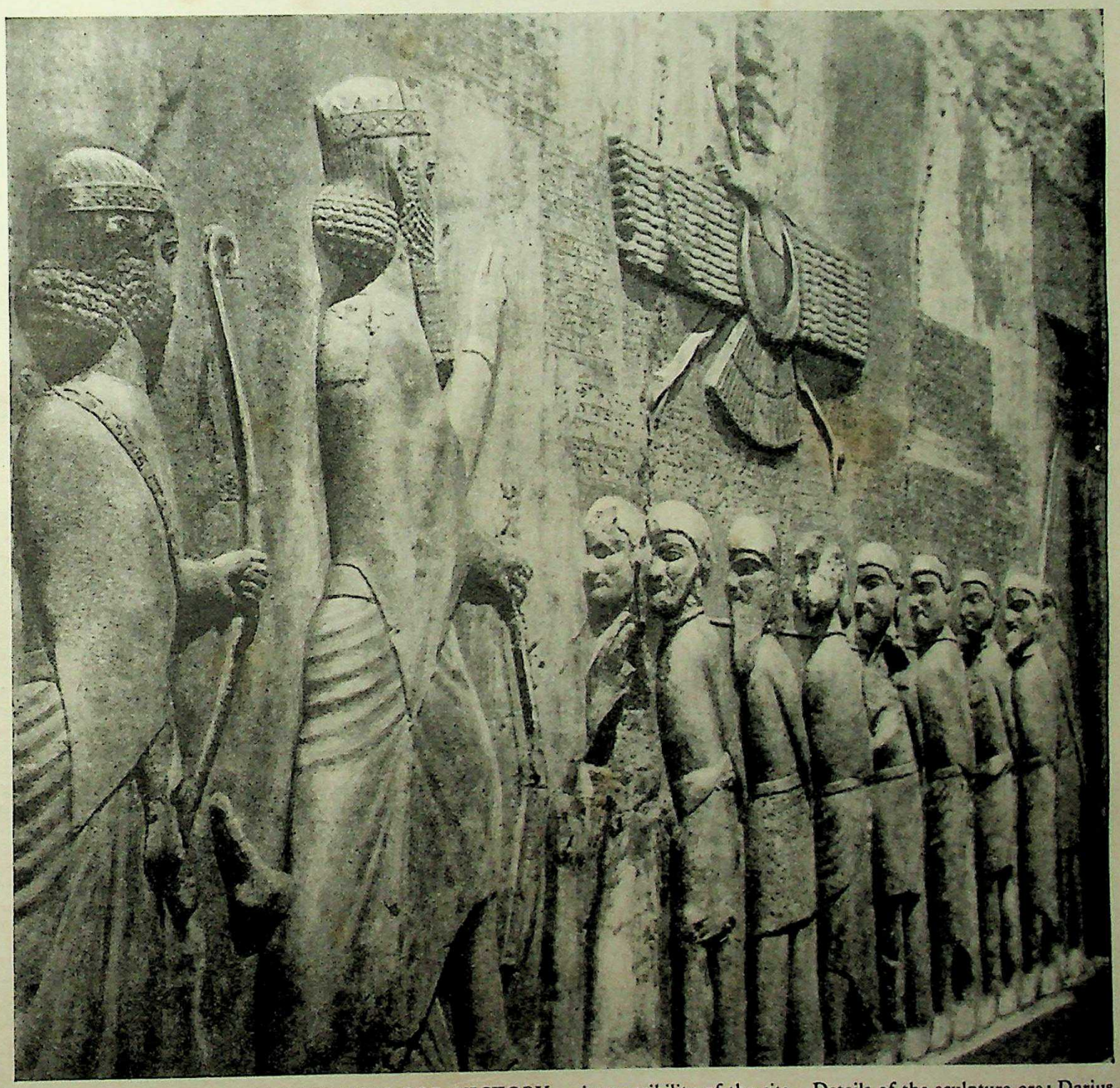
framework of the history of Judah forms a natural starting-point for our outline of the conditions in Palestine. In the Old Testament itself Ezra and Nehemiah are the only authorities for the Persian period which make any mention of the wide stretch of that empire. The contemporary prophets make no mention of the empire or its administration; they confined their attention to Judah and its little circle of life. But even Ezra and Nehemiah give us very little information about Persia, and we have to supplement their meagre notices of officials and provinces with information gleaned from the rich field of archaeology. Fortunately the records of 6th and 5th century Persia are fairly full, and from such sources as the cylinder of Cyrus, and the Behistun inscription of Darius, we may make up a pretty complete picture of the progress and administration of the Persian Empire. It is as impossible as it is unnecessary to give a full history of the empire from the time of Cyrus to that of Artaxerxes II Mnemon in this article, but a brief outline of events may be found helpful in order to relate the history of Judah to the wider history of the ancient world.

The most noteworthy thing about the early Persian Empire was its rapid rise from obscurity to the dominion of almost the whole of the then-known world. The Persians are almost unknown to history before the time of Cyrus. This able soldier was hereditary king of Anshan—which seems to have been a district in the south of Elam, probably round about the city of Susa. It is a vague district, and its extent and importance are quite unknown to us. It is extremely likely that Cyrus, a petty king or chieftain over this district of Anshan, first united all the Persian tribes under his sole rule, and then took to himself the title "King of Persia." At least he is the first to have held this title, which he assumed about the year 550 B.C. From that time his career was a succession of rapid triumphs. The first was against the kindred people of the Medes. In the year 550-549 B.C.,



DARIUS THE KING GIVES THANKS FOR VICTORY. Above the magnificently-sculptured scene on the towering rock of Behistun in Iran, Darius caused an inscription to be engraved in three languages—Persian, Elamite and Babylonian. The photograph is necessarily foreshortened owing to the inaccessibility of the site. Details of the sculpture are: Darius, attended by archer and lancer (the latter not shown), gives thanks to the national god of the Persians, Ahuramazda—represented within the winged disk symbolizing the sun—for his triumph over the rebel satraps, bound before him with ropes.

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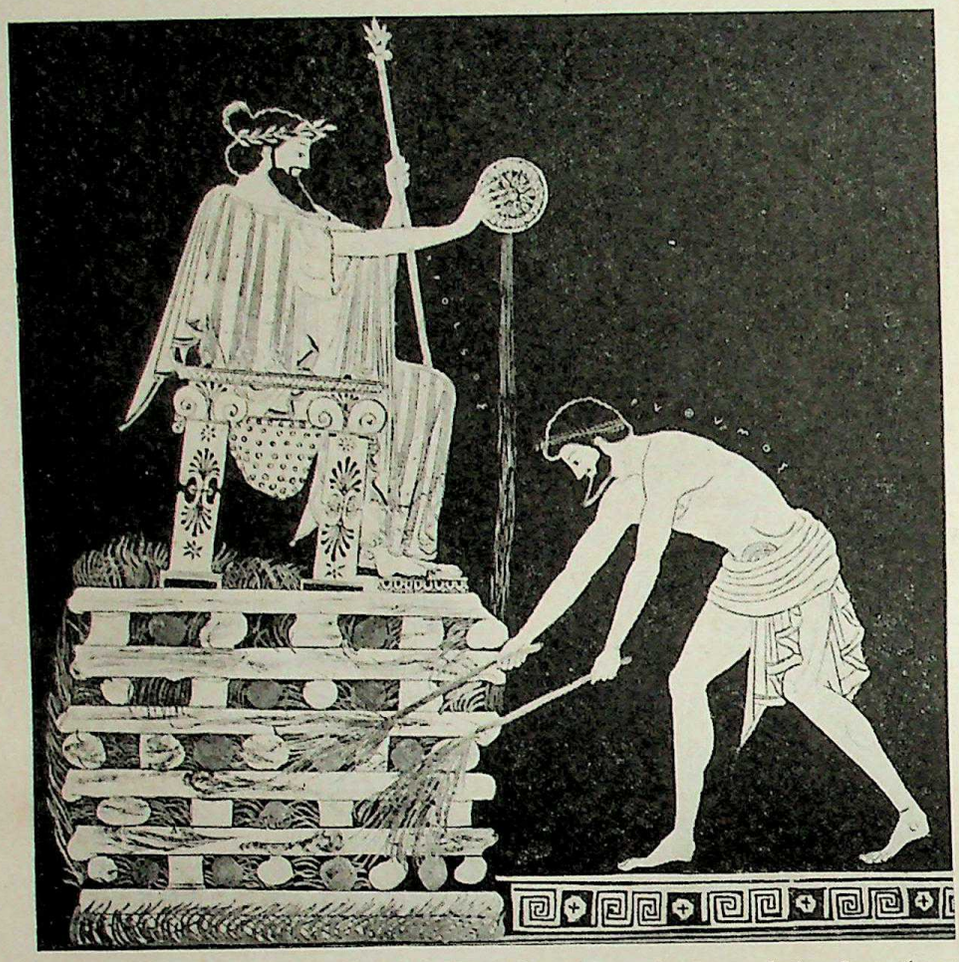

LAST KING OF THE LAND CALLED LUD. On an Attic vase dating from about 500 B.C., to be seen in the Louvre, Croesus, last king of Lydia—the Asiatic territory called Lud in the Old Testament—is shown on the burning pyre after his defeat by Cyrus in 546 B.C. A Greek tradition relates that Croesus was saved from a fiery death and treated well by his captor, a tradition which accords with the impression of the Persian king's clemency and tolerance given in the Book of Ezra.

After Fortwängler-Reichhold, "Geschichte Vasenmäleret"

Cyrus captured Astyages, king of Media, and took Ecbatana, his capital. Three years later, still advancing north and west, he overcame the kingdom of Lydia, capturing and probably killing King Croesus. This made him master of Asia Minor. There followed a period of seven years, in which, presumably, the Persian king was engaged in the consolidation of his new conquests. His next blow was directed at Babylon, which he overcame in the years 540-538 B.C. In his conquest of Babylon Cyrus was materially helped by divisions within the older empire. There had been much discontent at Nabonidus's religious policy, and the Persian was welcomed as a deliverer. It was as the elect of Marduk that Cyrus ascended the throne of Babylon, and as such he was accepted by "all the people of Babylon, Sumer and Akkad, princes and governors." This conquest of Babylon made Cyrus master of all the countries to the west, right up to the borders of Egypt. The remaining years of his life (538-529 B.C.) were occupied in the organization of the empire he had so rapidly attained.

Before passing on to his successor, Cambyses, something must be said on the character of the rule of Cyrus, especially with regard to his treatment of the religions of the subject peoples. Nabonidus had given great offence by gathering into his capital the images and symbols of the various local deities of his empire. This angered not only the peoples whose gods were thus removed, but also the devotees of Marduk in Babylon, who felt that their god was being grossly insulted by the introduction of this host of foreign, and to them inferior, deities. This dissatisfaction, as we have said, contributed in no small degree to the success of Cyrus's campaign against Babylon.

Tolerant Edicts of Cyrus

IMMEDIATELY following upon his accession Cyrus reversed the policy of Nabonidus. He sent back the gods to their own temples, and gave permission for various exiled peoples to return to their own land. This policy did not stop merely with the gods gathered by Nabonidus, but extended to all foreign deities whose symbols or images had been taken to Babylon. So he takes credit for returning a god to western Elam, which could not have been removed by Nabonidus himself, but by one of his predecessors. Hence there is nothing intrinsically improbable in the fact of the decree of Cyrus in Ezra i, however much we may doubt the details of its terms as we have them in the Old Testament.

In distinction to the preceding empires of Assyria and Babylonia, Cyrus made no attempt to force the Persian religion upon his new subjects. His religious policy was one of toleration, and liberty was granted to the subject peoples to carry on their old national religions in accordance with the rites and ceremonies of the past.

THIS is Cyrus's own description of his actions as inscribed on his cylinder: "The cities across the Tigris whose sites had been established from former times, the gods who live within them, I returned to their places and caused them to dwell in a perpetual habitation. All of their inhabitants I collected and restored to their dwelling places, and the gods of Sumer and Akkad whom Nabonidus, to the anger of the lord of the gods, had brought into Babylon at the command of Marduk the great lord, in peace in their own shrines I made them dwell, in the habitation dear to their heart. May all the gods whom I brought in to their own cities daily before Bel and Nebo pray for a long life for me, may they speak a gracious word for me." (Prince's translation, quoted by Prof. L. W. Batten, International Critical Commentary, "Ezra and Nehemiah," p. 35.)

This toleration on the part of Cyrus is further shown by inscriptions on the brick boxes which surrounded the door sockets of the temple of Nannar at Ur, which was restored by the first Persian king. This runs: "The great gods have delivered all the lands into my hands, the land I have caused to dwell in a peaceful habitation."

In the light of these inscriptions, and others of a similar tenor, we may consider the Edict of Cyrus (Ezra i, 2-4). This undoubtedly has a Jewish colouring, but its form as we have it comes from the later compiler of the books whose aim was to insist that the Return was a special dispensation of Jehovah's providence. Probably in its original form the Edict of Cyrus depends on some simple permission for the people of Judah to restore the Temple, couched in general terms like the Ur inscription. As there was no image of Jehovah to be returned, the return of the sacred vessels probably took its place (Ezra i, 7-11). It is also due to the compiler's belief that all the credit for the restoration of the Temple went to the returned exiles, that this permission to rebuild, with the laying of the foundation by Sheshbazzar, which presumably would be done in a similar manner to that of Nannar's temple at Ur with inscribed bricks or stones, was somewhat slurred over by him.

Of this at any rate we can be sure, the policy of Cyrus meant healthier relations between rulers and ruled. Apart from any higher conceptions of religious freedom on the part of that king, this toleration was a political necessity. Cyrus knew well enough how much the policy of Nabonidus had helped him to conquer Babylon by fostering discontent within the

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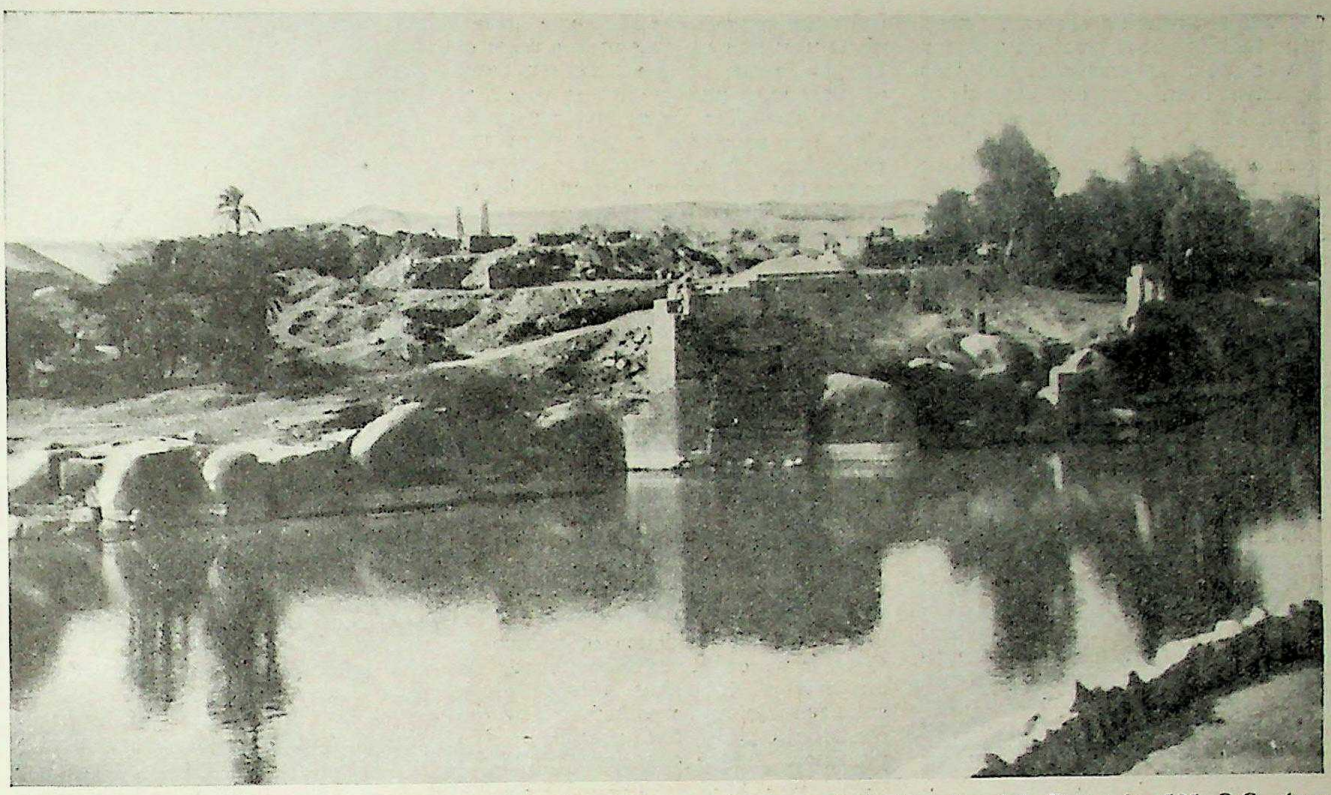

GARRISONED BY HEBREWS IN THE PERSIAN ERA. That the island of Elephantine in the Nile was a military settlement with Judean or Israelite garrison under Persian officers throughout the 5th century B.C. is known since the discovery there of the Elephantine papyri. But even before Cambyses II, predecessor of Darius, invaded Egypt in 525 B.C. there was a Hebrew colony on the island—possibly a remnant of the lost tribes of Israel—who built a Temple of Jehovah, though the law of one Sanctuary (Deuteronomy xii, 1-28), centralizing worship at Jerusalem, made a second Temple illegal.

Photo, Tourist Development Association of Egypt

state, and he realized that if he were to keep a firm hold on his new dominions popular discontent must be removed.

Accordingly he took the most obvious step to remove the discontent, and bind the heterogeneous mass of the empire to himself as the saviour and restorer of the ancestral faiths. The success of this policy is proved by the long continuance of the Persian Empire under the dynasty which he founded.

Cyrus was succeeded by his son, Cambyses (529-522 B.C.). The reign of Cambyses is a rather obscure period of history, and the only great work performed by him was the conquest of Egypt (525 B.C.). Here again the conqueror was aided by treachery within the nation, and in a comparatively short time the Persian power extended as far south as the town of Elephantine on the frontier of Ethiopia. Cambyses also made an attempt to conquer Ethiopia, but the expedition failed, and he had to be content to consolidate his conquest to the borders of Egypt. Little seems to have been done in Judah during this reign, and the Old Testament contains no references to it.

Just before the death of Cambyses a revolt broke out under a certain Gaumata, who claimed to be Cyrus's elder son, Smerdis, whom Cambyses had put to death. Cambyses did not live long enough to quell the revolt, but it was successfully suppressed by Darius I Hystaspis (522-486 B.C.) and the pretender killed. Following this were a number of risings in the east, as that in Babylon under Nidintu-Bel, but they were all successfully overcome by the new king in the first two years of his reign. Phoenicia and Syria were not involved in any of these troubles, though their echo is to be heard in the words of Haggai (ii, 22), "I shall overthrow a throne of kingdoms, and I shall destroy the strength of the nations; and I shall overthrow chariot and rider, horses and horsemen will come down, every one by the sword of his brother." But these rumours of revolt were soon displaced by a knowledge of universal peace, for a little later Zechariah says (i, 11), "They answered the angel of the LORD that stood among the myrtle trees, and said, We have walked to and fro through the earth, and, behold, all the earth sitteth still, and is at rest." This was in the year 520 B.C.

Imperial Persia under Darius

THE main work of Darius was in the consolidation of the empire he ruled rather than in the extension of its boundaries by conquest. For our purpose his importance lies in the organization of the empire which he inaugurated, and which survived with but minor changes until its conquest by Alexander (330 B.C.).

At the head of the whole state was the king. The principle of hereditary monarchy was established, but the successor was not necessarily the eldest son. In fact, the king could choose as his successor any son whom he thought fit. Thus Cyrus passed over his elder son, Smerdis, and appointed Cambyses to succeed him. The king was appointed by God, in the first place by Ahura-Mazda, his native deity, and with the extension of the empire, by the various gods of the nations. In Babylon he was the chosen of Marduk, in Egypt of Ra, and—shall we not conclude?—in Judah of Jehovah (cf. Isaiah xliv, 28; xlv, 1). He was an absolute monarch whose will was law, but in matters of administration and custom it was the habit to consult a council of "royal judges," probably chosen from the six chief families of Persia whose founders had aided Darius in his overthrow of Gaumata; or the council may have been made up of the heads of the state departments, to which we may refer the "seven counsellers" of Ezra vii, 14. Although the government was absolute and autocratic, yet it was very tolerant with regard to the traditions of the subject peoples. So long as the peace of the empire was preserved, and the taxes paid, the various peoples were allowed to govern themselves according to their own customs, and worship in their time-honoured ways.

The dominant people of the empire was the Persian. They formed the backbone of the army, and from their number came the chief officers, the king's counsellors, and the satraps of the provinces. But while the Persian origin of the ruling house was never forgotten, the administrative capital of the empire was beyond the bounds of Persia proper. The reason for this lay in the nature of the land,

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which was too rough and mountainous for the building of a great city. Since this was so, Susa was chosen. This may have been the old capital of Anshan, but it was otherwise suitable as being roughly in the middle of the empire, and near to Persia, from which the man-power of the army was recruited. So it was from Susa (Shushan) that Nehemiah set out on his mission to Judah (i, 1).

Speeding along the King's Highway

FROM Susa the great road system of the empire radiated, a system which was only surpassed in antiquity by that of the Romans. Of the actual course of these roads we are now almost entirely ignorant. At intervals of about 13½ miles (four parasangs) there were built inns, where horses and riders were always ready to carry along the king's messages as fast as a horse could gallop. Night and day these couriers sped upon the king's business, covering an incredible stretch of country in a short time. Troops also used the roads; and ordinary travel was much simplified by them. Perhaps it is not too much to read into the "in the desert a highway" (Isaiah xl, 3), a reference to the road system of Persia at that time beginning to be constructed. Royal garrisons were stationed at strategic points upon the roads for the purpose of keeping order. The existence of these roads must greatly have facilitated the return of Jews from Babylonia to Judah, though they had to be provided with a king's permit (Nehemiah ii, 7; Ezra i, 3; vii, 13) to enable them to pass the vigilant officers who kept a watchful eye upon all private travellers along the king's highway.

The whole empire was divided into twenty provinces, each under a governor called a satrap (*i.e.*, protector of the realm), and hence are called satrapies. This was an old device going back to the Assyrian and Babylonian Empires, but Darius more completely organized the system and gave it the form it maintained until the time of Alexander two centuries later. These satrapies were very large provinces, and often contained several national groups or conquered kingdoms. We need not here go into the details of their various positions and names. For our study it is enough to know that Judah formed part of the fifth satrapy called Abar Nahara (Beyond the River, in Hebrew, 'Eber ha-nahar, Nehemiah ii, 7, etc.), which consisted of Syria, Phoenicia, Palestine, and the island of Cyprus. Further details of this satrapy will be left until we come to consider the political condition of the restored community in Judah (*see* below).

The satraps or governors of the provinces were men of high birth, sometimes members of the royal house itself. They were appointed for an indefinite period, occasionally for life. One satrap might be in command of more than one satrapy, as a certain Ushtanni, perhaps the Tattenai (Tatnai) of Ezra v and vi, was in the reign of Darius satrap of Abar Nahara and of Babylon; and we know of other instances. This, however, was probably the exception rather than the rule. The functions of the satraps were very wide in civil and military administration. They were responsible for the preservation of law and order, and formed the highest judicial authority within the province. No small part of the satraps' duties was the maintenance of good relations between the various peoples within the bounds of the provinces. If questions arose beyond the competence of the satrap he might communicate with Susa by means of the royal posting service mentioned above, and ask for special instructions from the king. This was done by Tattenai with regard to the building of Jerusalem, and a royal rescript was returned to him with instructions on how he was to act (Ezra v, 6-vi, 12).

The official residence or palace of the satrap seems to have been modelled on that of the king, though on a smaller scale, and was kept up by the contributions of the people of the province. These exactions might be heavy and were frequently resented by the people. So it is that Nehemiah takes to himself great credit that he had not exercised his right of exacting his upkeep from the people as his predecessors had done (Nehemiah v, 14-15).

The 'King's Eye' on the Satraps

THE satraps, then, were in a strong position, and could be very troublesome to the central government. So precautions were taken by Darius to limit the powers and keep control of the satraps. Good communications ensured that news of any treasonable activity on the part of a satrap speedily came to the ears of the king, and measures be taken to check a revolt before it became dangerous. A royal secretary was also appointed to each satrap who looked after the correspondence between the satrap and the capital. This official was independent of the satrap's control, and thus was a constant check on any designs towards independence of the central government. As a further precaution there were periodic inspections by an official with the significant title of the "King's Eye," who had with him a force of Persian soldiers to check any disorder that might arise. A reference to this official, or corps of officials, may be found in Zechariah's mention of the "eyes of the LORD, which run through the whole earth" (iv, 10). A constant restraint was also exercised by various Persian garrisons, whose commanders were appointed by and responsible solely to the king himself.

A great part of the satrap's duties was concerned with finance. Each satrapy was assessed at a certain amount, and the satrap was responsible for forwarding that amount to headquarters. The total taxation of the empire was 14,560 Euboic talents (about £3,500,000), of which Abar Nahara supplied 350 talents (about £84,100). This money was sent to Susa and any surplus on the year's administration accumulated in the treasury there. This money was raised by some sort of land-tax (Nehemiah v, 4), but there were other revenues such as contributions in kind, and probably way-tolls for the upkeep of the roads. (Ezra iv, 13, 20).

The contributions in kind were used for the support of the army, and of the various establishments of the king, the satraps, and the subordinate governors. (Nehemiah v, 15). Exemption from taxation was granted to the priesthood of Egypt, and perhaps to other priests; certainly it is claimed for the priests of Jehovah in the Aramaic history of the Return (Ezra vii, 24), and on the analogy of the custom in Egypt we may perhaps accept this evidence. On the whole the taxation does not seem to have been excessive, and good value was given by the government in a peaceful administration, good communications and the encouragement of trade.

The religion of the Persian monarchs was probably Zoroastrianism, but not the perfervidly monotheistic Zoroastrianism of later years, for other gods were recognized throughout the empire, and favour was shown to the various cults of the subject peoples. In Persia the kings may have been strict devotees of Ahura-Mazda, but questions of policy forced them to admit the presence of other gods throughout their wide domains. Both Cyrus and Darius gave active support to the temple worship of various gods. On his cylinder Cyrus tells us "I gave daily care to his (*i.e.*, Marduk's) worship"; and the inscription of Uzahor-resenet, an Egyptian priest of the time of Cambyses, gives us the information that the last named king "restored the temple of Neith in person . . . He caused the libations to be offered to the Everlasting One in the house of Neith as all the kings of former times had done." From these examples it may be seen that the decree of Artaxerxes is not in itself impossible (Ezra vii, 15-23). As we saw above, the priests of Egypt were freed from taxation, as were the attendants of the gardens of Apollo at an uncertain place in Asia Minor. Thus the Persian kings went beyond a bare toleration of all religions, to an active support of the various local cults.

Official Language of the Empire

IN matters of administration the government must have been very greatly helped by the presence of a "lingua franca" throughout the empire, namely, Aramaic. This language and its alphabet, much simpler than the cuneiform, were adopted by the Persian kings for all their communications with at least the western half of their

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empire, and probably also with a large part of the eastern, as the discovery of an Aramaic inscription at Taxila in India seems to show. It was the language of the diplomat and of the merchant alike. Darius seems to have had an Aramaic translation made of his Behistun inscription for the general use of the empire. A Persian satrap of Egypt gave his orders to an Egyptian boatbuilder in Aramaic (Cowley, "Aramaic Papyri of the 5th century B.C.," No. 26), and the papyri from Elephantine seem to indicate that it was the language of the law-courts also. This oneness of language gave a certain unity of feeling to the otherwise heterogeneous mass of peoples which made up the Persian Empire.

Greece Monopolizes History's Stage

THE later career of Darius need not detain us. The struggle with Greece began about 499 B.C., and was still raging when Darius died in 486, to be succeeded by Xerxes (486-465 B.C.). It is just in this period of the latter days of Darius and the whole reign of Xerxes that the blank in our sources occurs. Of the period 515-458 B.C. we are told nothing except the brief remark in Ezra iv, 6 that at the beginning of his reign certain unspecified people wrote to the king accusing the Jews of treasonable activity in the rebuilding of Jerusalem. It is almost as if the attention of the ancient world was turned to the struggle with Greece, and that elsewhere events stood still. Probably Ezra iv, 6 indicates a time of opposition on the part of the government to further building in Jerusalem. Also the energies of a rather poverty-stricken people had been exhausted in the restoration of the Temple and a period of rest and recuperation was necessary before the next great step of building the walls of Jerusalem was taken. Life in Judah went on its ordinary way, and the compiler of Ezra-Nehemiah was not interested in ordinary things.

Xerxes was murdered in 465 B.C., and after a short usurpation by his murderer, Artabanus, his son Artaxerxes I Longimanus succeeded in attaining his father's throne, and finally restoring order (464-425 B.C.). The reign of Artaxerxes was the golden age of the Return, for he was very favourable to the Jews and under his favourite, Nehemiah, the walls of Jerusalem were restored. This, however, belongs to the particular history of Judah rather than to the general history of the Persian Empire.

The remaining Persian kings also are of little interest to us in this connexion. Ezra returned under Artaxerxes II Mnemon (404-359 B.C.), and was perhaps a sort of court official, or Jewish secretary, in the administration of that monarch. It was in this reign that the Jewish community was finally constituted in political and religious matters, and the later Judaism took its final shape.

Such, then, is the background of the restored community of Judah in world history. From this world empire we now turn to a more particular study of Judah itself, and the conditions under which its people lived.

DARIUS, SELF-STYLED KING OF KINGS. This portrait of the mighty consolidator of the Persian empire is from the sculpture on the rock at Behistun (*see* page 497). Darius combined great qualities of statesmanship with mercy and religious tolerance. It was in the second year of his reign that the letter was sent by the Jews in Jerusalem appealing for permission to continue the rebuilding of the Temple (Ezra v, 7-17), which resulted not only in an edict authorizing completion but also in the restoration of the treasure removed by Nebuchadrezzar.

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Judah under the Persians

IN our consideration of the background of Ezra-Nehemiah in Judah it is convenient to begin by setting forth the geographical limits of that territory. This consisted of portions of both the old tribal districts of Judah and Benjamin, though the larger portion lay to the south in the old Judah. The area occupied by the restored community in this period seems to have been very small. We are nowhere given the exact limits of the new Judah, and it is only by scattered references to various villages outside Jerusalem that we can reach an estimate of the probable limits occupied by the men of the Return. These villages are few in number, and cover a narrow area around the capital.

In the description of the rebuilding of the city walls Nehemiah tells us that certain villages furnished contingents of workers. These are Jericho to the east; Keilah, Beth-zur, Tekoa and Beth-haccerem to the south; Zanoah to the west; and Ai, Gibeon, Geba and Mizpah to the north. Taking the extreme north, south, east and west points, we discover the territory covered an area thirty miles wide from Zanoah to the Jordan and the Dead Sea, and twenty miles long from Ai to Beth-zur. Also mentioned are Beth-gilgal—which is otherwise unknown—and Azmaveth near Geba to the north (Nehemiah xii, 29). The sketch map in the next page gives a rough outline of the restored community, at least in its earliest days.

The list of villages in Nehemiah xi, 25-36, covers a much greater stretch of country, from Beer-sheba on the south to Bethel on the north, *i.e.*, about fifty miles by forty. There are probably several additions in this list made at a later date when the community had expanded. Zanoah is the only village in this list which is also mentioned as supplying builders for the walls. The fact that the Septuagint

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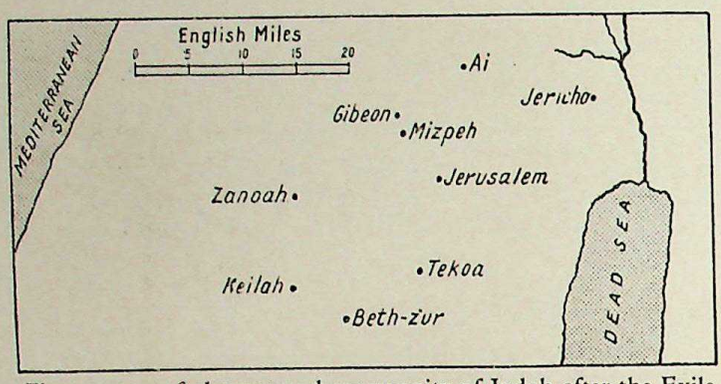


First centres of the restored community of Judah after the Exile

gives the list in a much shorter form bears out the theory of later additions. In view of this evidence we may accept the limits of the restored Judah as given by the contingents of wall-builders.

The centre and focal point of this area was the city of Jerusalem. All the interest both of the original sources and of the later compiler was taken up by the Holy City, and all other places were of no importance in comparison with it. In Nehemiah we are given the most complete account of the topography of Jerusalem to be found anywhere in the Bible, but even that account is very far from satisfactory. However we can attain an idea of the approximate extent of the city in the 5th century. Between the destruction of the city in the time of Nebuchadnezzar and the restoration of its walls by Nehemiah about 444 B.C. there were people living on the site of Jerusalem, but how much of the area they occupied we do not know, presumably only a small part, as Nehemiah (xi, 1-2) found it necessary to draft in a population from the surrounding villages.

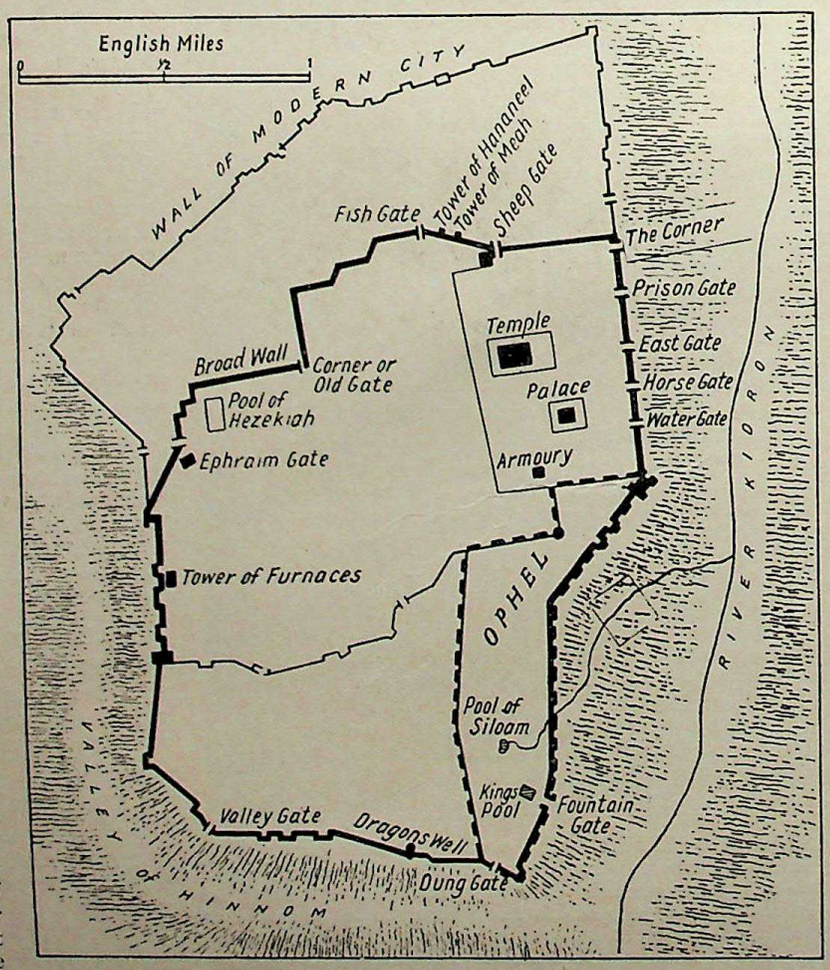
In his work of restoration Nehemiah followed the old lines of the walls and used the old names for the various gates and fortifications. In the account of his night ride (ii, 13-15) and in the description of the actual work on the walls (iii, 1-32), he has provided us with an outline of the circumference of the city which agrees with the scattered notices which we find in the pre-exilic writers. It is mainly from these two passages that our knowledge of the restored Jerusalem is drawn. As they stand they are full of difficulty both textually and geographically, but in broad outline we can secure a rough idea of the shape and size of the ancient city.

For his night ride Nehemiah left the city by the Valley Gate, "toward the dragon's well" (ii, 13). This was apparently to the west of Jerusalem, the valley being the valley of Hinnom, and the "dragon's well" is presumably the same as the "Serpents' Pool" of Josephus ("The Jewish War," v, iii, 2) which lay to the west. From there he rode southwards down the valley past the Dung (or Refuse) Gate, following the low ground to the south of Jerusalem past the gate of the Spring at the King's Pool, which may with fair certainty be identified with Siloam. Here he left his beast and went northwards again up the wady of the Kidron for some distance and then retraced his steps to the Valley Gate.

Walls and Gates of Jerusalem

THE description of the rebuilding of the walls (iii, 1-32) starts at the Sheep Gate to the north of the Temple, and then proceeds west, south, east and north to the starting point again. The next points of reference are the towers of Meah and Hananeel belonging to the fortress, first mentioned in this book (Nehemiah ii, 8) which later became Antonia, immediately to the north of the Temple. Then came the Fish Gate —so called as the place whither the Tyrian merchants brought their imports of fish (Nehemiah xiii, 16) in the northern wall. Also, in this part of the wall was the Old Gate, perhaps a relic of the old Davidic fortifications left in the reconstruction of Manasseh (II. Chronicles xxxiii, 14).

In the north-west corner was the Broad Wall (Nehemiah iii, 8; xii, 38), an exceptionally strong fortification at the weakest part of the city's natural defences. Possibly at the end of this Broad Wall stood the Tower of the Furnaces, guarding a bend in the wall, beside which was the Corner Gate, facing west. Also in the west wall was the Valley Gate already mentioned; and to the south the Dung and Fountain Gates. On the eastern side was the Water Gate leading to the spring Gihon, the Horse Gate close to the Temple, and the Muster (Prison ?) Gate also leading to the Temple area. Sir George Adam Smith ("Encyclopedia Biblica" ii, 2422-2425) suggests that the Valley Gate led to what was later known as the Tyropoea more to the south-east, in which case all the other features must be moved round accordingly, unless the reference to the Valley Gate has been misplaced. However, the older equivalence of the Valley to Hinnom gives a sufficiently consistent and coherent picture. Perhaps the sketch-map will make the matter clearer. This is only conjectural and roughly based on the remains of old walls that have been discovered. The positions of the gates are only approximate.



The extent of Jerusalem in the time of Nehemiah

The area so enclosed would be about two hundred acres. Of the actual houses and streets of this town we know nothing. There were houses built right up to the wall, and their owners undertook the construction of the wall opposite their own property. The priests seem to have gathered together between the Horse Gate and the Muster Gate (iii, 28), just in the place we should expect to find them. The Temple servants called Nethinim lived in Ophel. There were several "open places" beside some of the gates, as the Water Gate (viii, 1, 3, 16) and the Ephraim Gate, which may

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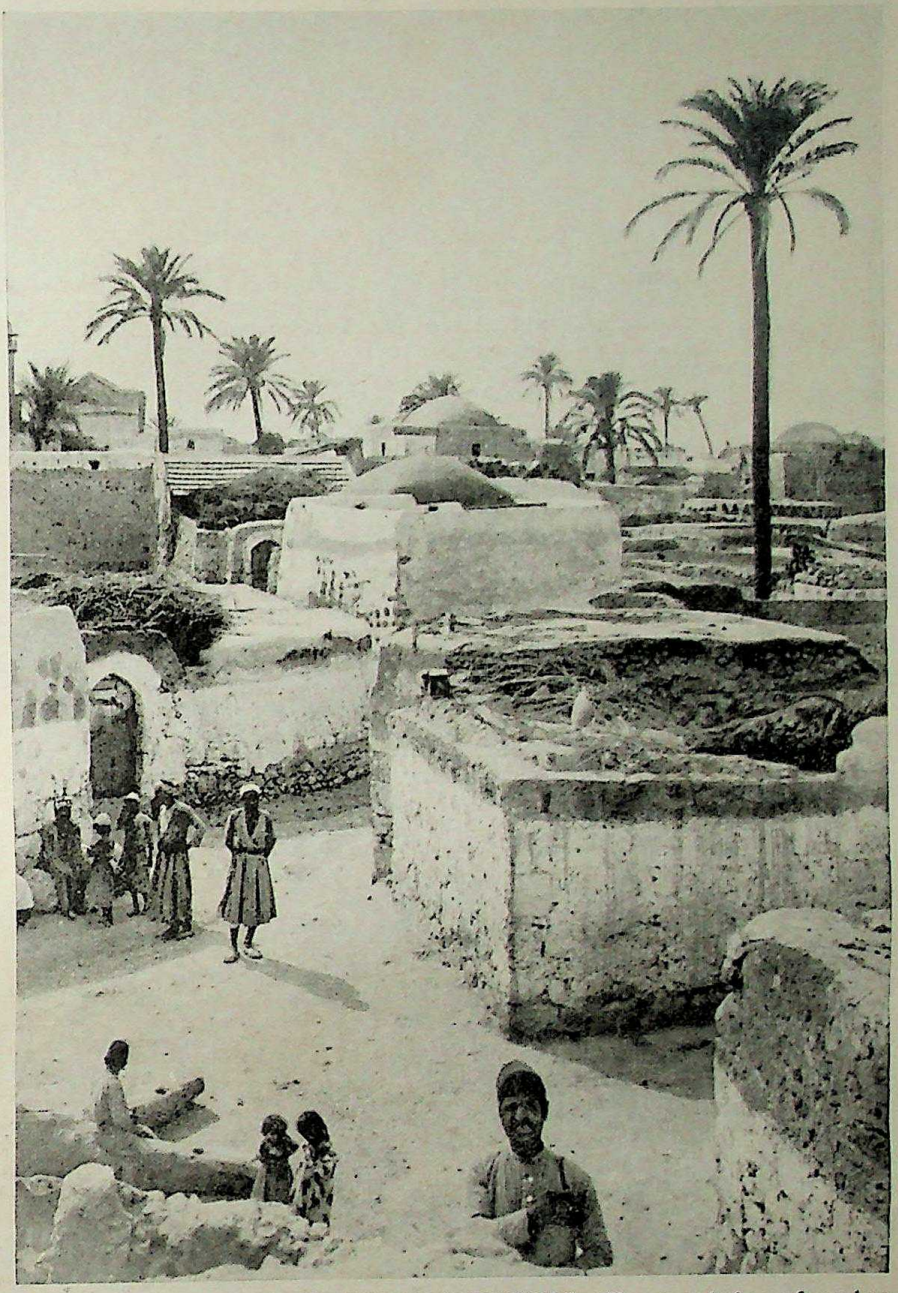
be the Valley Gate (cf. II. Kings xiv, 13) by an older name. More than this we cannot say of the interior arrangements of the restored city. Nehemiah found houses already built, and his work was confined to the building of the fortifications and encircling wall. These completed, their solemn dedication took place, after which Nehemiah returned to the Persian court, although he retained his office as governor of the province.

Political Conditions of Palestine

THE accession of Cyrus meant little change in the political conditions of Judah. From being a part of the Babylonian Empire, it simply passed to the Persian Empire as a small portion of the great satrapy of Abar Nahara, as we saw above. This was governed by a satrap (Heb-pehah) responsible to the central government at Susa, and controlled from there by dispatch (Nehemiah ii, 7-9). The satrap apparently did not live at Jerusalem, for Nehemiah went first to the governor, and then to Jerusalem (Nehemiah ii, 9 and 11). His seat was probably Samaria, which had always been a more important and central place than Jerusalem.

Under the authority of the satrap, there were a number of minor governors. There was a governor of Jerusalem, and we hear of several rulers of districts and half districts (Nehemiah iii, 9, 12, 16, 17, 18). What the functions of these men were we are not told, it was probably general administrative and judicial work under the instructions of the satrap; but the mention of them shows us that the administrative system had been fairly thoroughly worked out, and the duties of the governor were shared by some sort of a civil service. None of these minor officials seems to have had any military importance.

There had been a community of some size in existence before 520 B.C., as Haggai makes reference to solidly built houses (i, 4) and to the cultivation of crops (i, 9), which suggests an established community. This is only what we might expect, as Nebuchadnezzar did not completely denude Judah of inhabitants. When Sheshbazzar was sent to Judah in the time of Cyrus (Ezra i, 8) he found a community living among the ruins, who were the descendants of those left after the sack of the city. There was also a considerable number of Israelites left in the old northern kingdom, and they felt they still belonged to the race, and worshipped Jehovah, the ancestral God. In the year 518 B.C., certain representatives were sent from Bethel to inquire about an old custom of fasting that they had been observing for the past few years, and this shows that there was an organized community in the north which still kept alive the observance of the old Jehovah-worship. (Zechariah vii, 1-3). As time went on, however, this community was more and more excluded from the more rigid cult of Judah (cf. Ezra iv, 1-3).



"LOD, THE VALLEY OF THE CRAFTSMEN." The population of modern Lydda, on the site of Biblical Lod, near Ramleh, is almost wholly Moslem. In the time of Nehemiah the place was, with Ono, an industrial settlement of craftsmen (Nehemiah xi, 35); in the Middle Ages, seat of a bishopric, entitled St. George of Lydda. Remains of the Crusaders' church, built over the reputed grave of England's patron saint, are seen on the left of the photograph. According to the legend, St. George, the Roman soldier, was martyred in A.D. 303 for tearing down the anti-Christian edicts of the emperor Diocletian at Nicomedia.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

Jerusalem was always regarded with suspicion as a stronghold which, when fortified, could give the government a good deal of trouble. The satraps, therefore, kept a close control over the city, and on the first signs of rebuilding the satrap of the time stepped in to check what might have been the first signs of a troublesome revolt. He sent a full report of the matter to Susa, and in reply was told to stop any such building activity (Ezra iv, 7-24). The Jews had been given permission to return to their old homes, they had been allowed to re-establish the Temple worship, but the moment they passed beyond the bounds of religion, and the movement took a political air the government stepped in to exercise its control. It needed a special decree from Artaxerxes to enable Nehemiah to build the walls, and even then the satrap Sanballat was very far from satisfied that things were as they should be in Judah (Nehemiah iv). Nehemiah put down his opposition to jealousy, but it was more probably due to a fear of trouble in his satrapy when Jerusalem had been restored to its former strength (Nehemiah ii, 19).

In addition to the opposition of the satrap, there was a good deal of jealousy among the surrounding peoples of the influence a refortified Jerusalem would exercise. To this cause may be traced the opposition

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of Sanballat's friends, Tobiah the Ammonite and Geshem (Gashmu) the Arabian. The situation was made more difficult by parties within the city itself. A number of the officials and nobles were definitely against the rebuilding scheme, as is indicated by Nehemiah's silence about his plans (Nehemiah ii, 16). The various petty officials and nobles, perhaps from their fear of political consequences, were loath to begin on work which might be interpreted as high treason, and certain of them absolutely refused to have a part in the work (Nehemiah iii, 5). There was also opposition from the prophetic party, which had begun as far back as the time of Darius, when Zechariah had a vision forbidding the setting of limits to the city and the building of walls about it (Zechariah ii, 1-5). The basis of the prophetic opposition was apparently religious. They were expecting the swift coming of Messiah and the gathering-in of the Gentiles, when the limits of the old Jerusalem would be too narrow for the vast new population.

Thus there was at Jerusalem not that unanimity of purpose which the compiler of Ezra-Nehemiah would like to suggest, but a considerable strife between at least three parties. The first of these we may call the nationalist. This party was eager for the walls to be rebuilt and Judah to be independent again. It seems to have consisted mainly of the common people, with perhaps the larger number of the priests. Occupying an exactly opposite position was the party of compromise, consisting mainly of nobles, who possibly realized more clearly than the rest of the people the treasonable appearance of the wall-building, and the consequences of falling foul of the Persian Empire.

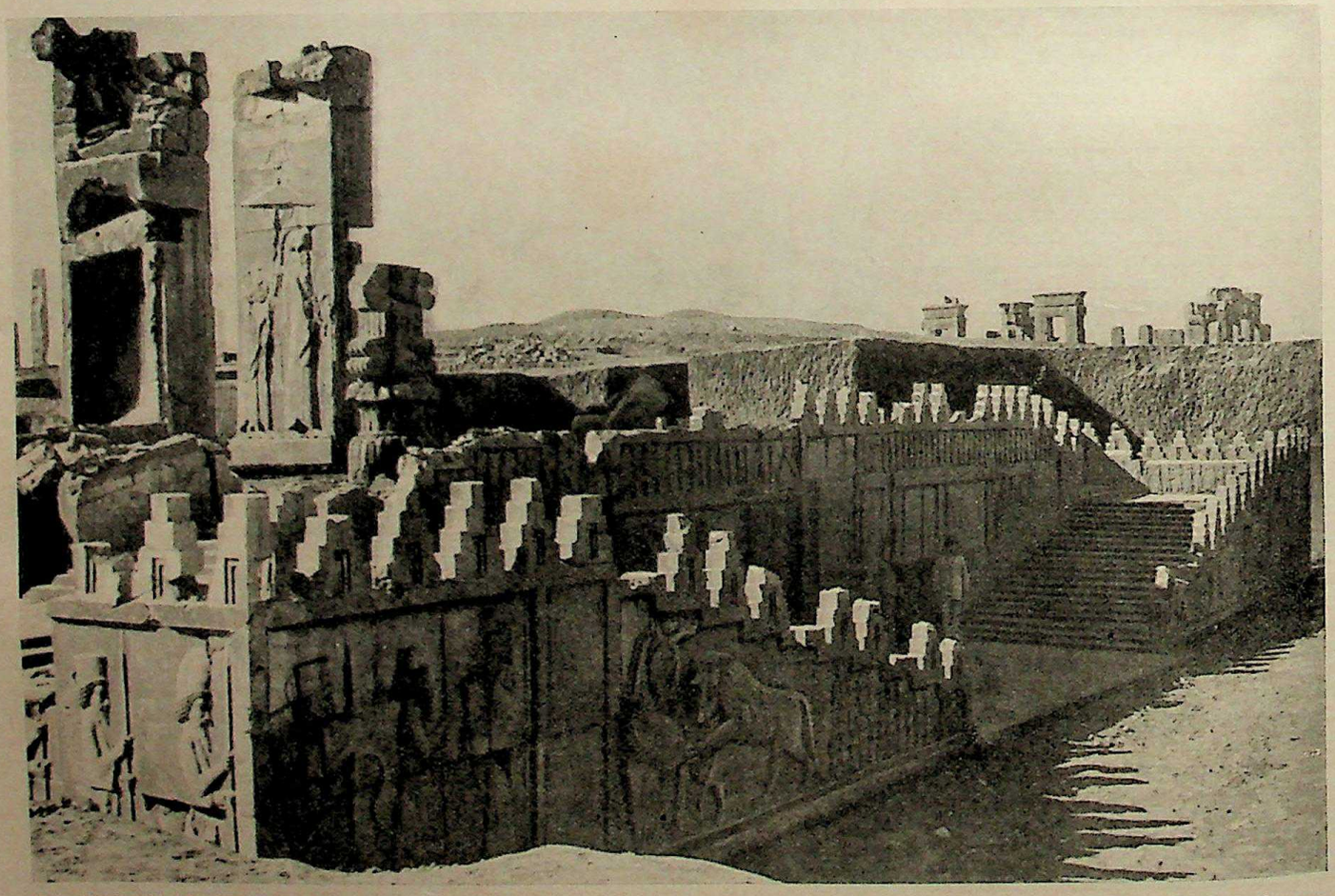
They were quite willing to acquiesce in the Persian rule, and maintained friendly relations with the governor and his associates (Nehemiah vi, 17-19; xiii, 4-5).

Nehemiah Opposed by the Messianists

THE prophetic party were also opposed to the political designs of the nationalists, but from a very different reason. The quotation from Zechariah above shows that they were looking for the coming of Messiah in the immediate future, and so the building of the walls was an insult to Jehovah, and an attempt to frustrate His purposes. In their opposition they made common cause with the party of compromise in trying to dissuade Nehemiah from his purpose. (Nehemiah vi, 10-14). That Nehemiah himself shared the hopes of the nationalist party is to be doubted; he was too loyal a servant of the king, but he was a useful instrument in the hands of that party, and provided them with the chance of forwarding their own ends.

In the books we are considering various governors and satraps are named, and it would perhaps be as well to consider the chief of these. The first mentioned was Sheshbazzar in the reign of Cyrus. We are told very little of this man, as the compiler of our books rather slurred over his work. The probability is that he was sent to Abar Nahara to replace the Babylonian governor, and in that capacity brought permission to Jerusalem for the resumption of the old cult, and the rebuilding of the Temple. In accordance with Cyrus's religious policy he also returned the symbols of Jehovah's worship, the sacred vessels of the Temple (Ezra i, 7-11). His name is Babylonian (probably Shamash-bel-usur), and he may have been one of the many Babylonian nobles who went over to the cause of Cyrus, and for his services was rewarded with a satrapy. The seat of his authority was almost certainly Samaria, and he only paid an occasional visit—if he paid more than the one mentioned by Ezra—to Jerusalem.

The next governor of whom we have any mention was Zerubbabel, himself



STAIRWAY IN THE PALACE-CITY OF DARIUS. This graceful tripylon, or double stairway, was the main entrance to the smaller and less formal residences of the Persian kings in glorious Persepolis, selected by Darius I as his palace-city. The beauty of this staircase is unobliterated after twenty-five centuries. In the centre of each of the outer crenellated and sculpture-ornamented walls is the symbolic motif of the bull attacked by a lion, a motif which recurs frequently in Persian art. The ruins seen in the background of the photograph are those of the lofty portals and columns of the great palace of Darius.

Photo, courtesy of the Oriental University of Chicago

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THE TOMB OF EZRA BY "BROAD TIGRIS' FLOOD." Josephus records that Ezra died and was buried in Jerusalem, but a very old Jewish tradition tells of his return to Babylonia, country of his birth and cradle of his race. Near the spot where meet "broad Tigris' flood and great Euphrates' roll" (these words are from a Babylonian hymn of the creation dated 800 B.C. in "The Music of the Sumerians," by Canon F. W. Galpin) a Moslem shrine and tomb have been erected to Ezra "ready scribe in the law of Moses" (Ezra vii, 6, 12), who stood high in the esteem of "Artaxerxes, king of kings."

Photo, E.N.A.

a Jew. As such he chose Jerusalem rather than Samaria for his residence. The Messianic hopes of the prophetic party centred round him for a time (Haggai ii, 21-23), and it is very likely that for that reason he was removed from his office as a dangerous person. The important event of his governorship was the restoration of the Temple.

Then there came Tattenai (probably the Ushtanni who was satrap of Abar Nahara and Babylon). He opposed the first attempts at the restoration of the walls of Jerusalem. Sometime after him came Sanballat, Nehemiah's bête noire. He is called in one of the Elephantine papyri (Cowley op. cit. 30) "governor of Samaria," that is, satrap of the province, and he may have been alive at the time of the letter, 408 B.C. His sons were men of importance at that time. Sanballat's name is Babylonian (Sin-uballit), but his sons have Hebrew names—Delaiah and Shelemiah—and it is possible that Sanballat himself was a Jew from Babylonia. If that had been the case, his opposition to Nehemiah's scheme is the harder to understand, unless there had been revolutionary ends behind it.

NEHEMIAH occupied a subordinate position to Sanballat; his authority was limited to Judah. He had two terms of office, the first twelve years long (444-432 B.C.) (Nehemiah xiii, 6), the second of doubtful date and extent. It was probably very short, and ended at the latest with the death of Artaxerxes in 424 B.C. At any rate we can be sure it had ended before 408 B.C. when Bigvai was governor of Judah (Cowley, op. cit. page 30).

The political conditions of the restored community varied from time to time according to the circumstances of the day, but dominating everything was the supremacy of the Persian power, and the constant strong hand of the satrap of Abar Nahara. At first nationalist hopes centred in a Messianic deliverance, but as time went on more ordinary methods were considered, and the fortification of Jerusalem was taken as the first step towards renewed national independence. Nehemiah's work, though it did not attain the end for which some of the people had hoped, yet established a firmer community which could in the course of time accept the new law to be promulgated by Ezra, and so ensure the carrying on of Judaism free from absorption into the mass of the empire.

Social Life after the Return

AS the interest of the writers of our sources was in the main religious, we only have a few casual glimpses of social conditions in Judah after the Return. As to how the people lived from day to day we have practically no information. The chief business was agriculture, with a large number of small holdings worked by the owners and their families (Nehemiah v, 3-4; xiii, 10). This is what we should expect from the past history of Judah, when so much stress was laid upon the retaining of the ancestral farm (cf. Jeremiah xxxii). We have a passing mention of houses (Haggai, i, 4), a few notices of various garments, tools and weapons, but what they actually looked like, whether the houses were large or small, with flat or sloping roofs, we do not know. These facts were all so obvious to the writers, and the people for whom they wrote, that it is not surprising to find no mention of them. The crops grown were corn, vines, figs, olives and pomegranates. Money was current, but scarce, and the real riches of the country lay in the produce of its farms. There was a richer class who could afford to employ hired servants, but it was not numerous; the larger proportion of the inhabitants consisted of yeoman farmers. In such a community there was little change in their social conditions from year to year, and the references we have to any one period would probably be equally true of any other, but we shall set forth our evidence in chronological order.

As we have already seen, Judah and Jerusalem had not been deserted after the fall of Jerusalem in 586 B.C. The farmers returned to their farms, and the ordinary work of every day went on as it had gone on for centuries. We get our first glimpse of conditions in Jerusalem from the Book of Lamentations, and a miserable picture it is. Walls and strongholds had been thrown down (ii, 2, 5, 8-9); the nobles had been taken captive to Babylon (i, 6; ii, 2, 9). It was a hard task even to keep alive (i, 19; ii, 11-12). But there were still inhabitants of some kind and they had elders and priests (i, 4; ii, 10). Life must have been very poor in such a state of affairs, but in the generation that preceded the triumph of Cyrus, things improved, life became more settled, food became more plentiful as crops were again grown and herds tended. The glory had departed from Judah, but the life of the common people in their little villages again became tolerable.

The next sure information we have of Judah and Jerusalem belongs to some sixty years later in the time of the Temple building when Haggai, Zechariah and probably Malachi were prophesying. Again we find the people's circumstances were not too happy. There had been a severe famine (Haggai i, 6) and food was very scarce. This was due to a drought and a plague of locusts (Malachi iii, 10-12). There was a state of poverty, and nobody had much beyond the

(*Continued on page* 511)

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Ezra and Nehemiah

THE Books of Ezra and Nehemiah, the latest historical Books in the Old Testament, bring the story of the Jewish people down to the time of their return from Babylonia. They tell how the captives returned under the leadership of Zerubbabel, how Jerusalem was restored, and how the people were reorganized. The Temple was rebuilt, and Temple worship was re-established. In short, the Jewish Church had assumed a form that was to make it one of the most important factors in the development of civilization.

This great theme gives to the two Books of Ezra and Nehemiah a purpose of dominating intensity, and hence they are unmarked by the discursiveness and the frequent poetic interludes of the earlier books, and are distinguished by their straightforward connected narrative, illustrated by copious genealogies, original documents, and detailed statistics.

YET in the telling of the building of the Temple, the obstacles that had to be overcome, and the re-establishment of the worship in the restored edifice, there are many interesting and some fine passages.

The Book of Nehemiah, it is interesting to note, is unique among the historical Books of the Old Testament in being written in the first person.

THE DECREE OF CYRUS

Ezra i, 1—3

NOW in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD, by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying, Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, The LORD God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth; and he hath charged me to build him an house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah.

Who is there among you of all his people? his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and build the house of the Lord God of Israel (he is the God), which is in Jerusalem.

WORSHIP RESUMED

Ezra iii, 1—2, 6—7

AND when the seventh month was come, and the children of Israel were in the cities, the people gathered themselves together as one man to Jerusalem. Then stood up Jeshua the son of Jozadak, and his brethren the priests, and Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and his brethren, and builded the altar of the God of Israel, to offer burnt offerings thereon as it is written in the law of Moses the man of God.

From the first day of the seventh month began they to offer burnt offerings unto the LORD. But the foundation of the Temple of the Lord was not yet laid.

They gave money also unto the masons, and to the carpenters; and meat, and drink, and oil, unto them of Zidon and to them of Tyre, to bring cedar trees from Lebanon to the sea of Joppa, according to the grant that they had of Cyrus king of Persia.

ARTAXERXES' LETTER

Ezra vii, 11—13, 21—22, 25

NOW this is the copy of the letter that the king Artaxerxes gave unto Ezra the priest, the scribe, even a scribe of the words of the commandments of the LORD, and of his statutes to Israel.

Artaxerxes, king of kings, unto Ezra the priest, a scribe of the law of the God of Heaven, perfect peace, and at such a time.

I make a decree, that all they of the people of Israel, and of his priests and Levites, in my realm, which are minded of their own freewill to go up to Jerusalem, go with thee.

And I, even I Artaxerxes the king, do make a decree to all the treasurers which are beyond the river, that whatsoever Ezra the priest, the scribe of the law of the God of heaven, shall require of you, it be done speedily, unto an hundred talents of silver, and to an hundred measures of wheat, and to an hundred baths of wine, and to an hundred baths of oil, and salt without prescribing how much.

And thou, Ezra, after the wisdom of thy God, that is in thine hand, set magistrates and judges, which may judge all the people that are beyond the river, all such as know the laws of thy God; and teach ye them that know them not.

NEHEMIAH IN JERUSALEM

Nehemiah ii, 12—17

AND I arose in the night, I and some few men with me; neither told I any man what my God had put in my heart to do at Jerusalem; neither was there any beast with me, save the beast that I rode upon.

And I went out by night by the gate of the valley, even before the dragon well, and to the dung port, and viewed the walls of Jerusalem, which were broken down, and the gates thereof were consumed with fire. Then I went on to the gate of the fountain, and to the king's pool: but there was no place for the beast that was under me to pass.

Then went I up in the night by the brook, and viewed the wall, and turned back, and entered by the gate of the valley, and so returned.

And the rulers knew not whither I went, or what I did; neither had I as yet told it to the Jews, nor to the priests, nor to the nobles, nor to the rulers, nor to the rest that did the work. Then said I unto them, Ye see the distress that we are in, how Jerusalem lieth waste, and the gates thereof are burned with fire: come, and let us build up the wall of Jerusalem, that we be no more a reproach.

BUILDERS AT WORK

Nehemiah iv, 17, 18, 21—23

THEY which builded on the wall, and they that bare burdens, with those that laded, every one with one of his hands wrought in the work, and with the other hand held a weapon. For the builders, every one had his sword girded by his side, and so builded. And he that sounded the trumpet was by me.

So we laboured in the work: and half of them held the spears from the rising of the morning till the stars appeared.

Likewise at the same time said I unto the people, Let every one with his servant lodge within Jerusalem, that in the night they may be a guard to us, and labour on the day.

So neither I, nor my brethren, nor my servants, nor the men of the guard which followed me, none of us put off our clothes, saving that every one put them off for washing.

DEDICATION OF THE WALL

Nehemiah xii, 27—30

AND at the dedication of the wall of Jerusalem they sought the Levites out of all their places, to bring them to Jerusalem, to keep the dedication with gladness, both with thanksgivings, and with singing with cymbals, psalteries, and with harps. And the sons of the singers gathered themselves together, both out of the plain country round about Jerusalem, and from the villages. . . .

And the priests and the Levites purified themselves, and purified the people, and the gates, and the wall.

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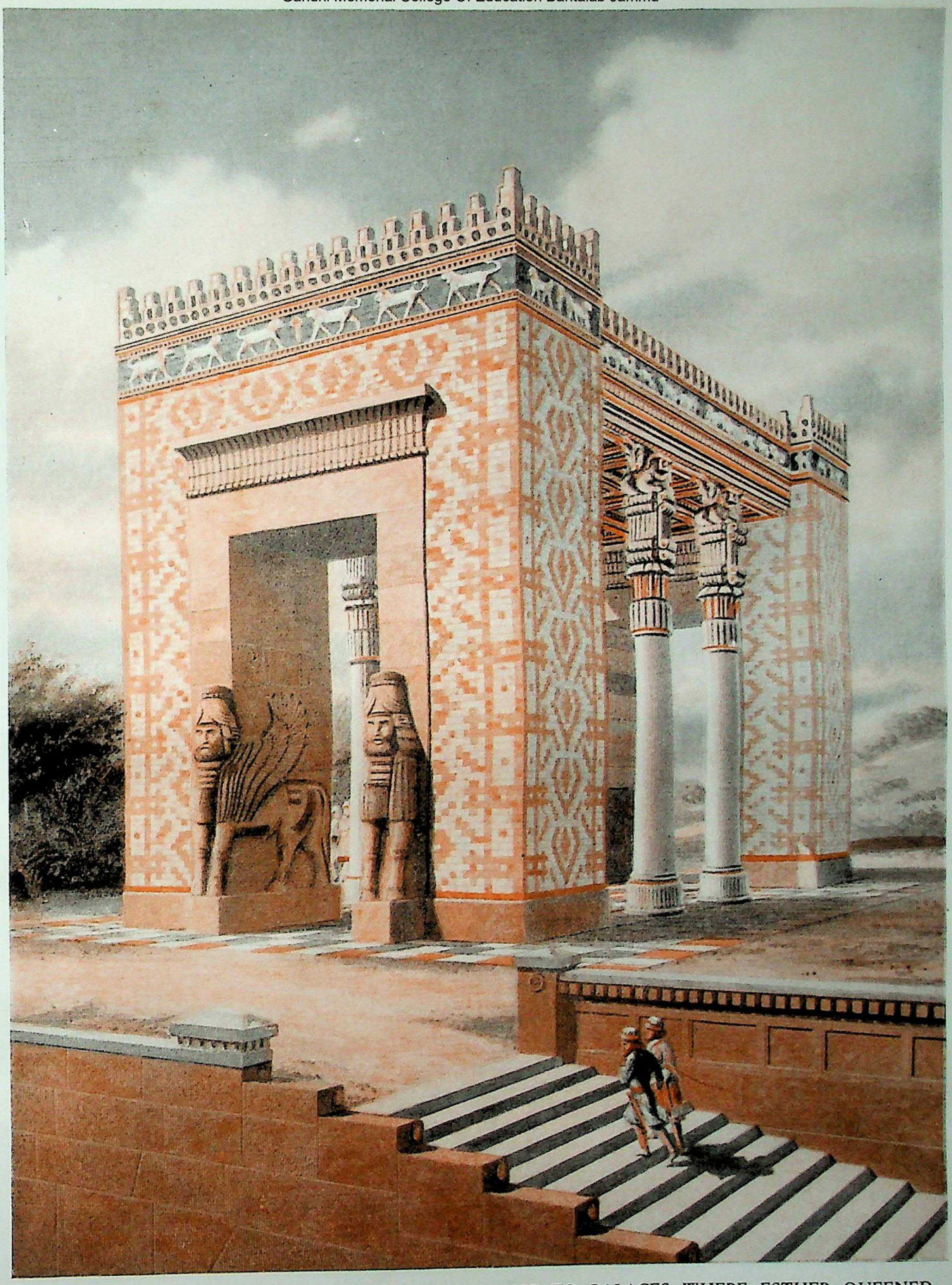

MONUMENTAL ENTRANCE TO PALACES WHERE ESTHER QUEENED

The details of this restoration of the magnificent propylaea or entrance which Xerxes (Ahasuerus) built on the Platform of the Palaces at Persepolis have been selected from the sculptured reliefs of architectural marvels carved on the rock-tombs in the mountainside above the peerless city of the Persian kings which is now a jumble of ruins. Therefore, though little more than the two great piers, standing about 33 feet high and carved with stylized Assyrian winged bulls symbolizing power, remain of the structure pictured above, there is nothing improbable about the frieze of lions in enamelled brick round the cornice of the propylaea, nor fanciful in the crenellated walls, columns of uncemented stone and beams of painted wood.

After a reconstruction by Ch. Chipiez

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"I WILL RISE NOW, AND GO ABOUT THE CITY IN THE STREETS"

Through the heart of walled Jerusalem, from Jaffa Gate to the Temple Area, runs the Street of David. Scarcely more than twelve feet wide and stepped in parts like the section pictured, much of it is no thoroughfare for vehicular traffic. These narrow streets of the old city become tunnels where arches carry rooms to enlarge the houses. Entrances to workshops, stores and passages open in the early morning as the street awakes to its casual daily business. Shop counters encroach on the space; dove cages are hung out; water carriers take goat-skin containers to fill them at the faucet by the gate; idlers sit on wooden stools against the walls and gossip away the hours.

Photo American Colony in Jerusalem

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"THE PEOPLE GATHERED TOGETHER INTO THE BROAD PLACE"

When, in response to the demand of the Judean community in Jerusalem, Ezra brought "the book of the law of Moses," the whole concourse of men, women, and children gathered into the square before the Water Gate of the city, eager to accept as their national code the Pentateuchal collection of laws (Nehemiah viii, 1, 2, R.V.). On this historic occasion—hitherto much of the Law had been a monopoly of the priesthood and now it was published to the man in the street—the people were greatly moved. Pictured above is another vast oriental assemblage stirred by religious exultation. They are Moslems collected in front of the Damascus Gate at Jerusalem prior to starting on a pilgrimage to Neby Musa, their memorial shrine to Moses, the great lawgiver.

Photo. American Colony in Jerusalem

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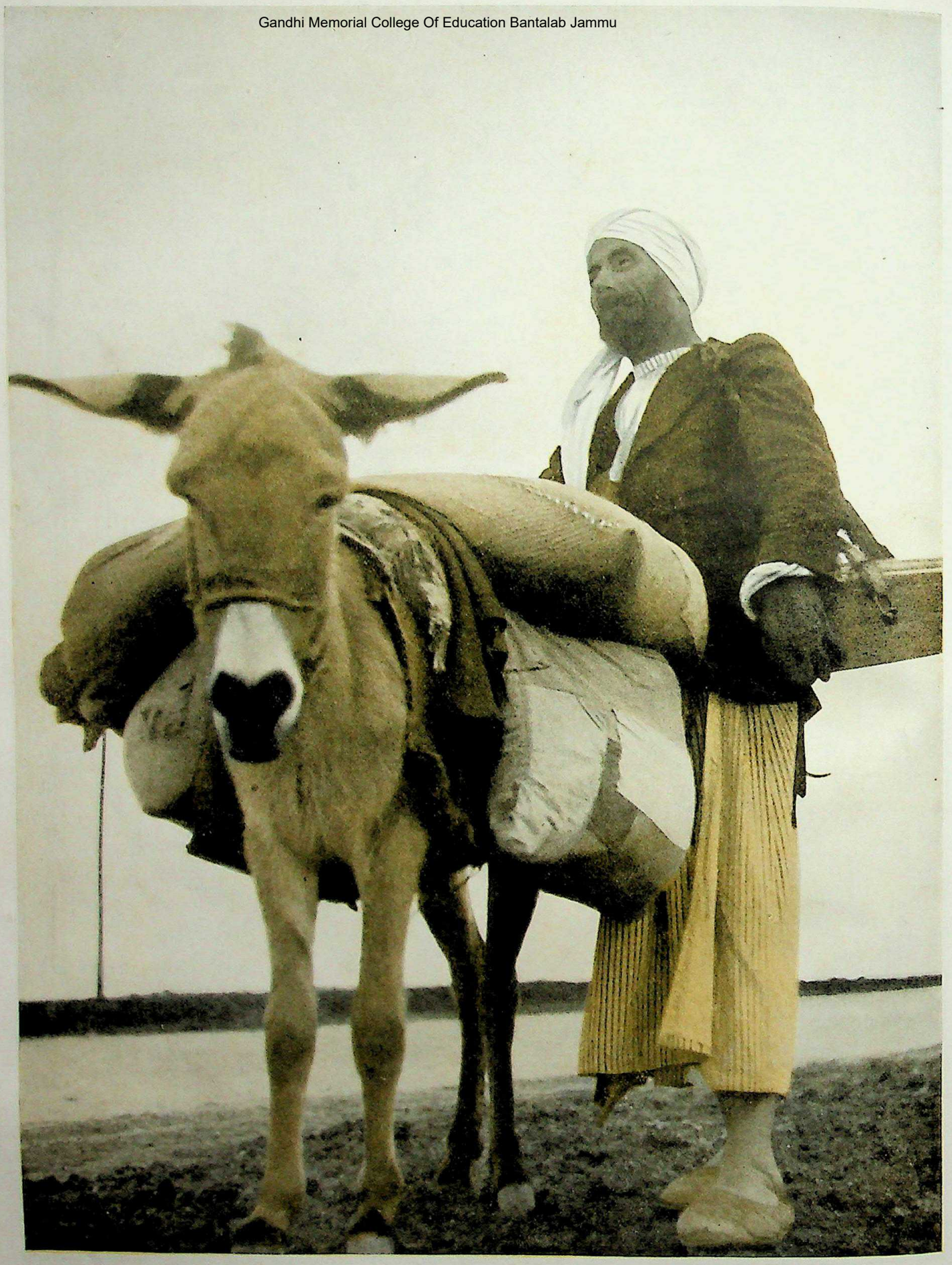

A MAN OF TYRE SELLING "ALL KINDS OF WARES"

From far and near merchants and hawkers brought their goods into Jerusalem when Nehemiah resided as governor in his rebuilt city. All manner of wares from fish to textiles and dyes to fruits of the field came from the land of the Phoenicians, invaded by Shalmaneser V about 725 B.C., but risen again to some of its former prosperity in the Persian era. Today the market gardens and orchards round Tyre and Sidon are full of sweet-scented growth. Their fragrance, mingling with the tang of the sea and the smoke from the wood fires in the peasants' homes, produces a synthetic perfume as subtle as that from the contents of this Tyrian pedlar's pack of perfumery, dried fruits, haberdashery and fancy goods.

Photo, Daily Mirror

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(*Continued from page* 505)

absolute necessities of life. It is in this poor condition of things that we may find the cause of the delay in building the Temple, which the compiler put down to the opposition of the neighbouring peoples. The people were too poor to undertake such a task, and they lacked leaders to rouse their enthusiasm for it.

But not only was it a time of economic poverty, along with that poverty the morals of the community had degenerated, and so Malachi inveighs against laxity in marital fidelity, against prevailing dishonesty and sharp practice, and against the lack of consideration for the rights of the weaker members of society (Malachi iii, 5). Doubtless the better members of the community still preserved a higher code of conduct, but then, as now, decency and morality had little "news value."

Contacts with the Wider World

YET this poor community were not cut off from their more prosperous brethren in Babylonia, and communications were exchanged between the exiles and the men of the homeland. Gifts were sent from Babylon for the use of their poorer compatriots in the work of the Temple, and these were often valuable, as in the case of the gold brought in the time of Zechariah (vi, 9-14). For a fairly large party this journey took about four months (Ezra vii, 9), but for the king's post it might be as little as a week Judah was by no means cut off from the world, and news of the great world beyond the Euphrates was received and eagerly discussed in the streets of Jerusalem, as was the case with the rumours of trouble at the time of the accession of Darius (Haggai ii, 22).

Following this flash of light, darkness falls upon conditions in Judah until the time of Nehemiah. We are to presume that the Jews continued a somewhat hand-to-mouth existence through these seventy years, for the next reference we have to social conditions again reveals a state of poverty. During his building of the walls Nehemiah came upon a financial crisis. The cultivators had evidently had some bad seasons, and were ground down by the weight of the government taxes. So bad had things become that farms had had to be mortgaged to pay the taxes, and even in some cases the children sold into slavery. Food was short and prices were high, and the small freeholders were in a state of abject poverty. To aggravate matters moneylending on the part of the upper classes had become prevalent, and formed a source of bitterness and class-hatred (Nehemiah v, 1-5.) The buying of such mortgaged land from the needy proprietors, with the forming of large estates and the reducing of the population to serfdom was a crying abuse of power on the part of the rich nobility, and Nehemiah takes no little credit to himself for not making use of his official position to indulge in the practice (Nehemiah v, 16). He also refused to add to the burdens of the cultivators by exacting contributions in kind from them, as he was entitled to do, and as his predecessors had done (v, 14-15).

In this connexion it is interesting to notice the provisions that were used in the governor's establishment. Daily there were used an ox, six sheep, with fowls and wine, with which provisions he fed one hundred and fifty men, who presumably had no property or means of support within the community itself. This provision the governor found out of his own resources (Nehemiah v, 17-18).

When the walls had been built, Nehemiah made arrangements for the policing of the city. The scantiness of the population at the time made these vigilance arrangements the more necessary. Over the whole city he set his brother Hanani, and along with him Hananiah, who is called "commander of the castle." The latter would be a sort of "chief of police" and have under his command any armed forces which were in the city. Instructions were then issued as to the times of opening and shutting the gates. They were not to be opened until the sun was high; but unfortunately we do not know when they were to be shut, owing to the corruption of the text. A slight but probable emendation suggested by Batten (*op.cit. ad loc.*) gives the sense "while it (the sun) is still standing let them shut the gates," that is to say, they were to be shut before sunset, and only left open during the hours of full daylight. The inhabitants of Jerusalem were then divided into "watches," and these were posted in turn upon the walls to give warning of any danger from outside, and presumably to check any disturbance inside Jerusalem (Nehemiah vii, 1-4). This passage suggests that every citizen had his share in the policing and guarding of the city. It is unnecessary here to go into the details of Nehemiah's arrangements for the guarding of the actual work of rebuilding as they were temporary measures and did not form a permanent part of the social life of the community (Nehemiah iv, 9-23).

From what has been said it can be seen that at no time was the standard of life in the restored community very high. Men's minds were so taken up with the struggle for existence that it is small wonder that art and literature did not flourish.

Use of the Babylonian Calendar

ONE innovation that comes from this period must be noted in closing this section. This is the introduction of the Babylonian calendar. It is in the writings of this period that we first come upon the names of the months. In pre-exilic times the months had been usually numbered and some had names, but after the exile the Babylonian names were used and the Babylonian method of reckoning was used. Thus we hear of Nisan (Babylonian Nisannu) for the old Abib, of Kislew (Babylonion Kislivu) and the rest of them. With the calendar there were probably also imported by the returned exiles many new ways of life learned in Babylon, but how far these new ideas affected the community in general it is hard to discover, and is often problematical.

Religious Conditions after the Return

TO the writers of the period under review, religion was the matter of supreme importance, and so, while they hurried over political and social conditions, they dwelt at great length on matters of religion. Here again, however, the original sources are overlaid by the preconceptions of the compiler, and we have to remove first of all the later accretions and interpretations of the original material before we can obtain a coherent picture of the state and development of religious thought in Judah during the 6th and 5th centuries before Christ. Within the period covered by the Books of Ezra and Nehemiah there was considerable development, and ideas which were current at the beginning had faded at the end, and new ideas had taken their place. It was indeed a formative period in religious thought beginning with a state of considerable chaos wrought by the destruction of the Temple under Nebuchadrezzar, with its inevitable dislocation of the old faith and cultus, and ending with the stereotyping of the new Judaism, with its centre in the second Temple, under Ezra some time in the first quarter of the 4th century B.C.

In spite of the destruction of the Temple in 586 B.C. worship continued at the devastated site of the altar. As soon after the fall of Jerusalem as the governorship of Gedaliah a body of men arrived in the city with their offerings for the national shrine. These men came from northern Israel, showing that the sacred site was still regarded as the centre of the nation's worship (Jeremiah xli, 4-5). It is, therefore, a fair inference that all through the exile sacrifice continued to be offered at the temple site, and the worship continued in some way or other. When we come on to surer ground again in the time of Darius I, we find worshippers from the north are still coming to Jerusalem for guidance in religious matters as the source of all authoritative pronouncements (Zechariah vii, 1-3).

At this period, indeed, there was a great quickening of interest in religious affairs. The edict of toleration from Cyrus meant that the cult was recognized by the imperial authorities as official, and steps could be taken to rebuild the Temple and restore the services in their fullness. Owing to the poverty of the people the work had been delayed until the arrival

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of energetic leaders in the persons of Haggai and Zechariah the prophets, with the active co-operation of the political head Zerubbabel and the chief priest Jeshua. Not only was interest quickened in the organization of ritual and services, but the troubles within the empire on the accession of Darius kindled hopes of a Messianic intervention on behalf of the chosen people, which centred round Zerubbabel, a scion of the Davidic house, as the anointed of Jehovah (Haggai ii, 6; 20-23 cf. Malachi iii, 1-5; iv, 1-6). This seems to have been the ruling religious idea of the time, at least on the part of the prophets and their adherents, and it persisted until the time of Nehemiah, giving rise to the prophetic opposition to his plan of rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem.

A mark of this revived interest in the old worship is to be found in the vehemence of the contemporary prophets in denouncing the faults of the people with regard to the cultus. Probably due to the famine in the early years of Darius, the bringing of offerings to the Temple had become slack, and only defective beasts were brought, if they were brought at all (Malachi i, 7-9; iii, 8-10). Along with this negligence on the part of the worshippers went a slackness and corruption among the priesthood. The Temple ritual in their hands became a meaningless formalism, done wearily day after day as a painful duty; while their pronouncements in the name of Jehovah were corrupted for their own ends. Truth ceased to matter, and holy things became profane (Malachi i, 7-14; ii, 1-9; cf. Isaiah lvi, 10-12). But though the ritual had become such a weariness to some, others were conscious of a reviving interest in the details of the ritual law and the services soon to be renewed in the restored Temple (Haggai ii, 10-14). Yet the dead hand of formalism was beginning to tighten its grip. Public mourning was performed with great ceremony, but the heart of the people did not repent the evil of their ways (Malachi ii, 13).

Challenge of the World

ALONGSIDE of this formalism there grew up a mood of scepticism. It seemed that sharp practice in business and a lack of social morality gave success in life, while the decent man was oppressed by his more unscrupulous rival. This did not accord with the justice of Jehovah, and so the question came to be asked whether it was any good to serve Him and strive to keep a decent level of morality. Was it not better to have as good a time as one could? Those who did that had the favour of Jehovah revealed in their prosperity (Malachi ii, 17; iii, 13-15; cf. Isaiah lvii, 1-2). So because of the evil of the time many fell away from the high faith of the prophets to idolatry or indifference; but still there remained in Judah a loyal remnant who could carry on the faith for the future generations of Judaism (Malachi iii, 16-18).

Following this picture of religious flux there comes a blank until the time of Ezra except for occasional references to religious ceremonies. Nothing is told us in detail, and we have to infer that the forces working in the time of Darius developed in the direction of a greater rigidity of the formal cult of the Temple worship and a gradual lessening of the Messianic hope. Though they were written so much later, it is extremely likely that the papyri found at Elephantine represent the state of religious affairs in Judah before the time of Ezra.

Guiding Hand of the Priests

BUT even here the evidence is meagre, and must be used with caution, especially as the colonists in Egypt were more susceptible to polytheistic influences than the dwellers in Judah. But we find an organized Temple worship, with a guild of priests, and probably also a high priest. Sacrifices were offered, and various feasts and sacred seasons observed. (Cowley, *op. cit.* pap. 21). These festivals had the authority of the king himself (*ibid.*), and the papyrus thus forms an interesting parallel to the decree of Artaxerxes (Ezra vii, 12-26). A regular system of contributions for the upkeep of the Temple and its worship was in force (*ibid.* pap. 22). so we may conclude that in Judah the Temple worship continued in the old fashion under the guidance of an organized priesthood under the supreme authority of the high priest.

The mention of the priesthood brings us to one of the most perplexing problems in the religious life of the time. Various classes of priests are mentioned, priests proper, Levites, nethinim, and it is difficult to define the relative positions of these various bodies, and their separate functions. Later opinion made the Levites a subordinate class of Temple servants, but signs are not wanting that in this period they were as highly esteemed as the priests themselves, and exercised similar functions. The question is too big to be discussed here; we can only note the conclusions that were reached in the reconstituted community of Judah.

First of all a need was felt for an authority in religious matters, and here there were two bodies of opinion. A large number of men of priestly descent had returned from Babylon and claimed it as their right to exercise priestly functions in the Temple. But they found on return a corps of priests who had not been in exile, but had been officiating on the altar-site all through the exile, and this body looked upon the returned exiles as men who had been punished by the wrath of Jehovah for their sins and the sins of their fathers, and who were therefore unclean, and unfit to be priests. Yet the need of a controlling authority became clamant. The rites and ceremonies of Judaism had become intricate in their detail. The new community was organized about the Temple, so it was absolutely necessary to know who really exercised the authority of Jehovah as His representatives in the Temple. We have an echo of this dispute in Zechariah's vision of the justification of Jeshua as high priest (iii). Now Jeshua was a man of the Return—"a brand plucked from the burning," and hence ceremonially unclean from his contact with the heathen, according to the remaining inhabitants of Judah The prophet's vision vindicates Jeshua by seeking to prove his authority in that he had been restored by the favour of Jehovah, and so might exercise Jehovah's authority over the whole people. So the returned priests of the old line of Zadok were restored to their office.

In the matter of the Levites the position reached was that of the Priestly Code It was decided that they should not be the equals of the priests, but they should become an indispensable class of Temple-servants whose duties revolved round the material side of the cult organization rather than the spiritual. So the hierarchy took shape. At its head was the high priest, who came to be the representative of the community in civil and religious matters. Then came the college of priests, made up both of the priests who had remained in Judah, and those who had returned from exile. Under them came a large body of Levites who attended to the details of Temple administration.

Emphasis on External Signs

ONCE the community had been organized about the Temple, and the nation was rapidly becoming a church, it became necessary to decide who were its members and who were not, with the accompanying attempt to separate Judah from the world. The nation was sacred, and not to be contaminated by the uncleanness of the nations who did not worship Jehovah. As a result of this feeling the external signs of membership in the community, such as circumcision and sabbath observance, had a greater emphasis laid upon them (Nehemiah xiii, 15-18, cf. Isaiah lvi, 1-8); and great stress was laid on purity of descent. The latter caused a good deal of trouble in the community as a number of the returned exiles (we may presume) had married foreign women. This was felt to be a weakening of the faith and order of the sacred nation, and it was at length settled after a judicial inquiry lasting three months that such mixed marriages could not be allowed (Ezra ix, 1-2; x). Along with these regulations for the preserving of the purity of the national stock went certain regulations of ceremonial separation from heathen defilement on sacred days (Nehemiah x, 30-31).

Gradually with the passing of the years after the rebuilding of the Temple and the settlement of the hierarchy the ritual of the Temple became

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"THE PEOPLE WENT THEIR WAY TO EAT." After the reading of the law by Ezra, the people were told to rejoice: "Go your way," said Nehemiah, "eat the fat, and drink the sweet, and send portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared" (Nehemiah viii, 10). These cheerful Palestinians have stopped at a pastrycook's stall and wait for the batches of pancakes to be done to a turn. The cook cannot refill his little tin quickly enough with the batter. When the cakes are ready, he deftly scrapes them off the iron girdle with a slice and tosses them to the customers. The boy on the left is anxiously alert.

Photo, "Daily Mirror"

fixed and stereotyped, and more and more elaborate. A sacred calendar of feasts and fasts was drawn up; and a directory of sacrifices for specific occasions was published. Worship, instead of being the spontaneous searching of man for God, became a fixed routine of rites and ceremonies performed by the priests, and continued whether there were worshippers present or not. The ritual was the important thing, the worship of the heart was a secondary consideration.

About this time we find the feast of tabernacles being observed in somewhat the same style as is laid down in Leviticus; (Nehemiah viii, 13-18, cf. Leviticus xxiii, 33-43); and also a time of mourning for sin which seems to have been the beginning of the Day of Atonement (Nehemiah ix, 1-3, cf. Leviticus xvi). The appearance of this day in the sacred calendar is the symptom of a new consciousness of sin, and a new emphasis on atonement.

The whole sacrificial system was brought into connexion with this idea, which existed in germ before the exile, but did not become explicit until the time of the return. The experiences of the exile had been such as to leave men with a sense of sin and a craving for pardon. By the growth of the Temple ritual this could only be obtained from the Temple services in that they constituted the chief way of communion between God and Man.

For the upkeep of the Temple, with its sacrifices and priesthood, certain regulations were laid down. A fixed Temple-tax of one third of a shekel was laid upon all Israelites, and various contributions in kind, such as wood for the sacrificial fire and firstfruits for the feeding of the priests, were also prescribed (Nehemiah x, 32-39). These were gathered by the Levites who had charge of all such matters.

Public Reading of the Law

AN innovation probably originating in Babylonia was the public reading of the Law in the services, as it is done in the synagogue even to this day, with appropriate blessings and responses on the part of reader and people (Nehemiah viii, 5-8). But it was not enough to read the Law, for the people could not understand it, apparently having forgotten their native Hebrew (Nehemiah xiii, 24). And so certain Levites were appointed to make a translation which the people could understand. It is extremely likely that this translation was in Aramaic, and that here we have the beginning of the Targums, or Aramaic translations of the Hebrew Law. Another opinion has been advanced that these translations were Hebrew translations of a cuneiform Babylonian original of the Law. In view of the prevalence of Aramaic in the Persian Empire the Targum-theory seems to me the more probable of the two.

These, then, are the main features of Judaism after the exile. A profound Messianic hope arose, only to fade gradually as the years passed, although apocalyptic dreams still persisted. Prophecy also died with the hardening of the cultus which crushed the spontaneity and freedom of the prophet under the legalism and ritual of the priest. Jehovah had spoken in the Law, and in the Law alone. With the deification of the Law there was no place left for the prophet. The hierarchy, as the sole authorities in matters of religion, took to themselves a new significance. They became a closed corporation, and in the person of their chief, the high priest, they exercised almost supreme rule in the community of Judah.

When we leave the books of Ezra and Nehemiah this process is just at its beginning, but the community has become a sacred nation apart from the world It has become a church organized around the Temple, and the step to making the head of the church the head of the state also is inevitable.

The work of Ezra was the attempt to establish the ideal theocracy in Judah, but Jehovah had other purposes for His people and the attempt was doomed to end in failure in a barren wilderness of legalism, only to be broken in Jesus Christ

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Historical Romance of Esther

THE authorship and date of writing of the Book of Esther are unknown. It is clearly a more sophisticated literary work than the Book of Ruth, which it resembles in being centred round a heroine but widely differs from in spirit and background. In its attitude of violent Jewish nationalism it is the antithesis of Ruth, which teaches racial tolerance in the acceptance of the Moabitess as a virtuous example in Israel. Instead of the simplicity of agricultural scenes at Bethlehem there are the resplendent settings of the Persian Palace, banqueting hall, gardens and the royal house of the women. One verse supplies the initial setting of Ruth; in Esther there is quite an elaborate description of the opening feast. An atmosphere of perfumes and incense replaces fresh air and mellow harvest fragrance. The Book of Esther deals with the passions, intrigues and vengeance of an Oriental Court; Ruth with the quiet events and customs of rural life.

A well-constructed story is narrated in the first seven chapters of the Book. Here, with the hanging of Haman, the Book, from the artistic viewpoint, should end. But a professed purpose of Esther is to explain the origin of the Feast of Purim, which the writer proceeds to do in the two following chapters. The situations of the narrative are worked out with skilful employment of the literary devices of contrast and irony. The characters of Haman and Mordecai are cleverly contrasted before their positions are reversed; the irony of the former's fate after his rejoicing and preparations of vengeance is bitterly effective. The climax of triumphant retaliation forms a dramatic conclusion to the Book.

IN SHUSHAN THE PALACE

i, 1—7, 9—13, 15—19, 21

NOW it came to pass in the days of Ahasuerus . . . the king made a feast unto all the people that were present in Shushan the palace, both unto great and small, seven days, in the court of the garden of the king's palace; where were white, green, and blue hangings, fastened with cords of fine linen and purple to silver rings and pillars of marble: the beds were of gold and silver, upon a pavement of red, and blue, and white, and black, marble. And they gave them drink in vessels of gold, and royal wine in abundance, according to the state of the king. Also Vashti the queen made a feast for the women in the royal house which belonged to king Ahasuerus.

On the seventh day, when the heart of the king was merry with wine, he commanded . . . the seven chamberlains that served in the presence of Ahasuerus the king, to bring Vashti the queen before the king with the crown royal, to shew the people and the princes her beauty: for she was fair to look on. But the queen Vashti refused to come at the king's commandment by his chamberlains: therefore was the king very wroth, and his anger burned in him.

Then the king said to the wise men . . . What shall we do unto the queen Vashti according to law, because she hath not performed the commandment of the king Ahasuerus by the chamberlains? And Memucan answered before the king and the princes, Vashti the queen hath not done wrong to the king only, but also to all the princes, and to all the people that are in all the provinces of the king Ahasuerus. For this deed of the queen shall come abroad unto all women, so that they shall despise their husbands in their eyes, when it shall be reported. The king Ahasuerus commanded Vashti the queen to be brought in before him, but she came not. Likewise shall the ladies of Persia and Media say this day unto all the king's princes, which have heard of the deed of the queen. Thus shall there arise too much contempt and wrath. If it please the king, let there go a royal commandment from him, and let it be written among the laws of the Persians and the Medes, that it be not altered, That Vashti come no more before king Ahasuerus; and let the king give her royal estate unto another that is better than she. . . . . And the king did according to the word of Memucan.

HAMAN'S DISMAY

vi, 6—12

SO Haman came in. And the king said unto him, What shall be done unto the man whom the king delighteth to honour? Now Haman thought in his heart, To whom would the king delight to do honour more than to myself? And Haman answered the king, For the man whom the king delighteth to honour, let the royal apparel be brought which the king useth to wear, and the horse that the king rideth upon, and the crown royal which is set upon his head: And let this apparel and horse be delivered to the hand of one of the king's most noble princes, that they may array the man withal whom the king delighteth to honour, and bring him on horseback through the street of the city, and proclaim before him. Thus shall it be done to the man whom the king delighteth to honour.

Then the king said to Haman, Make haste, and take the apparel and the horse, as thou hast said, and do even so to Mordecai the Jew, that sitteth at the king's gate; let nothing fail of all that thou has spoken. Then took Haman the apparel and the horse, and arrayed Mordecai, and brought him on horseback through the street of the city, and proclaimed before him, Thus shall it be done unto the man whom the king delighteth to honour.

And Mordecai came again to the king's gate. But Haman hasted to his house mourning, and having his head covered.

POETIC JUSTICE

vii; viii, 1

SO the king and Haman came to banquet with Esther the queen. And the king said again unto Esther . . . What is thy petition Queen Esther? And it shall be granted thee: and what is thy request? And it shall be peformed, even to the half of the kingdom. Then Esther the queen answered and said, If I have found favour in thy sight, O king, and if it please the king, let my life be given me at my petition, and my people at my request; for we are sold, I and my people, to be destroyed, to be slain, and to perish.

Then the king Ahasuerus answered and said unto Esther the queen, Who is he, and where is he, that durst presume in his heart to do so? And Esther said, The adversary and enemy is this wicked Haman. Then Haman was afraid before the king and the queen. And the king arising from the banquet of wine in his wrath went into the palace garden: and Haman stood up to make request for his life to Esther the queen; for he saw that there was evil determined against him by the king. Then the king returned out of the palace garden into the place of the banquet of wine; and Haman was fallen upon the bed whereon Esther was. Then said the king, Will he force the queen also before me in the house? As the word went out of the king's mouth, they covered Haman's face.

And Harbonah, one of the chamberlains, said before the king, Behold also, the gallows fifty cubits high, which Haman had made for Mordecai, who had spoken good for the king, standeth in the house of Haman. Then the king said, Hang him thereon. So they hanged Haman on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai. Then was the king's wrath pacified. On that day did the king Ahasuerus give the house of Haman the Jews' enemy unto Esther the queen. And Mordecai came before the king; for Esther had told what he was unto her.

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Esther

The Book and Its Story

The Book of Esther the Queen

by REV. A. C. BOUQUET, D.D.

Vicar of All Saints', Cambridge; Author of "The Real Presence," "Modern Handbooks on Religion," etc.

AHASUERUS, emperor of Persia and Media between 486 and 465 B.C., in the third year of his reign made a great feast in his palace at Shushan (Susa) for all his princes and servants, and his Queen, Vashti, held a similar feast for the women of the court. On the seventh day of the feast, when the King was flushed with wine, he ordered his seven chamberlains to bring the Queen into the presence of his guests, that they might see her beauty. Vashti, however, for reasons implied rather than stated, refused to come at the King's command. Thereupon the King was angry, and questioned his chief councillors as to what penalty should be inflicted upon his contumacious consort; and one of them, Memucan, answered that since the example of Vashti was likely to encourage the women of Persia to disobey their husbands, it would be best to depose her from her position of queen-consort, and to deprive her of her royal revenues. This the King agreed to do, and having issued the decree to that effect, he was next advised to select a new queen, and for that purpose caused his officials to assemble together a number of eligible young women from whom he might choose.

Esther's Elevation to the Throne

NOW it happened that there was living at Susa a Benjamite Jew who had been one of the captives carried away from Jerusalem to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar. His name was Mordecai, and he had under his care his young cousin, a beautiful Jewess named Esther, who was evidently famed for her charms, since she was not only selected by the officials as one of the candidates for the vacant consortship, but was highly favoured by Hegai, the eunuch in charge of the women, who gave her presents and appointed seven girls to wait on her. Each of the candidates in turn had to visit the King, and it happened that when Esther appeared the King was greatly attracted by her and chose her to be his spouse: "he loved Esther more than all the virgins, and he set the royal crown upon her head, and made her queen instead of Vashti." In so doing Ahasuerus was apparently unaware that he had exalted a captive Jewess, for Mordecai had told Esther not to reveal her nationality. So the marriage feast was celebrated, and Esther was received with state. Shortly after this she was able to render the King a useful service, for Mordecai happened to overhear two of the court chamberlains planning to assassinate their sovereign, and naturally told his cousin, who duly reported the matter to the King. Whereupon the King ordered an inquiry, and as a result the two conspirators were hanged.

A new favourite now appeared on the scene, one Haman, the son of Hammedatha the Agagite. For some obscure reason the royal fancy lighted upon him, and he was promoted to the chief place among princes of the King's court. The King ordered everyone to do him reverence, but Mordecai, possibly discerning Haman's true character, refused him obeisance. His behaviour was brought to the notice of Haman, and the latter, hearing that Mordecai was a Jew, made up his mind to revenge himself not merely upon his rival but upon all the Jews throughout the whole kingdom.

Jewry Menaced with a Pogrom

HAMAN therefore went to the King and gave evidence against the Jews, declaring that their presence was harmful to the common weal, and asking the King to issue a decree for the massacre of all persons of Jewish blood. The King consented, apparently without hesitation. He caused the decree to be issued under his own hand and seal and circulated to the local governors of all the provinces, and he agreed to pay ten thousand talents of silver to those in charge of what would today be called a "pogrom." The result of this extraordinary measure is given dramatically in a single sentence: "The King and Haman sat down to drink; but the city Shushan was perplexed."

It need hardly be supposed that the Jews were officially informed of the plot against their lives, but rumour, it is implied, was busy, and in any case Gentile talk in the bazaars must have been rife. So the news of the King's intention came to Mordecai, who rent his clothes and put on sackcloth and ashes and stood and cried before the gate of the King's palace. In all the provinces there was also great mourning among the Jews.

In due time Esther the Queen was told about the decree, and she sent a message to her cousin by one of the King's chamberlains to inquire whether the story she had heard was true. Mordecai had by some means obtained a copy of the document in question, and he sent it to Esther, begging her to go in to the King and intercede for the lives of her people. Esther hesitated, and replied that she dared not go into the King's presence chamber unless she had first been sent for, because it was the law that no one should enter the presence chamber without a summons, under penalty of death—the only exception being that if anyone did so enter the presence the King could signify his favour towards that person by holding out to him the golden sceptre, and in that case the death penalty was not exacted.

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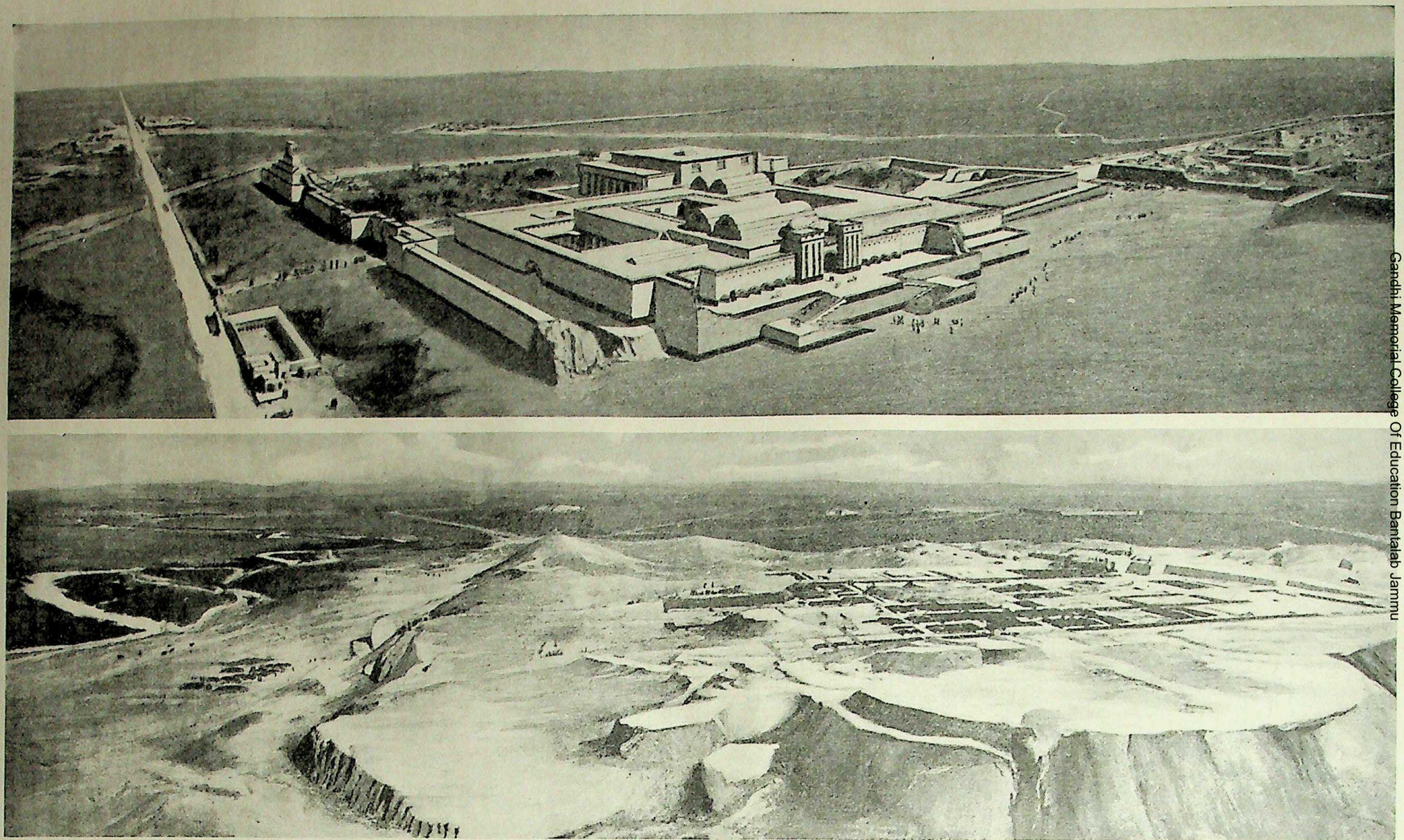

SHUSHAN THE PALACE, HOME OF NEHEMIAH AND ESTHER. North of the town of Ahwaz, the great artificial mound of Susa rises on the wide plain. Excavations have discovered the remains of the city restored as a fortified town by Cyrus. From the foundations, seen in the lower illustration, it has been possible to reconstruct " Shushan the palace," as shown in the upper drawing. Built by Darius, it was the winter residence of the Persian kings. There Artaxerxes sympathetically noted Nehemiah's sadness and, on learning its cause, gave him permission to rebuild Jerusalem (Nehemiah ii, 2-6). There, too, " Ahasuerus sat on the throne of his kingdom " (Esther i, 2), Mordecai came in sackcloth before the gate to mourn Haman's decree, and Esther, Jewish national heroine, aware that she was risking her life, successfully petitioned the King for her people.

Reconstruction by M. L. Pillet

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Mordecai, however, rebuked Esther for shrinking from her perilous task and returned her the memorable answer: "Think not with thyself that thou shalt escape in the king's house, more than all the Jews. For if thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time, then shall there enlargement and deliverance arise to the Jews from another place; but thou and thy father's house shall be destroyed: and who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?"

Roused by this challenge, Esther rallied herself to perform her duty, and she made answer to Mordecai: "Go gather together all the Jews that are present in Shushan, and fast ye for me, and neither eat nor drink three days, night or day: I also and my maidens will fast likewise; and so will I go in unto the king which is not according to the law: and if I perish, I perish."

Three days later Esther, wearing her royal robes, went and stood in the inner court of the King's house in the presence of the King as he sat on his royal throne. When the King saw her he held out his golden sceptre for Esther to touch. The King then said: "What wilt thou, Queen Esther?" and Esther answered that she desired the King and Haman to come to a banquet that she had prepared. This the King agreed to do, and he sent for Haman to accompany him, and when they were seated at the banquet Esther invited them to feast with her again on the morrow. Haman was greatly delighted at this apparent sign of the Queen's favour, and his only grief was that whenever he saw Mordecai the latter ignored him; but he was somewhat comforted by his wife, who suggested that he should put up a gallows fifty cubits high and persuade the King to have Mordecai hanged upon it as a penalty for his contemptuous behaviour.

Whom the King Delighteth to Honour

THAT night the King could not sleep. He commanded that certain records should be brought for him to read, and in these it was noted that Mordecai had saved the King's life by telling Esther about the plot to assassinate him. The King then asked whether Mordecai had been duly rewarded, and was told that nothing had been done for him. Just at that moment Haman arrived to ask the King to order the execution of Mordecai. Thereupon, before Haman could speak, the King asked him: "What shall be done unto the man whom the King delighteth to honour?" Now Haman not unnaturally thought that the King was referring to him, so he answered: "For the man whom the King delighteth to honour, let the royal apparel be brought which the King useth to wear, and the horse that the King rideth upon, and the crown royal which is set upon his head: and let this apparel and horse be delivered to the hand of one of the King's most noble princes, that they may array the man withal whom the King delighteth to honour, and bring him on horseback through the street of the city, and proclaim before him: 'Thus shall it be done to the man whom the King delighteth to honour.'" How great, then, must have been his astonishment and humiliation when he immediately received orders to make haste and take the apparel and the horse, to bear them to Mordecai, and to lead him in triumph through the city!

When this episode was at an end, Mordecai returned to the King's gate, but Haman hurried home with deep chagrin to tell his wife what had happened, and from her and his counsellors he gained but little consolation. Then he went with the royal equerries to be escorted to the Queen's banquet, which was renewed on a second day.

Haman Meets with His Deserts

AT this second session of court festivity the King remembered that the Queen had visited him for a special purpose, and he reminded her that she had not yet set forth her request. This gave Esther her cue, and she begged for her life and for that of her people, and went on to tell the King about the massacre which had been planned against herself and her whole nation. The King replied: "Who is he and where is he, that durst presume in his heart to do so?" Esther thereupon denounced Haman to the King in his own presence.

Ahasuerus at once rose in wrath, and went out into the garden. Haman, seeing that the game was up, flung himself abjectly at the feet of the Queen as she reclined upon her couch, and begged for mercy. Presently the King returned, and seeing Haman's posture, uttered a coarse jest: "Will he force the queen also before me in the house?" As the King uttered these words, his attendants arrested Haman and blindfolded him. The attention of the King was then drawn to the gallows already erected for the execution of Mordecai, and the royal command went forth that Haman should be hanged thereon. "So they hanged Haman on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai." After this the King gave the house of Haman to Queen Esther, and bestowed upon Mordecai the royal ring with which he had previously invested Haman.

Meanwhile, however, the royal decree against the Jews remained still in force, and if disaster was to be averted, measures must needs be taken under an absolute dictatorship for the reversal of the decree. Esther therefore once again went in to the King and procured from him a curious document which provided not for the immediate cancellation of the anti-Jewish edict, but for the Jews to bear arms in self-defence and to turn the tables on their adversaries. Mordecai also was granted the insignia of a viceroy, and the Jews throughout the provinces were so much favoured that many of the Gentiles actually sought to become proselytes, in the hope of sharing their privileges.

The day then drew near, the thirteenth day of the month Adar, on which the original royal decree had been planned to take effect. When it dawned the Jews in all the provinces gathered themselves together, and under the leadership of Mordecai, and with the assistance of the local officials, massacred those who had planned the pogrom. In the palace at Susa they slew 500 men, as well as the sons of Haman; and

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hanged the corpses of the latter upon gallows. The day following, another 300 were slaughtered at Susa, and in the rest of the provinces 75,000. Special mention is made of the fact that there was no looting of the property of the victims.

Finally, at the instance of Mordecai, the fourteenth and fifteenth days of the month Adar were established as a perpetual memorial and festival among all Jews to celebrate their deliverance, and we are told that these days were called "Purim" after the word *Pur*, or *puru*, "lot" or "dice," and that the ordinance of the feast was confirmed in writing not only by Mordecai but by Esther the Queen.

The story ends with a reiteration of the greatness and glory of Mordecai, acting as the King's viceroy, and with the imposition of a tax by King Ahasuerus over an empire extending from Mesopotamia to the borders of Greece (over the isles of the Aegean Sea).

Esther and the Feast of Purim

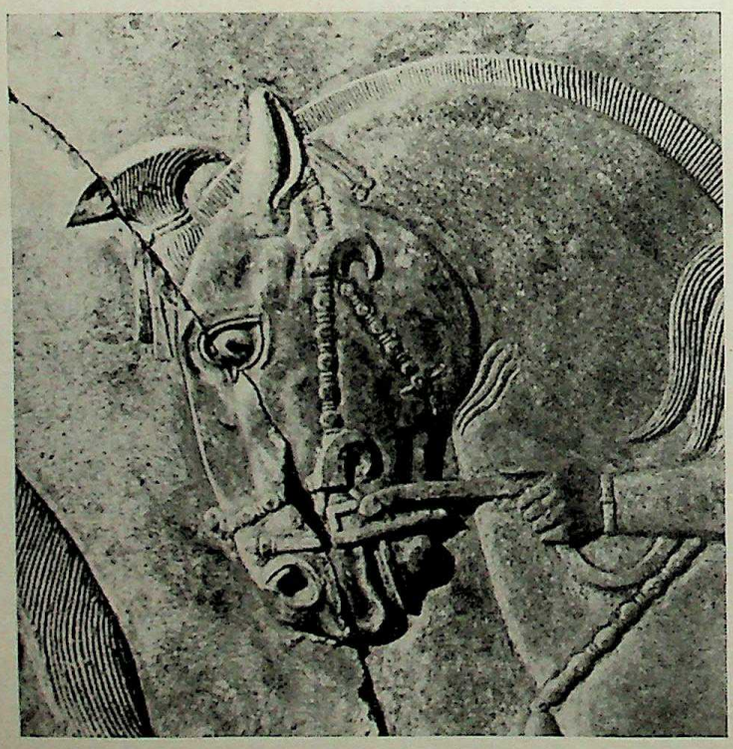
WHATEVER the subsequent use made of the Book of Esther, whether by Jews or Christians, there seems no doubt that its original purpose was less edifying. It must be plain that whoever composed it was largely concerned with a savage and somewhat narrow patriotism, and with giving reasons for the observance of the feast of Purim.

Now this anniversary is a problem of the first magnitude. As observed up to the present day it is a feast of deliverance, designed to commemorate the escape of the Jews from the hands of various enemies in different ages—not simply the Persians, but the Greek King Antiochus Epiphanes and his general Nicanor, the Moslems, and even the Germans. It is not accompanied by great religious observance, but by convivial and charitable celebrations, and by the reading in the synagogue of the Book of Esther, with certain ceremonies and responses, hand-clapping and imprecations, calculated to indicate a hatred of Haman and all that he stands for. But there is evidence that the original feast was somewhat more pagan in character. Even the Mishna directed that on it the Jews were to be allowed to drink until they could not tell the difference between "Blessed be Mordecai" and "cursed be Haman"!

At the same time, as connected with the recitation of the Book of Esther, Purim cannot be much earlier than 135 B.C. The dates for it are generally given as the 14th and 15th of the month of Adar, approximately February-March, or very early spring. But the 13th Adar seems originally to have been kept as "Nicanor's Day," *i.e.*, the anniversary of a Jewish victory over the general of that name, and in 170 B.C. there seems no knowledge of Mordecai and Esther as among the national heroes of the Jews, whereas about 120 B.C. (in II. Maccabees) we find "Mordecai's Day" spoken of as following "Nicanor's Day," although I. Maccabees apparently knows no such festival.

The conclusion must therefore be that somewhere about 135 B.C. Esther was compiled, probably not in order to institute a new feast, but to give a respectable or at least plausible explanation of an existing one. Certainly anyone reading Esther iii, 7 must feel that the reference to "Pur, that is, the lot" is very strained, and fits badly into the story. Of course, it is true enough that there is an ancient Assyrian word *Puru* which means a stone dice; but the tale, and its introduction of this word, look singularly like artificial attempts to account for the origin of the name, the real explanation having been lost or forgotten. If *Pur* and *Purim* are words occurring in a Persian folk-tale, the Jewish writer clearly does not know their true meaning. But the implication is that the feast is a legacy from the Persian period in Jewish history.

This inference is however by no means certain. It is almost as likely that the story is based upon a piece of Babylonian folk-lore. Many scholars have pointed out that although it professes to relate the doings of ordinary human beings, it does not read like a tale of real life, and it violates a number of known facts. It is significant that Mordecai and Esther are variant spellings of the names of a Babylonian god and goddess, Marduk and Ishtar; while Haman is a variant of Humman, the name of an Elamite deity.



"HORSE THAT THE KING RIDETH." With other superb sculptures decorating a staircase excavated on the site of Persepolis, once palace-city of Persian kings, this bas-relief of a royal steed serves well to illustrate the horse of Ahasuerus (Esther vi, 8). Brought for Mordecai to ride on his triumphal progress through the streets of Susa, it was led by the hand of Haman.

Photo, courtesy of Chicago Oriental Institute

The exact way in which a folk-tale of divine beings has become turned into this novel about human ones has exercised the ingenuity of many orientalists, but none of the theories seems very convincing. At the same time it is quite clear that the connexion exists, and also that in the story as it stands we are dealing with a work of fiction, however much there may be analogous to it in the history of the two or three centuries before Christ.

Ahasuerus is the Xerxes of Herodotus, and some of the local colour in the story is correct. But his queen during the period under consideration was not called Esther but Amestris, and she was the daughter of a Persian general. The number of the provinces of Xerxes was under thirty, not 127

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as in Esther i, 1 and viii, 9. The details of court etiquette are wrong. The method of selecting a Persian queen given in the text is at variance with the law of the Avesta and with the witness of Herodotus. Mordecai is described as one of the captives carried away in the reign of Jehoiachin. Yet he is alive and promoted to high office 122 years later (474 B.C.). Esther professes to conceal her nationality, yet everyone apparently knows that Mordecai is her cousin. The Jews get to know of the projected massacre, yet they merely fast and mourn. Esther is given the golden sceptre to touch, yet instead of putting forward her petition at once, when the King's mood is favourable, she risks deferring it for two days—until the second banquet. None of this is in correspondence with real life. It is a tale told after the manner of the "Arabian Nights' Entertainments," with all the literary conventions and improbable devices which belong to that class of Eastern literature. Similar tales are found in Daniel, Tobit, Judith and Esdras.

So strikingly similar is the background in all these tales that it would seem likely that behind all of them is an ancient ritual drama, based upon primitive religious ideas woven by the minds and emotions of the peoples of antiquity.

"THEN WERE THE KING'S SCRIBES CALLED." This Assyrian bas-relief shows one scribe writing alphabetic Aramaic on a papyrus roll and another inscribing a clay tablet with Babylonian cuneiform. By the 7th century B.C., about two hundred years before the time when the scribes of Ahasuerus were summoned to write the decree against the Jews (Esther iii, 12), the alphabetic system was competing with the cuneiform. It is probable that Aramaic would have been much mixed with the Hebrew spoken by Esther and her people.

British Museum

THE use of a foreign or Gentile title for a Jewish feast is not at all unthinkable. Christians have acted in a similar way. "Easter" is the name of a heathen goddess Eostra, and has no connexion whatever with the Gospel of the Risen Christ, except perhaps that this goddess was a Magna Mater presiding over spring fertility—the resurrection of the soil. "Yule" has nothing to do with the birth of Jesus, though it occurs in Christmas carols as the name of the festival of His nativity.

It is significant that a good many Protestant Christians have felt difficulties about the recognition of these feasts, on the ground of the toleration of heathen customs which they seem to countenance. Thus during the Commonwealth in England the Puritan mayor of Canterbury prohibited the observance (within his jurisdiction) of "the heathen festival of Christmas." In the same way the Jerusalem Talmud relates how 85 elders, including more than 30 "prophets," had scruples about the recognition of the feast of Purim, because there was no sanction for it in the Law of Moses.

Nevertheless, both Esther and Purim became very popular among the Jews, and this has been taken to signify the extent to which many of them, rejecting the more universalist spirit of the Book of Jonah—which leads straight on to the teaching of Christ—surrendered themselves completely to the spirit of narrow and fierce nationalism with its intense and bitter and revengeful hatred of the Gentiles, and a disposition to exploit them by the use of such worldly wisdom as they possessed.

Since the Book cannot be historical, it does not give rise to such serious archaeological problems as a genuine chronicle. It cannot be used as an authority for the history and customs of the age of Xerxes, and its social and topographical details are of little worth. Its chief antiquarian interest is to be found when it is treated (1) as a good specimen illustration of the literary art of story-telling as practised at the time of its composition, and (2) as an illustration of the common practice in pre-scientific ages of welding myth into contemporary history. As regards (1), Prof. W. H. Hudson considers Esther to exhibit a comparatively late stage in the evolution of story-telling as an art. The technique is much more highly-developed than that shown in the story of Ruth. No doubt this sophistication betokens a late date and the influence of Greek literary artifice.

As regards (2), the best way of understanding this is to take a few examples from non-Jewish circles. There

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CHOSEN TO REPRESENT QUEEN ESTHER. Each year a different girl is selected for the place of honour in the carnival at Tel-Aviv—north of Jaffa and one of the most prosperous towns in the Levant—held to commemorate the annual Feast of Purim and the heroism of Esther. This young Yemenite Jewess pictured in the decorative garb designed for the representative of the Queen is from South Arabia.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

are grounds for believing that King Arthur is not an historical character but a totem-figure, perhaps a raven; that Cuchulainn was not a real Irish king but a god; and that Robin Hood was Robin of the Wood or Robin Goodfellow, not a medieval bandit who took to the maquis of Sherwood Forest, but a nature-deity rather like Pan or Priapus. Similarly the characters in Attic tragedy, such as Odysseus and Agamemnon, are not ordinary human beings, and were probably once gods. The Spartans in fact worshipped Zeus under the name of Agamemnon, and the story of Jephthah and his sacrificed daughter shows that this kind of myth is not confined to Greek circles. With regard to Xerxes or Ahasuerus himself, he was, it is true, an historical character; but the Greek dramatist Aeschylus, when writing his play, "The Persians," weaves round him an entirely fictitious story, concerning which Lord Raglan in his book, "The Hero," remarks "the Greeks must have realized that Xerxes could not have kept his throne if he had behaved as he is represented as behaving, and that anyhow Aeschylus could not have known what passed in the palace at Susa. But all this did not distress them, since what they were accustomed to was not history but myth. Aeschylus gave them myth with a gratifying topical flavour, and was awarded the first prize." With a few slight changes, the same literary judgement might be passed upon the unknown author of the Book of Esther

Sir James Frazer considers it probable that Purim is nothing but a more or less disguised form of the Babylonian festival Zakmuk, connected with the annual "puhru" or assembly of the gods. In date it agrees within a fortnight of the latter. Originally Purim may have fallen in the month of Nisan (*see* Esther iii, 7), and may have been shifted by the Jews in order to avoid too close a proximity to the more important feast of the Passover. Frazer also relates how even as late as the 18th century the celebration of Purim by the residents in the Judengasse at Frankfort resembled a pagan Saturnalia, and that the story of Esther was acted during the feast as a kind of ribald comedy. He further comments upon the well-attested fact that it has been the custom of the Jews to make little effigies of Haman and to burn them in bonfires on the day of the feast. The burning of any hated person in effigy may seem to us to need no abstruse explanation, but it is of course a survival from primitive times, when on the one hand such festivals as the Sacaea or Zakmuk were accompanied by human sacrifice, while to injure the effigy of any individual has always been considered in magic to be the best way of indirectly causing injury to the individual himself.

It is perhaps of some interest to note that in the accusations of ritual infanticide brought periodically against the Jews, from the 5th century A.D. onwards right up to the present period of German Nazi propaganda, the victims are nearly always said to have met their fate in the spring, some time earlier than the feast of the Passover. This would seem to suggest that the original Gentile festival which the Jews adopted and called Purim was originally accompanied by a human sacrifice.

As to the ride of Mordecai, there is evidence of an old Persian ceremony called "The Ride of the Beardless One," in which a mock king is paraded on horseback through the streets on a day coinciding with the Babylonian feast of Zakmuk, evidently personifying the departure of winter.

Ancient Festival with a New Significance

THE probable conclusion must be, therefore, that the feast of Purim is a Jewish adaptation of a Gentile nature-festival (perhaps the Babylonian New Year Festival called Puchru) participation in which had become part of the Jews' social life during their exile in Mesopotamia. Some of the orgiastic Gentile ceremonies were retained, but toned down, and given a new significance as part of the gladness and rejoicing with which the Jews hailed their deliverance from a massacre only to be paralleled in its ferocity by the notorious massacre of Danes in England on St. Brice's Day, 1002, or by the still more notorious murder of French Protestants on St. Bartholomew's Day in 1572.

A curious analogy to this fusion of festivals is to be seen in England. At the beginning of November occurred an ancient pagan Celtic festival, Samhain, which marked the beginning of the winter season, and was accompanied by the lighting of sacred fires. The Christian Church overlaid this with the feast of All Hallow E'en or the Vigil of All Saints. After the Reformation, the tendency was to suppress these ceremonies, since Protestantism did not welcome them. It was therefore a relief when as the result of the Gunpowder Plot on November 5, 1605, a new opportunity was given for the revival of the ancient fire ceremonies of Samhain, even though their name and

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origin had been forgotten. What Protestant England frowned upon as a survival of paganism, it found itself not merely tolerating but welcoming, when re-introduced as the festival of the national deliverance from the machinations of Guy Fawkes. And so a new popular festival arose on November 5th, with a Prayer Book service provided for the day, and once again bonfires were lit and effigies burned, members of the Reformed Church of England hardly recognizing that the zest of the celebrators was less due to their hatred of Rome than to the subconscious instinct which led them to do as their pagan forefathers had done, probably without realizing it.

There seems little doubt that the alacrity with which the Jews came to observe the ceremonies of Purim is evidence that sub-consciously they were reverting to the rites of a pre-prophetic nature-festival, a festival of the Middle East, which perhaps their ancestors had shared with their non-Hebrew neighbours, and to which the exile had reintroduced them; and that the deliverance of Nicanor's Day gave fresh zest to the observance of an early spring anniversary, the actual significance of which had long been forgotten, though traces of association with mythological personages remained in the traditions of the nation, ready to be worked up into the tale of Esther.

Eternal Purpose in a 'Patriotic Romance'

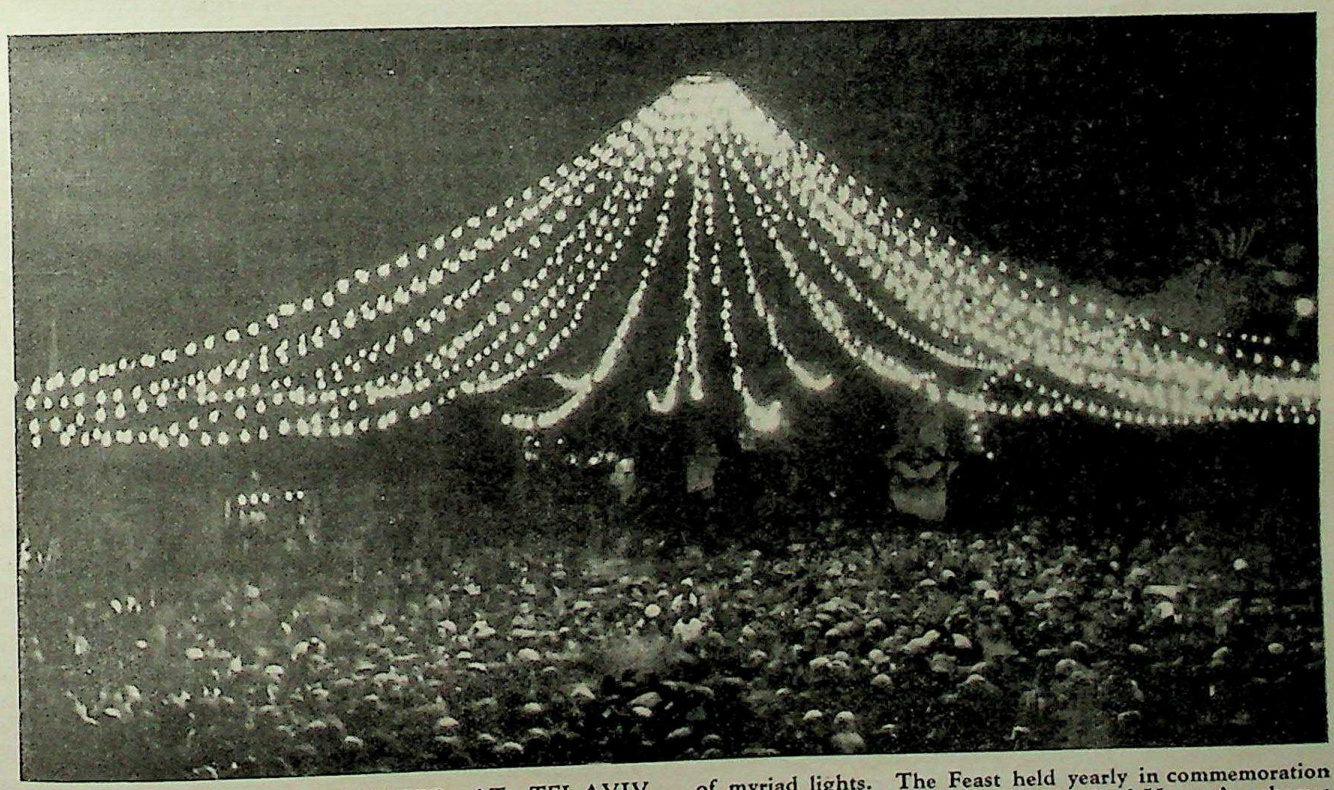
To gain a fair estimate of the value of this extraordinary story, it will be best to begin by noting the position which is given to it by the Jews themselves; since, after all, it is their own property and forms part of their literature.

The Book of Esther is one of the Megilloth or Rolls. That is to say it is not regarded as of the same value as either the Law or the Prophets. Its level of inspiration is felt to be lower. It is, so to speak, an occasional piece, and bears somewhat the same relation to the Torah or Law that a minor Pauline epistle does to the Sermon on the Mount.

It appears to have been composed by some unknown author in order to provide an explanation for the observance of the popular but late Jewish feast of Purim; but at first it was probably not regarded by the Jews as sacred scripture, and it was not declared canonical by them until A.D. 90 (at the Synod of Jamnia). In Christ's time, therefore, it still stood outside the official canon.

Liberal Jews would probably grant that it is extremely doubtful whether it really gives the true historical origin of Purim. The book is not history, and is not treated as such by Jews. It is merely a patriotic romance, extolling the courage of a woman who set the salvation of her people above the danger which might threaten her own life.

From the Jewish Church the book passed into the Christian, and we may note that, at first, it was almost entirely ignored. Melito of Sardis (A.D. 175) excludes it from the sacred scriptures; Origen did not count it among the historical books; and it was not treated as part of the canon of the Old Testament till A.D. 397. The Syrian Christians regarded it as apocryphal, and the Nestorians never had it in their Old Testament. Thereafter Christians tried to make the best of it, chiefly by a strained use of allegorical methods, until the Reformation, when Luther candidly declared that he wished it did not exist. Among Protestants, Münster, Drusius



FEAST OF PURIM CELEBRATED AT TEL-AVIV. Centre of Zionist activities and town of remarkably rapid development, Tel-Aviv is packed with Jews from all parts of Palestine at the time of the spring carnival of Purim. This nocturnal view shows part of the assemblage under a canopy of myriad lights. The Feast held yearly in commemoration of the defeat by Esther and Mordecai of Haman's schemes against the Jews lasts two days. In Esther ix, 22, it is ordained: "They should make them days of feasting and joy, and of sending portions one to another, and gifts to the poor."

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

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and Grotius produced commentaries, in which they treated the story as historical, and merely contented themselves with discussing the moral problems involved in it, such as the divorce of Vashti, Esther's marriage to a Gentile, and so on. Catholic commentators also wrote about the book, notably Cajetan, Estius and Mariana, but they differed from their Protestant contemporaries in treating the Greek Septuagint additions as of equal authority with the original Hebrew text, and in continuing allegorical methods of exegesis, such, *e.g.*, as the treatment of Esther as a type of the Blessed Virgin.

Why is the Book in the Canon?

IN the middle of the 18th century there began in Germany the revolution in literary criticism which has continued up to the present day, and which has involved an almost complete breach with tradition, in the interests of scientific truth and absolute sincerity. The Book of Esther has not escaped the effects of this revolution, and in consequence those who feel their inability either to judge it as an example of a stage in religious development, and to value it for the doctrine implied in Chapter iv, verses 13-16, or to treat Esther allegorically as a typical figure of human co-operative effort, declare that the book should never have found a place in the Bible. Thus Ewald says: "in it we fall as if from heaven to earth," while one of the most recent commentators, Professor L. B. Paton says: "The book is so conspicuously lacking in religion that it should never have been included in the canon of the Old Testament." Canon How (S.P.C.K. Bible Commentary) says: "it is not easy to defend its inclusion among the inspired books of the Old Testament reverenced by the Christian Church"; while Bishop Gore, as editor, adds in a footnote that the divinest element in the book is perhaps to be found in the deep sense of the indestructibility of Israel, and the duty of an Israelite to maintain the cause of his people at whatever risk.

The strength of any chain is in its weakest link, and in the same way the strength of any claim to infallibility which has been put forth on behalf of either the Christian Church or the Christian Bible depends upon the inerrancy of such a choice as that which placed Esther within the limits of the Canon. If, however, the Scriptures be regarded as the corpus of documents illustrating the progress of Divine revelation in history, and its appropriation by the human race, there is no difficulty about setting the Book of Esther in its place as part of the literature between the Exile and the birth of Christ, and the problem of inerrancy versus an inspiration which may not preclude from occasional error, does not, and need not, arise.

In the Book as originally written, the name of God does not occur. At a later date this seemed so shocking to Greek-speaking Jews that they produced an expanded and conventionalized version, in which on all appropriate occasions the name of the Lord was inserted, and a long prayer was put into the mouth of Mordecai. Some scholars have thought that this Greek version is a real translation of a much longer Hebrew original, but the evidence is conclusive against the possibility of this being the case. There is no trace of the existence of any such original. The additions themselves bear no sign of being translated from a Semitic language, while they actually contradict the Hebrew text in so many particulars that they must be regarded as clumsy interpolations rather than as translations of an integral part of it. Moreover, the Greek style of the additions is different from that of the main translation and they are, therefore, probably by one or more different authors. Josephus, who uses the Greek text, does not know of two of these additions, so they cannot have been in all the Greek MSS.

The book then as written, or at any rate as transmitted in Hebrew did not contain the name of God.

Yet, in spite of its defects, it is great literature. As an Eastern tale of capricious despotism and heroic womanhood it is hard to match in any Eastern language. It is told with extraordinary brevity and dramatic force, and our translators have contrived to keep these features in the English version. One of the most recent commentators remarks that the strutting little peacock Haman, with his inordinate vanity, malicious envy and cruelty, stands out as a masterpiece of portraiture. Stripped of his Oriental vesture, is he altogether a figure of the past? Is patriotism, even in these latter days, always free from the vindictive spirit, or racial and social pride free from cruel contempt of "lesser breeds"?

Yet it is not enough to enjoy the story. We must needs discern also what lies behind it. Though the name of God is not mentioned, the purpose of God is implied. Fiction or fact, this tale claims *to interpret real life*, and to do so in unmistakable terms.

We may well ask whether the absence of the name of God from the story is not typical of much ordinary life. A book without the name of God. Is not many a day, many a year, in the life of the average person somewhat like that? There may or may not have been prayer at its opening, but its working and playing hours do not seem to be much concerned with Deity. On many pages in life's book, many sheets in life's daily chronicle the name of God does not occur. That does not mean that God is not concerned with them.

But in the second place, the text iv, 14b is a declaration spoken direct to every individual: "Who knoweth whether thou art not come, etc.?" It has what is today called an *existential* interpretation. We are not capable of treating it in a detached way. It speaks to each one of us "Thou." Who knows whether each one of us human beings is not come to the Kingdom of his or her life for just such a moment as that in which we find ourselves? The chance, the fortuitousness, the indeterminacy, may be only on the surface. Deeper down is the fact that we are not the playthings of chance.

And lastly, the situation waits for an acknowledgment. Do we really thank God, and go on to conquer all its attendant difficulties by accepting them?

Esther's Example of Willing Obedience

IT may be said that it is hard to believe that one's job is indeed God's will, when human freedom seems so often to interfere, and spoil the Divine Purpose? The answer is that this is true, so far as the Divine ordering of the world is concerned. Human freedom is real, even though delegated. Men do sometimes hinder God's plan. Square pegs do get into round holes. But there is a saying that that is remedied by God's using the square pegs to make round holes bigger. Even if God's Will for us is capable of being hindered, we can still do that Will by accepting the imperfect situation and so making it a better one, for that seems to be what God has always done Himself. We conquer by accepting, which is an active thing. Esther did not sit down and weep. She rose up and said: "I will go in unto the King, and if I perish I perish."

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"HAMAN WAS COME INTO THE COURT OF THE KING'S HOUSE"

The private court before the residence of the Persian kings in Shushan the palace has been thus reconstructed from existent material and authentic details. It is the left-hand well seen in the upper illustration in page 516. The ground plan is extant; examples of the pillars, timbered ceiling and sculptured walls of the loggia are represented in the decorations of tombs of the period. Haman can be imagined waiting in this court, planning Mordecai's doom. "Behold," said the king's servants, "Haman standeth in the court" (Esther vi, 5, 6). Then Ahasuerus sent for him to ask: "What shall be done unto the man whom the king delighteth to honour?" And Haman hasted mourning to his house to arrange Mordecai's procession.

After a reconstruction by M. L. Pillet

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"AND THERE CAME A MESSENGER UNTO JOB"

The poetical history of Job, perfect and upright patriarch in the land of Uz, has inspired many fine illustrations. Those by Tissot in this page show the beginning of the trials, and the happy issue out of them all. Above, Job and his wife are seen receiving the ill tidings of their children's death (Job i, 18), caused by the havoc of a whirlwind.

When Job's misery reached its climax, in humility he perceived God aright. A vision of the Almighty was revealed to him amidst the whirlwind of his striving thoughts. "And the Lord turned the captivity of Job," his afflictions vanished; he and his household were greatly blessed (Job xlii, 10, 16) while "he lived to see his sons, and his sons' sons" in prosperity.

J Tissot, 1826-1902

"THE LORD GAVE JOB TWICE AS MUCH AS HE HAD BEFORE"

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Luca Giordano, 1632-1705

"THEY SAW THAT HIS GRIEF WAS VERY GREAT"

Job, mourning among dust and ashes and holding the potsherd "to scrape himself withal" after he had been smitten with boils, received his three friends, Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar, in speechless misery. Though they had come from afar to comfort him in his distress, they sat, sympathetically silent, for a week, oriental good taste forbidding intrusion upon his grief until he opened the conversation (Job ii, 13). The Neapolitan Luca Giordano (called Fa Presto because of his dexterity and prolific output of work), engaged as Court painter by Charles II of Spain, chose the meeting between Job and his Friends as one of the subjects for the decoration of the Escurial.

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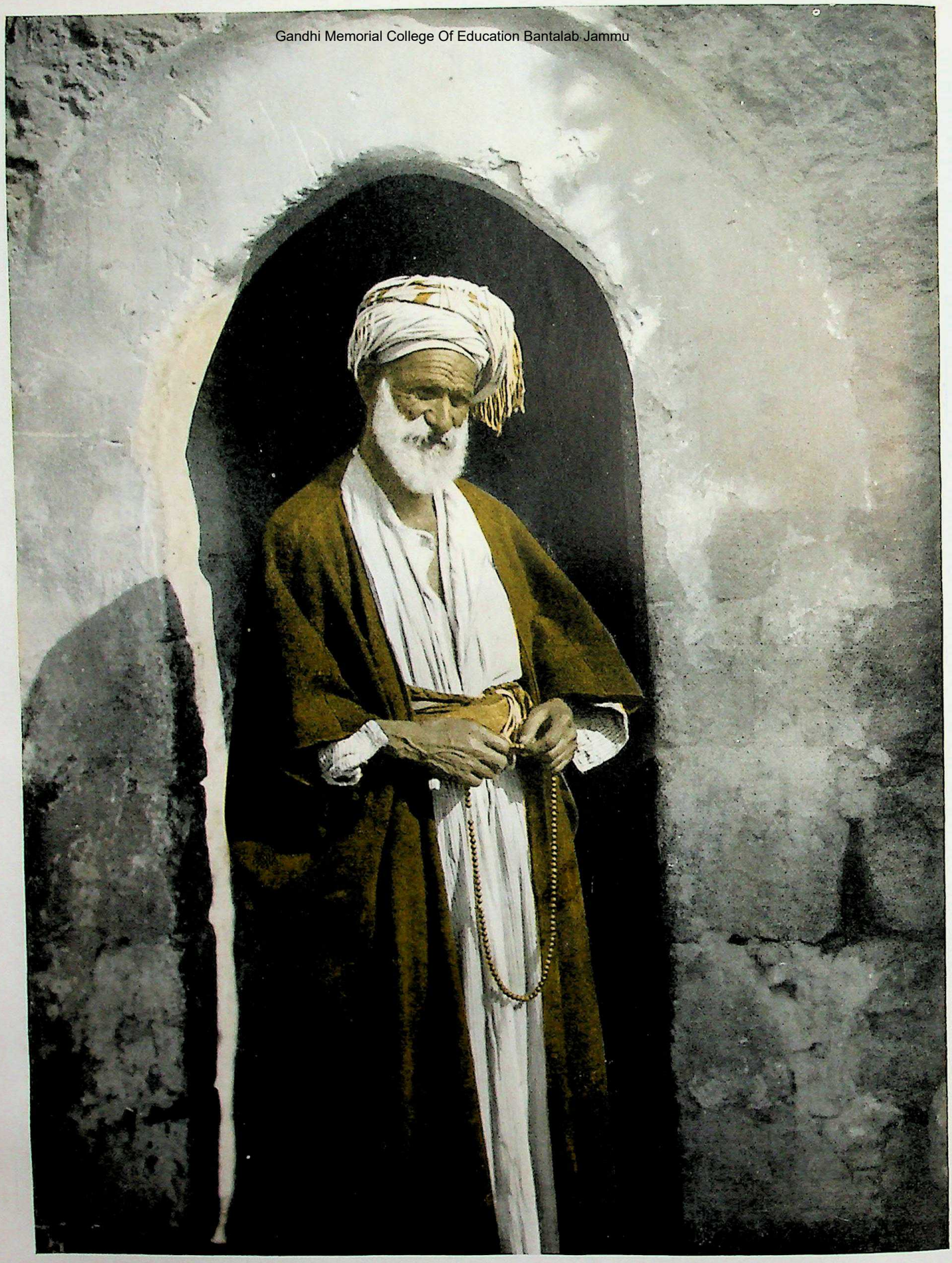

"ONE THAT FEARED GOD, AND ESCHEWED EVIL"

The patriarchal and benevolent appearance of this Mukhtar, or Headman of an Arab village, holding his Moslem beads, evokes thoughts of Job, a typically Semitic but not peculiarly Hebrew character. Doubtless the Mukhtar's prayers include his household. Job also continually rose up early to make offerings for his children, saying, "It may be that my sons have sinned and cursed God in their hearts" (Job i, 6). This venerable chieftain has his own trials. He must keep peace within his village during troublous times. Should he fail, he has to report serious offences or rioting to the nearest police headquarters, thus bringing upon his community undesired outside interference. Descendant of Ishmael and Abraham, he regards himself as a prince.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

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"WHEN I WENT OUT TO THE GATE THROUGH THE CITY"

In the grandly-sustained poetic monologue which finally silences his three "miserable comforters," Job gives an account of his former greatness in the community, when he sat in judgement at the gate and all men acknowledged him as he passed through the streets (Job xxix, 7-13). He was "a father to the poor," and dwelt as a chief amid chieftains in a pastoral but highly-civilized society. Though agricultural in their interests, observers of nature and well-acquainted with country sports—horsemanship, the chase, angling and fowling—the characters in this masterpiece of Hebrew poetry and wisdom also speak as if familiar with the ways of urban life and industry that obtained in the Land of Uz.

Photo, Donald McLeish

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José Martinez, 1612-1682

"THOU SPEAKEST AS ONE OF THE FOOLISH WOMEN"

Job's wife seems to strike an unsympathetic note, a note stressed in the picture (Museum, Budapest) by the able Spanish painter, José Martinez. To her tortured husband she says: "Dost thou still retain thine integrity? Curse God, and die." But her briefly-recorded scene is tragic. She speaks in utter despair, distraught by the catastrophic deaths of her ten children.

Léon Bonnat, 1833-1922

Léon Bonnat, notable French portraitist, pictured a Job full of years and sorrow, overwhelmed by disasters, spiritual turmoil and disease. "The days of affliction have taken hold upon me. My bones are pierced in me in the night season: And my sinews take no rest" (Job xxx, 16, 17), he exclaims after his sufferings have been greatly aggravated by the wordy piety and rebukes of his "comforters."

"LET THE DAY PERISH WHEREIN I WAS BORN"

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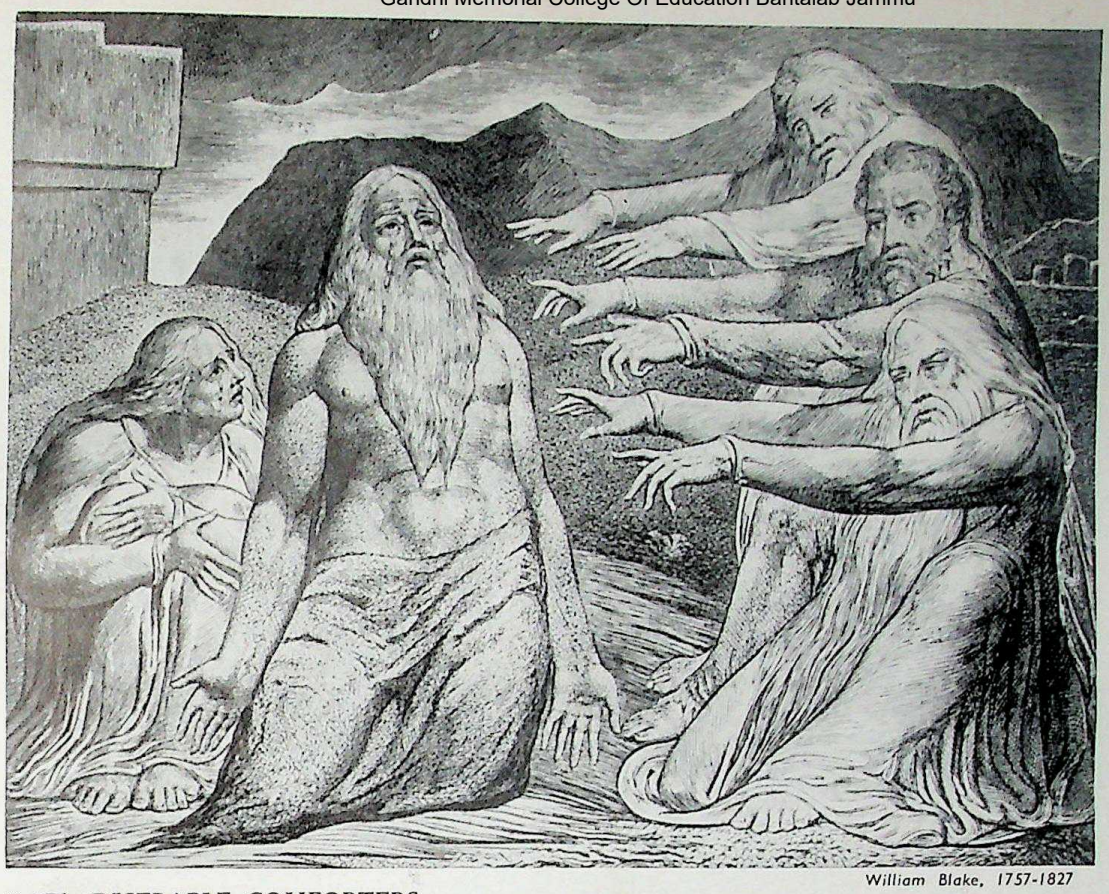
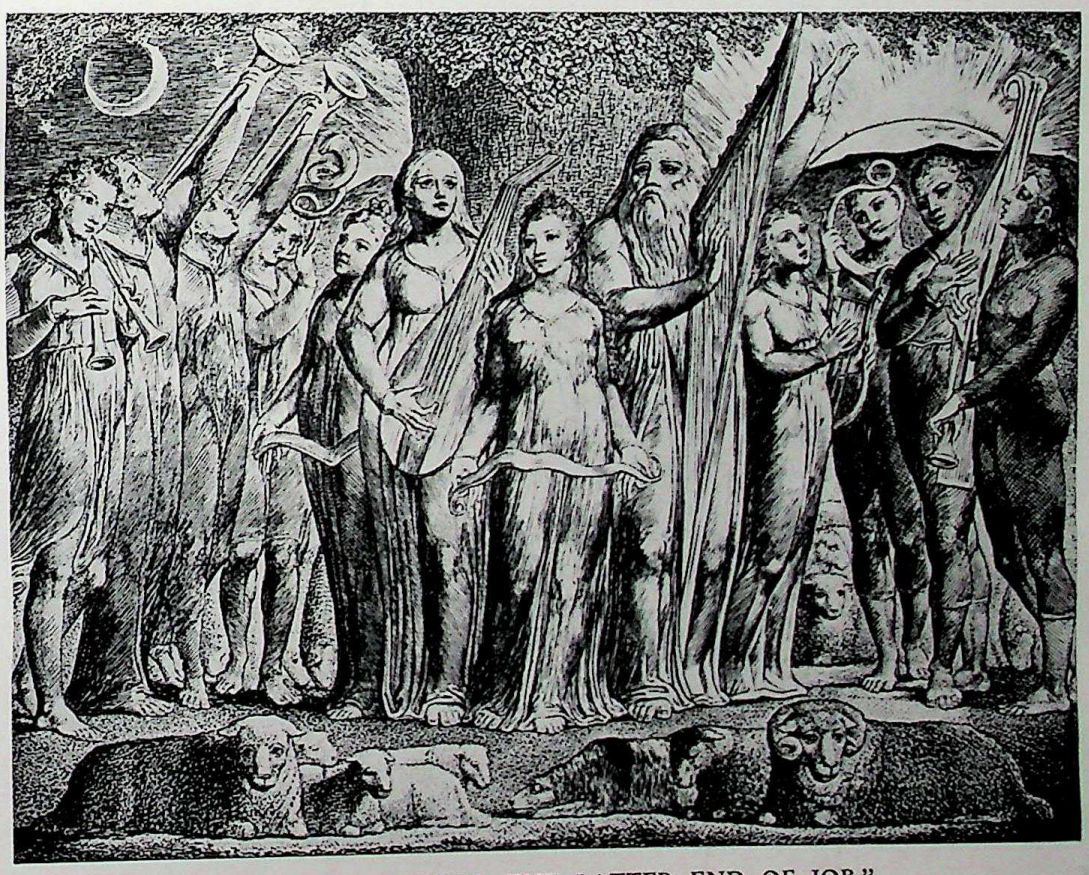


William Blake, 1757-1827

"MISERABLE COMFORTERS ARE YE ALL"



"SO THE LORD BLESSED THE LATTER END OF JOB"

Most famous of the illustrations to the Book of Job are Blake's series of twenty-one engravings completed in 1825 and now in the British Museum. The designs of all have a quality of ineffable beauty. Among the most majestic is the upper one reproduced here—The Just Upright Man is Laughed to Scorn. Elihu sits, unnoticed by Job, listening to the vain repetitions of outworn theological arguments (Job xxxii, 3), "his wrath kindled because they had found no answer, and yet had condemned Job." The lower illustration, Job and His Family, in lovely and joyous contrast, presents the happy ending to the prose epilogue of the poetic masterpiece.

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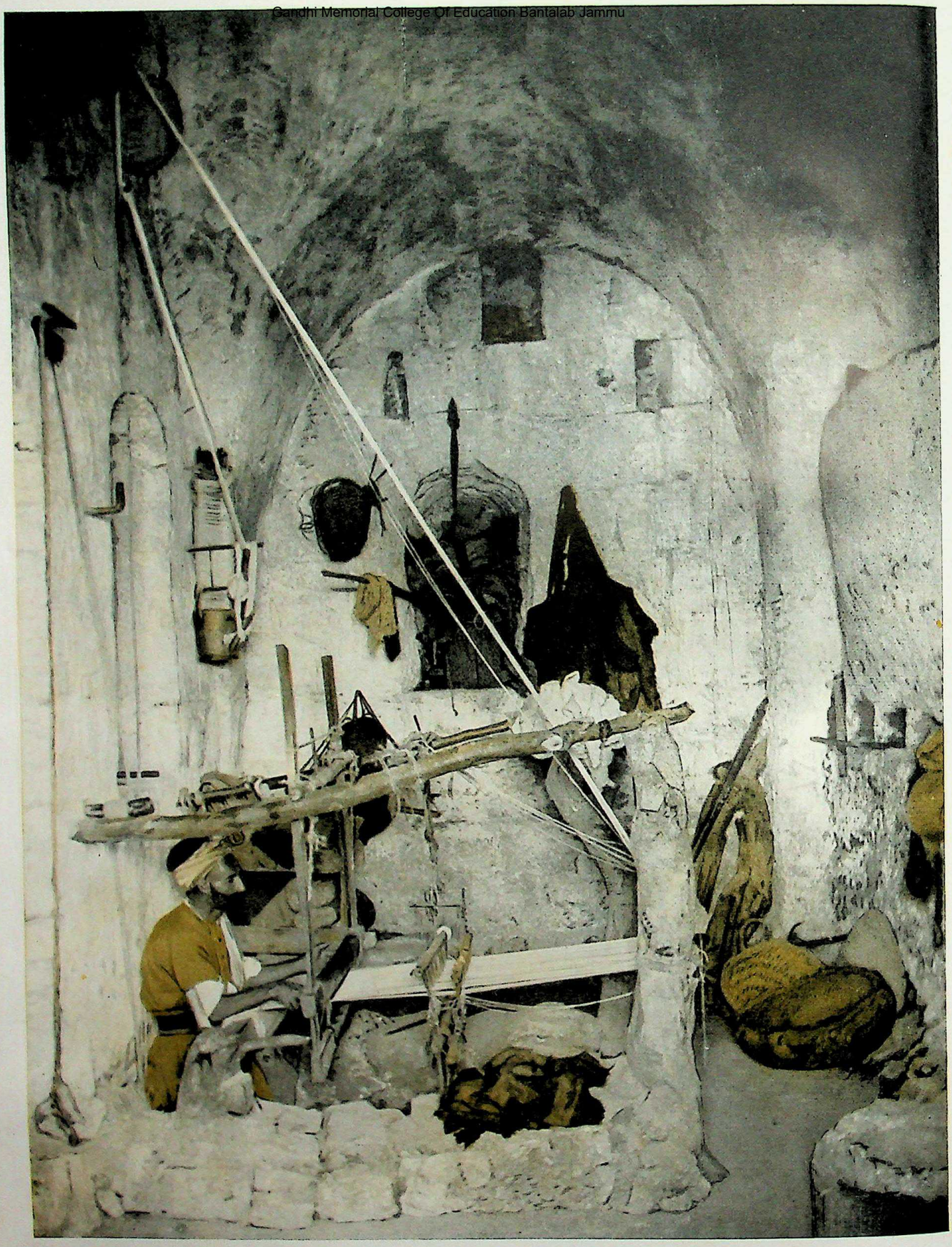

"MY DAYS ARE SWIFTER THAN A WEAVER'S SHUTTLE"

The writer of Job could well have had in mind a loom set in such a primitive workshop as this, when he used his vivid simile on the transitory nature of mortal existence (Job vii, 6). The weaver pictured fashions many beautiful patterns in rugs and tapestries at Ramallah in the Jerusalem district. His antique and cave-like establishment, similar to many in the town, is partly built of limestone blocks and partly cut into the rock—a good shelter against possible invasion. The weaver's pit, sunk in the floor so that he may be seated on the edge as he works the loom, is an age-old feature of his workshop.

Photo Keystone

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Chronology from the Exile to Alexander

As in the preceding chronology (pages 396-398), the dates given below are taken from the "History of Israel" (Oxford University Press, 1932) by Professor T. H. Robinson and Professor W. O. E. Oesterley, and the "Universal History of the World," edited by Sir. J. A. Hammerton.

Date B.C.	*Hebrew History*	*Contemporary History in Egypt and the West*	*Contemporary History in Mesopotamia and Asia Minor*
586-536	The Exile. Daniel (c. 580) interprets a dream of Nebuchadrezzar and is given governorship of province of Babylon. Obadiah and Ezekiel prophesy	Hophra (Apries) on the throne of Egypt	
569		Aahmes II (Amasis) succeeds in Egypt (569-526)	Croesus King of Lydia; conflicts with Medes
568			Nebuchadrezzar invades Egypt
562-556		Peisistratus, tyrant of Athens	Death of Nebuchadrezzar. Evil-Merodach, Neriglissar and Labashi-Merodach succeed
556	After Nebuchadrezzar's death Daniel loses influence but regains it by interpretation to Belshazzar of the writing on the wall		End of Chaldean dynasty. Nabonidus succeeds; his son Belshazzar is given regency in Babylon
551			Rise of Cyrus the Persian
538			Cyrus takes Babylon (Isaiah xlvii, 1, 5)
536	The Restoration. Zerrubbabel prince of Judah and Joshua the High Priest lead first band of Jews from captivity		Cylinder of Cyrus records his policy towards the captives
529	Re-building of Temple delayed by disputes with neighbouring tribes, particularly the Samaritans		Death of Cyrus. Succeeded by Cambyses II (Ahasuerus of Ezra iv.)
526		Death of Aahmes. Succeeded by Psammeticus III	Cambyses in Egypt
525	Jewish temple to Jehovah found at Yeb, Elephantine Island, by Cambyses	Egypt conquered by Cambyses and ruled by Persian kings 525-420	
522			Darius I (Hystaspis) succeeds Cambyses (Darius of Ezra iv, 24; v; vi)
520	Zerubbabel governor of Judah. Rebuilding of Temple resumed under his direction by order of Darius. Haggai and Zechariah prophesy		Darius quells revolts of Medes, Persians, Babylonians and of satraps in Egypt and Lydia
516	Temple finished and dedicated	Darius in Egypt	
490	Documents, dated 494-400, attest existence of Jewish garrison at Yeb, Elephantine	Persians defeated by Greeks at Battle of Marathon	
486		Egypt revolts against Persia. Revolt suppressed in 484	Xerxes I (Ahasuerus of Book of Esther) succeeds Darius (485-465)
480		Xerxes invades Greece.	
464	Malachi prophesies c. 460		Artaxerxes I (Ezra vii) succeeds (464-424)
457	Second large contingent of Jews return from Babylon, led by Ezra	Pericles in power at Athens	
445-4	Nehemiah's first visit to Jerusalem; he causes re-building of the walls		
432	Nehemiah's second visit; he inaugurates measures of reform	Peloponnesian War 431-404	
424-3	Eliashib, high priest (Nehemiah xiii, 28)		Xerxes II succeeds Artaxaerxes but reigns less than a year. He is succeeded by Darius II (Nothus)
404	Artaxerxes II, thought by some to be Ahasuerus of the Book of Esther		Artaxerxes II succeeds (404-359)
359	Jaddua, high priest 351-331 (Nehemiah xii, 11)		Artaxerxes III succeeds (359-338) and is followed by Arses
336		Alexander succeeds Philip of Macedon	Darius III succeeds (338-331)
333	Palestine passes under control of Alexander and his successors	Alexander and his successors rule Egypt for about 300 years	Persian Empire overthrown by Alexander

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"BEHOLD, HE DRINKETH UP A RIVER." The behemoth referred to in the Divine reply to Job is generally thought to be the hippopotamus. The Hebrew word, with its plural termination, means literally "enormous beasts." In reproof of self-righteousness and mortal arrogance the description of "behemoth, which I made with thee," is given to illustrate man's powerlessness—he cannot even rule the larger animals of the creation. "His bones are as strong pieces of brass; his bones are like bars of iron. He lieth under the shady trees, in the covert of the reed, and fens" (Job xl, 18, 21). The hippopotamus is not known in Palestine, but the writer of Job was evidently acquainted with Egypt, and might have seen herds of the huge beasts wallowing in the Nile by banks fringed with papyrus reeds, where the lotus covered them "with their shadow."

Photo, Major Radclyffe Dugmore

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Job

I

The Book in Outline

'My Servant Job': the Bible Drama Arranged in Dialogue Form

by REV. JAMES COLVILLE, M.A.

President of the National Free Church Council, 1937-38; Minister of St. Peter's Presbyterian Church of England, Upper Tooting.

> Job was the first to give God time, the first to give Him room, the first to see His long looks, His glances of a thousand years. Out of the treasures of the snow, the guidings of mornings and wanderings of nights, and all the vast and beautiful care of the infinite heart, Job learned the awe that was to make his faith one of the mighty memories of men.
>
> Thus he was the emancipator of righteousness, the inspirer of pain. He will be remembered as the redeemer of sorrow, one who could sing with a cross; one who lifted duty above reward, and degraded sin below punishment, because he discovered the infinity of God, because he lost himself in the wideness of God's ways.—GERALD STANLEY LEE, *The Shadow Christ*

THE BOOK OF JOB is a problem-drama—the only one of its kind in the Bible—and the following summary, told for the most part in the actual language of the Authorized Version, is an attempt to recapture its ancient form. The characters in the drama are:

THE LORD — JOB — JOB'S WIFE — SATAN or THE ACCUSER
ELIHU — THREE FRIENDS: ELIPHAZ, BILDAD, ZOPHAR — FOUR MESSENGERS

THE PROLOGUE

There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job; and that man was perfect and upright, one that feared God and eschewed evil. He had seven sons and three daughters. He owned also seven thousand sheep, three thousand camels, five hundred yoke of oxen, five hundred she asses and a very great household; so that this man was the greatest of all the men of the east.

Whenever his sons feasted in their houses, Job rose up early and offered burnt offerings for them, in case they had sinned and cursed God in their hearts.

THE FIRST HEAVENLY COUNCIL

THE LORD: Satan, whence comest thou?

SATAN: From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.

THE LORD: Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil?

SATAN: Doth Job fear God for nought? Hast thou not made a hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? Thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land. But put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face.

THE LORD: All that he hath is in thy power; only upon himself put not forth thy hand.

JOB'S HOUSE

Enter the Messengers.

FIRST MESSENGER: The oxen were plowing, and the asses feeding beside them: and the Sabeans fell upon them and took them away; yea, they have slain the servants with the sword.

SECOND MESSENGER: The fire of God is fallen from heaven, and hath burned up the sheep and the servants and consumed them.

THIRD MESSENGER: The Chaldeans fell upon the camels and have carried them away, and slain the servants with the sword.

FOURTH MESSENGER: Thy sons and thy daughters were eating and drinking, and a great wind came and smote the four corners of the house, and it fell upon the young men, and they are dead.

JOB: The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.

THE SECOND HEAVENLY COUNCIL

THE LORD: Satan, whence comest thou?

SATAN: From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.

THE LORD: Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God and escheweth evil? Still he holds fast his integrity, though thou didst move me against him.

SATAN: All that a man hath will he give for his life. But touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse thee to thy face.

THE LORD: He is in thy hand; but save his life.

JOB'S HOUSE

Job, smitten by Satan with boils from head to foot, is seated among the ashes. His wife enters.

JOB'S WIFE: Dost thou still retain thine integrity? Curse God, and die.

JOB: Thou speakest as one of the foolish women. Shall we receive good at the hand of the Lord, and shall we not receive evil?

Enter Job's three friends, who, seeing his sufferings, weep, and sprinkle dust upon their heads.

JOB'S LAMENT

JOB: Perish the day wherein I was born, and the night in which it was said, There is a man child conceived. Would that darkness had seized upon it and carried it away, that it had brought no tidings

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of my birth, and that the stars of twilight that ended that day and heralded the dawn had gone out!

If I had to be born, why could I not have died in the moment of birth, and never been welcomed to my father's knees? I should then have lain still and been quiet, in that realm of the dead where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest, where are the small and the great, and where the servant is free from the master.

Why is light given to him that is in misery, and life to the bitter in soul?

Why is light given to a man whose way is hid, and whom God hath hedged in?

My sighs have become my daily food, and my roaring pours from me like water. The thing that I fear comes upon me, and what I dread befalls me. Nowhere can I find rest or quietness.

THE DEBATE BETWEEN JOB AND HIS FRIENDS

Eliphaz states the orthodox belief that suffering is due to sin. Bildad appeals to the ancients in support of this belief. Zophar, in the light of it, declares that, in spite of his apparent rectitude, Job must have sinned.

PART I

ELIPHAZ: Will you resent it, if we attempt to speak? But who can refrain from speaking?

You have instructed many, and strengthened the weak hands. But now that trouble has come upon you, you faint. Be re-assured by the thought of your uprightness. What innocent man has ever perished, or where were the righteous cut off?

Once, in the night, when deep sleep falls on men, I beheld a vision which brought fear upon me and trembling, and made all my bones to shake. A voice said, Shall mortal man be just before God? Shall a man be pure before his maker?

Even the angels he charges with folly, and perfection is not to be expected from those who dwell in a house of clay, in a body formed from the dust. Wrath killeth the foolish, and envy slayeth the silly man. Man brings trouble upon himself, as surely as the sparks fly upward.

Instead of being impatient, Job, turn to God, who gives rain upon the earth, and sends waters upon the fields, who exalts the humble, and disappoints the devices of the crafty. You will find that God chastens man for his good. He makes sore and binds up, he wounds and his hands make whole. From many evils God will deliver you, and you will come to your grave in a full age, like a shock of corn in its season.

JOB: O that my grief were thoroughly weighed, and my calamity laid in the balances together! It would be heavier than the sand of the sea. The arrows of the Almighty are within me, and the terrors of God set themselves against me. O that I might die, for I have not the strength to hold out against my sorrow! My friends disappoint me, like the streams of brooks that pass away. Show me where I have erred. It is evident that I do not lie. I have not lost the sense of right and wrong.

I live through months of vanity. When I lie down, I say, When shall I arise and the night be gone? My days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle and are spent without hope. My eye shall no more see good. I would not live alway. If I have sinned, Why, O thou preserver of men, dost thou not pardon my transgression and take away my iniquity? For soon I shall sleep in the dust, and when thou seekest me, I shall be no more.

BILDAD: How long will you say these things, and how long shall the words of your mouth be like a strong wind?

Does God pervert judgement, or does the Almighty pervert justice? Seek God, and make your supplication to him, and prosperity will begin to return to you. Our fathers believed and taught that, as the rush withers without mire, and the flag fades without water, so those who forget God suffer. God will not cast away a perfect man, neither will he help the evildoers. If you will repent, God will fill your mouth with laughter, and your lips with rejoicing.

JOB: God, no doubt, is a just judge, but man is unequal to the task of stating his case before him. He cannot answer one of a thousand questions God may put to him. God is wise, mighty and powerful. He shakes the earth. He blots out the sun and the stars. He spreads out the heavens and treads upon the waves of the sea. But in the world, there is no sure evidence of his justice. He destroys the perfect and the wicked. If I called, he would not answer me. O for a daysman, an umpire, who could arbitrate between us! If God would take away his rod from me, I would speak. But it is not so.

Yet I will speak, and speak in the bitterness of my soul. Show me, O God, why thou dost contend with me. Hast thou human eyes, seeing sin where it is not? Thou hast made me, yet, all the time, this was thy dark design—to torture me. Why was I born? Why did I ever see the light? But, since life is mine, grant, O God, that, for the remainder of my days I may be comforted a little, before I go whence I shall not return, to the land of darkness and the shadow of death.

ZOPHAR: You say, Job, that your doctrine is pure and your life is clean. But God knows all. And if he were to open his lips and speak, you would find that your sins are greater than you realize, and that God is exacting of you less than your iniquity deserves. The divine wisdom is as high as heaven and as deep as hell, and it is foolish for you to think that you can find out the Almighty to perfection.

Your only hope is to repent. Prepare your heart, and stretch out your hands in prayer to God, that he may put away evil from you. Then you will forget your misery as waters that pass away. Your life will become clearer than the noonday. Hope and a sense of security will return. You will lie down and no one will make you afraid.

But for the wicked there is no escape, and their hope shall be as the giving up of the ghost.

JOB: Doubtless you are the people, and wisdom shall die with you. But I have understanding as well as you. Your arguments are commonplace. You

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cannot deny that those who are unfortunate are despised by those who are at ease, that robbers prosper, and that those who provoke God are secure.

From the animal world we learn that all things are in God's hands. In the case of man, the ear decides as to the wisdom or folly of what is heard, the palate knows how things taste. Why should any man need to be told by others how anything tastes or sounds? Wisdom, you say, is with the ancients; I maintain that wisdom and strength are with God. He has counsel and understanding.

All this I know. But your defence of God, God himself would not approve. You are forgers of lies and physicians of no value. You are special pleaders, unfair advocates for God. God himself will reprove you, and your remembrances will crumble to ashes.

Hush. I will appeal again to God. He may slay me, but I will maintain my ways before him. Why, O God, dost thou hold me for thine enemy? Why dost thou persecute me, who am as frail as a leaf? Why dost thou recall to me the sins of my youth?

How sad is human life, lived under the eyes of such a God! Why does God continually act as man's judge? If only God would turn from man and give him rest! A tree, when it is cut down, can be revived with new life. If only a man might die and live again! But man dies and wastes away, and where is he?

God watches me, seals up my transgressions in a bag, and sews up my iniquity. The mountains falling come to nought; the rock is removed out of its place; the waters wear the stones; the hope of man, and man himself, is destroyed.

PART II

ELIPHAZ: All this unprofitable talk makes it clear, Job, that you have no reverence for God, and that you have ceased to pray to him. Are you the first man to be born? or have you sat in the secret council-chamber of God? The wisdom of age is ours. Why, then, do you turn your spirit against God? Neither the heavens, nor the angels, nor man is clean in the sight of God. The wicked man travails with pain all his days. He wanders abroad for bread, saying, Where is it? He dwells in desolate cities, and lives in houses unfit for habitation. He shall not be rich, neither shall his substance continue. The congregation of the hypocrites shall be desolate, and they shall bring forth mischief for themselves.

JOB: I have heard all this before, you miserable comforters.

God has made me weary. He tears me in his wrath. He has delivered me to the ungodly, and turned me over into the hands of the wicked. He has broken me asunder. His archers compass me about. He runs upon me like a giant.

I have sewed sackcloth upon my skin, and my face is flushed with tears, though not for any injustice that I have done. My friends scorn me. But I turn to God, and pray that he will vindicate me.

Life's end approaches, and the grave is ready for me. Mockers are with me, and there is no real hope

"CAME A GREAT WIND FROM THE WILDERNESS." This caravan encounters a sandstorm, or simoon, which is sweeping across the desert, blowing dust and debris over men and camels, threatening havoc to date palms and the flimsy habitations within walled enclosures. The wind which "smote the four corners of the house" belonging to Job's eldest son, killing him and his brothers and sisters assembled for a feast (Job i, 19), was a "whirlwind from the south." Gyrating spirally, the winds in the vortex of the cyclone attain a destructive force, uprooting large trees and overturning buildings.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

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of returning prosperity. God has made my name a by-word among the people. My eye is dim by reason of sorrow, my days are past, my purposes are broken off. I have said to corruption, thou art my father; to the worm, thou art my mother and my sister. One hope only remains to me—to make my bed in the darkness of the grave.

BILDAD: How long will it be before you make an end of words? Why are we reputed vile in your sight? The light of the wicked shall be put out, and the spark of his fire shall not shine. Terrors surround him during life, and at death his remembrance perishes, and no one mourns his loss.

JOB: My faults, whatever they are, have not injured you. My errors remain with myself. It is God who has overthrown me, and compassed me with his net. He has fenced up my way. He has stripped me of my glory, and destroyed me on every side. My acquaintances are estranged from me; my servants give me no answer; even my wife is strange to me; those whom I loved are turned against me.

"CAST OFF HIS FLOWER AS THE OLIVE." Job's comforter, Eliphaz, likens the instability of the wicked man to the quick shedding of olive blossom (Job xv, 33). About the end of April the trees flower fully in Palestine, presenting a snowladen appearance. With every breeze of spring masses of tiny white blooms are shaken off like showers of snowflakes, though plenty remain on the branches to ensure a good fruitage. The greyish lanceolate leaves are paired.

Photo, H. J. Shepstone

O my friends, have pity on me, for the hand of God has touched me. Would that my words were printed in a book, so that posterity might justify me! But I know that my vindicator lives, and that at death, he will justify me.

ZOPHAR. Have you not long since learned this, that the triumph of the wicked is short, and that the joy of the hypocrite is but for a moment? After a time, the fruits of evil appear. The bones of the wicked are full of the sins of his youth. The wickedness which seemed sweet in the mouth turns to poison in the stomach. He has to surrender his ill-gotten gains. All that he does brings him no happiness, and his prosperity vanishes.

Further, God casts the fury of his wrath upon him. The heavens reveal his iniquity, the earth rises up against him. This is the portion of a wicked man, and the heritage appointed unto him by God.

JOB: Listen carefully to what I say, and then, if you will, mock on. My complaint is not against man, but against God. Why do the wicked live to an old age and become mighty in power? Their houses are safe from fear, their children dance, they spend their days in luxury, and they die in peace.

Yet they renounce God, saying, Depart from us, and, What profit is ours if we pray? You say that the prosperity of the wicked is in their own hands. But, tell me, How often is the candle of the wicked put out? You think you know God's ways better than he does himself, though he judges those who are on high. The fact remains, one man dies in his full strength, another dies in the bitterness of his soul, and both lie down alike in the dust.

I know your thoughts and the devices which you wrongfully imagine against me. But ask any man who has seen the world. He will tell you that the wicked is spared in the day of destruction. No one tells him to his face what he is. At last, he is laid in the grave, and his tomb is carefully tended.

Why then do you try to comfort me in vain, seeing that in your answers there is falsehood?

PART III

ELIPHAZ: Is it any advantage to God that you are righteous? Why should he reprove you, if you fear him? Your wickedness must be great. You have stripped the naked of their clothing, withheld bread from the hungry, seized the lands of others, and sent widows empty away. Therefore snares are round about you, and fear troubles you.

Is not God in the height of heaven? Yet you say, how doth God know? In past days, wicked men who said to God, Depart from us, were cut down, and the righteous rejoiced over their fall.

Return to God, and be at peace. Then the Almighty will be your defence. You will delight in him, and lift up your face to him.

JOB: Even today is my complaint bitter, my stroke is heavier than my groaning. If only I could find God, and order my cause before him, and argue it out with him!

But I go forward, and he is not there, and backward, but I cannot perceive him. On the left hand, where

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"AND CURDLED ME LIKE CHEESE." These Beduin women have placed rounds of milk cheese to dry on the roof of their tent. Rennet was probably also used in Biblical times to curdle milk and the curds, drained of whey, were salted, shaped, and firmed in the sun. Job, in undeserved misery and in bitterness of soul, questions the Almighty: "Hast thou not poured me out as milk, and curdled me like cheese?" (Job x, 10). The Creator had made him, yet He had apparently allowed His creature's mind to be stultified with confusion, tormented with the unanswerable problem of human suffering.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

he works, I cannot behold him; on the right hand, he hideth himself, that I cannot see him.

Yet he knows the way that I take. When he has tried me, I shall come forth as gold.

Why does not God appear and execute justice in the earth?

Evil men remove landmarks, and violently take away flocks. They turn the poor out of their homes, so that they have to wander as wild asses in the desert, and gather food in the wilderness, and lie down at night naked in the cold, wet with the showers of the mountains, clinging to rocks for shelter. The murderer, rising with the dawn, kills the poor and needy. The adulterer waits for the twilight. Thieves, in the night, break into houses which they have watched during the day.

You say, their portion is cursed in the earth. Yet God allows them to live. Who can deny this is so?

BILDAD: God is great. Dominion and fear are with him. Is there any number of his armies? Upon whom does his light not arise? How then can man be justified with God? How can he be clean that is born of a woman? Even the moon and the stars are not pure in his sight, much less man that is a worm.

Hell lies open to his eyes. He stretches out the northern skies, and hangs the earth on nothing. The pillars of heaven tremble at his reproof. He stills the sea with his power, and by his understanding he smites the proud.

These are only parts of his ways, the little that we can see. But the full measure of his power who can understand?

JOB: What a help you are to God! How you have saved him whose arm is without strength! What counsel you have given to him who has no wisdom! You must have been inspired.

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As God lives who has wronged me and vexed me, I speak the truth when I say that you are wrong. I hold fast to my righteousness, and my heart shall not reproach me.

ZOPHAR: What is the hope of the hypocrite when God takes away his soul? Will God listen to his cry when trouble comes upon him? I will teach you. That which is with the Almighty I will not conceal.

This is the portion of the wicked man. If his children be multiplied, it is for the sword, and his offspring shall not be satisfied with bread. His sons shall be buried in death, and their widows shall not weep. His raiment the just shall wear, and the good shall divide his silver. Terrors take hold on him as waters, a tempest steals him away in the night. God shall cast upon him and not spare, and men shall clap their hands and hiss at him.

[*The following poem on Wisdom, which does not affect the argument, and which Job ignores in his reply to Zophar, is believed to be the work of a later writer.*

Where shall wisdom be found, and where is the place of understanding?

There is a mine for silver, and a place where gold is refined.

Iron is taken out of the earth, and brass is molten out of the stone.

Out of the earth cometh bread, and under it is turned up as it were fire.

Its stones abound in sapphires, and it hath dust of gold.

Man puts forth his hand upon the rock and overturns the mountains.

His eye sees every precious thing, and the hidden thing he brings to light.

But where shall wisdom be found, and where is the place of understanding?

The deep says, It is not in me; the sea says, It is not with me.

Neither silver nor gold can buy it.

The gold of Ophir, the precious onyx and the sapphire cannot be valued with it.

Gold and crystal cannot equal it; nor coral, nor pearls nor rubies.

The topaz of Ethiopia cannot equal it, nor pure gold.

Where shall wisdom be found, and where is the place of understanding?

It is hid from the eyes of all living and concealed from the birds of the air.

Destruction and death say, We have heard the rumour thereof with our ears.

God knows the way of it, and he knows where it dwells.

For he looked to the ends of the earth, seeing everything under the heavens.

He who made the weight for the winds, and weighed the waters by measure.

"HOUSES OF CLAY." The impermanent nature of mud huts, "whose foundation is in the dust" (Job iv, 19), suggested the metaphor which the writer of Job puts into the mouth of the well-meaning but narrow-minded Eliphaz to express the fragility of mortal clay. A single-roomed hut constitutes the home of the peasant family in many villages on the edge of the desert today. In such a mud cabin young domestic animals may also be housed in bad weather. The roof is formed, as in the remote days of Old Testament times, of rafters and brushwood, covered with hard-beaten earth, boughs or palm branches.

Photo, Dorien Leigh

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When he made a decree for the rain, and a way for the lightning of the thunder,

Then he saw it and declared it, he prepared it, yea, and searched it out.

And to man he said, Behold the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom,

And to depart from evil is understanding.]

JOB: O that I were as in months past, as in the days when God preserved me; when I went out to the gate through the city, and young and old, friends and nobles, received me with respect, and gave ear to my advice! I delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had no helper. The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me, and I caused the hearts of widows to sing for joy. I was eyes to the blind, and feet to the lame. I attacked the oppressor, and plucked the spoil out of his teeth; and I looked for an honourable old age.

But I have been disappointed. The young deride me, they make me their song, their by-word. They abhor me, and push away my feet, and raise up against me the ways of destruction. Terrors are turned upon me, they pursue my soul as the wind, and my welfare passes away as a cloud.

O God, I cry unto thee, and thou hearest me not. I stand up, and thou dost not regard me. Thou art cruel to me, with thy strong hand thou dost oppose thyself to me. When I looked for good, evil came; when I waited for light, came darkness. My harp is turned to mourning, and my organ into the voice of them that weep.

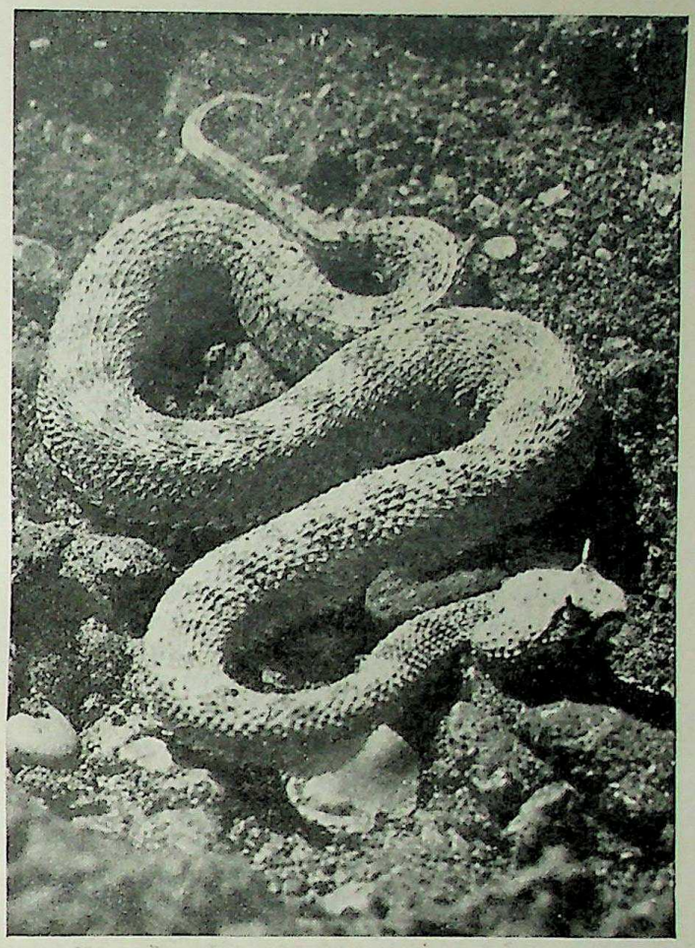
Let me be weighed in an even balance, and God will acknowledge my integrity. I resolved never to look upon a maid. If I have walked vainly, or my foot has been led to deceit, then let me sow, and another eat; yea, let my offspring be rooted out. If ever my heart has been deceived by a woman, let my own life become servant to another. If I have despised my servants, or withheld the poor from their desire, or seen any perish for want of clothing; if I have made gold my hope and confidence, I should have deserved to be punished, for I should have denied God. If I rejoiced at the destruction of him that hated me, or covered my transgression by hiding my iniquity in my bosom, or feared what the multitude would say—

But I protest my innocence. O that I might be heard, and that the Almighty would answer me! If God, my adversary, would show me his indictment, written in a book, I would take it upon my shoulder, and go into his presence, and declare unto him all my ways.

THE SPEECH OF ELIHU

ELIHU: I am young, and you, friends of Job, are old, therefore I was afraid and dared not express my opinion. I said, Days should speak, and years should teach wisdom. And yet, wisdom does not always come with years, great men are not always wise, neither do the aged understand judgement. Sometimes wisdom comes by the direct inspiration of the Almighty.

I have listened carefully to what you have said, but none of you convinced Job, or answered his words.



"THE VIPER'S TONGUE SHALL SLAY HIM." Known and dreaded in the Eastern desert, the crested asp or horned viper lies almost hidden in the sand and may often attack without provocation. Its bite is deadly. With other apt images from nature Zophar gathers that of the viper into a fine word-picture (Job xx, 16), when his turn comes to present the orthodox view of a sinner to the afflicted Job.

Photo, F. W. Bond

Do not say, He was too clever for us. He has not addressed me yet, and I will not answer him with your speeches. There are many things which I feel bound to say. I must speak, to relieve my mind. I accept no man's person. I flatter nobody. If I did, my maker would soon take me away.

Now, Job, listen, and answer if you can. Like you, I am a man, and you need not be afraid of me. My hand will not be heavy upon you. I heard you say, I am innocent and without iniquity, yet God counteth me for his enemy. This is not just.

Remember that God is greater than man. He speaks in two ways, that he may withdraw man from his purpose. Sometimes in a dream; sometimes by chastening him on a bed of pain so severely that the man's soul abhors all manner of meat, and he draws near to the grave. Then another divine messenger comes to his help, to make known to him what is right, and to provide him with a ransom, so that he may be delivered from going down to the pit. Then he sings before men this song, I have sinned and perverted that which was right, but he has delivered my soul from the pit, that, alive, I should see the light. These things God often does to man to redeem him.

If you have anything to say, speak. If not, hold your peace, and I will teach you wisdom.

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And you wise men, friends of Job, listen to me, that you may have knowledge.

Job has said, I am righteous, and God has deprived me of justice. What man is there like Job, who drinks up scorning like water, who goes in company with the workers of iniquity, and walks with wicked men, and then says, There is no profit in winning the favour of God?

Hear me, wise men. Far be it from God that he should do evil, for he rewards every man according to his deeds. God will not do wickedly, neither will the Almighty pervert judgement.

Could a God that hates right govern? Will you condemn him who is most just, who says to a king, Thou art wicked, and to princes, Ye are ungodly; a God who does not accept the person of princes, nor regards the rich man more than the poor? His eyes are upon the ways of men, there is no darkness where evil men may hide from him. He appoints no set time for judgement. He breaks in pieces mighty men without number, and overturns them in the night, because they would not consider any of his ways, and thus caused the cry of the poor to come to him.

When he is quiet, who can condemn? and when he hides his face, who can behold him?

But Job has spoken without knowledge, and his words lack wisdom.

Tell me this, all of you, Job and you wise men alike, Do you think it right to ask what advantage your righteousness brings you?

I will answer the question.

Look unto the heavens and see, and behold the clouds on high. If you sin, how does that affect God? And if you are righteous, what does he receive of your hand? By reason of the multitude of oppressions, men cry for help. But no one says, Where is God my maker, giver of songs in the night? God will not hear an empty cry, neither will the Almighty regard it. Therefore Job opens his mouth in vain, and multiplies words without knowledge.

One moment. There are other things to be said in behalf of God. I will bring knowledge from afar, and ascribe righteousness to my maker.

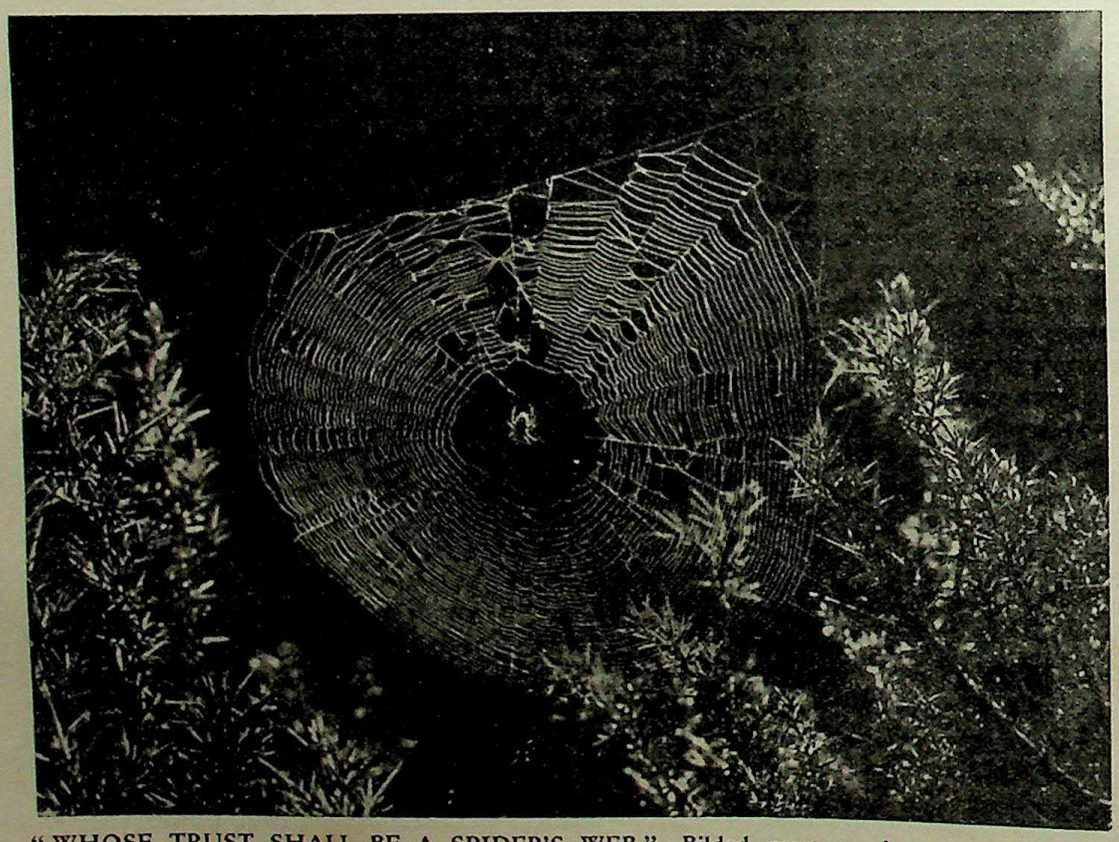
God is mighty, and despises none. He does not preserve the wicked, but he watches over the righteous. If they are held in cords of affliction, it is only that they may realize their transgressions. If they repent and serve God, they spend their days in prosperity and pleasure. But if they do not cry to him when he binds them, they die young, like men whose lives have been unclean.

So, Job, God would have dealt with you. But instead, judgement has taken hold upon you. Do not be led astray by your sufferings. Could your wealth save you without suffering? You prefer iniquity to affliction.

God is great, who can criticize him? God is great, and we know him not, neither can the number of his years be searched out. He draws up water-drops from the sea, and lets them fall in rain. He distributes the clouds. He dwells in light. With his hand he hurls lightning upon the earth. Listen to his voice, and the sound that goes out of his mouth. He sends it across the sky, and his lightnings go to the ends of the earth. Then the voice of his thunder roars, and he will not stay when his voice is heard.

Great things he does which we cannot understand. He sends snow and rain which make men keep within doors, and beasts retire into their dens. He sends frost and ice, and makes the thick clouds heavy with moisture. The lightning comes from the cloud, flashing hither and thither, either for correction or in mercy.

Stand still, Job, and consider the wondrous works of God. Do you know how God works, balancing the



"WHOSE TRUST SHALL BE A SPIDER'S WEB." Bildad, most reactionary of Job's three conventionally pious friends, enriches the verbal beauty of their concerted attack with his cautionary parable of the hypocrite: "whose hope shall be cut off, and whose trust shall be a spider's web" (Job viii, 14, 15). Damage is frequently occurring to the delicate wheel-like web of the orb-weaver. Wind may blow down the exquisitely-wrought fabric, stretched between two branches of a bush; a heavy dew can break its gossamer threads and keep the spider busy at early morning repairs.

Photo, S. Crook

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clouds, stilling the earth by the south wind, and spreading out the sky as a molten looking-glass?

What can we say to him? We cannot order our speech by reason of darkness. Touching the Almighty, we cannot find him out. He is excellent in power and judgement, and to plenteous justice he does no violence.

THE VOICE OF THE LORD

THE LORD: Who is this that darkens counsel by words without knowledge? Gird up your loins, Job, like a man; for I will demand of you, and answer me.

Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? Whereupon are the foundations thereof laid, and who laid its corner-stone, when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?

Who shut up the sea with doors, saying, Hitherto shalt thou come, and no further, and here shall thy proud waves be stayed?

Have you ever commanded the morning, or entered into the springs of the sea, or walked in the depths of the ocean? Have you seen the gates of death, or the door-keepers of Hades? Where is the place where light dwelleth, and where is the abode of darkness? Tell me that. You know; for the number of your years is so great!

Have you entered into the treasures of the snow, or have you seen the treasures of the hail? How are the clouds divided that scatter the showers upon the earth? Has the rain a father, and who gave birth to the dew?

Can you bind up the Pleiades in a group, or loose the bands of Orion?

Can you bring forth the stars in their season, or guide the constellations of the Bear? Do you know the laws of the heavens, and can you set up their dominion on the earth? Can you send lightnings on their way? Who spreads out the clouds in wisdom, and who pours out the bottles of heaven?

Again, can you hunt for the lioness, and fill the mouths of her cubs with food, as they lie in their dens? Do you know how the wild goats feed among the rocks? Who sent out the wild ass free, whose home I have made the wilderness and the barren land his dwelling? Will the wild ox be willing to serve you, will he stay in your stable? Did you give the goodly wings to the peacocks, or wings and feathers to the ostrich?

Did you give the horse his strength? He paws in the valley, rejoicing; in strength he goes forth to meet the armed man. He mocks at fear, and is not affrighted, he turns not back from the sword. The quiver rattles against him, the glittering spear and the shield. When the bugle sounds, he neighs, as he scents the battle from afar, the thunder of the captains and the shouting.

Does the hawk fly by your wisdom, and stretch her wings to the south? Does the eagle mount up at your command, and make her nest on high?

Look at behemoth—the hippopotamus. His strength is in his loins. He moves his tail like a cedar. His bones are as strong as brass, his limbs like bars of iron. He is God's masterpiece. The mountains provide him with food. The hills cover him with their shadow. He drinks up a river, and does not haste, calm though Jordan surge up to his mouth.

Can you draw out leviathan—the crocodile—with a hook, or put a cord in his nose, or pierce his jaw? Will he speak soft words to you? Will you play with him as with a bird, and bind him for your maidens? Can you fill his skin with harpoons, and his head with fishing spears? Lay your hand upon him, you will never forget the battle. His teeth are terrible, his scales are his pride. His eyes flash like the morning rays. His breath would set coals on fire, and a flame comes out of his mouth. His neck is strong, his heart is solid as a rock. When he rises, the mighty are afraid. He laughs at the shaking of a spear. He makes the sea boil and foam. There is nothing on earth like him.

Will critics still strive with the Almighty? He who argues with God, let him answer. Will you set aside my judgement and condemn me, that you may be justified? Have you an arm like God?

Deck yourself with majesty and excellency, and array yourself with glory and beauty. Cast abroad the rage of your wrath and abase the proud. Tread down the wicked in their place. Then I will acknowledge that your right hand can save you.

JOB'S SUBMISSION

JOB: What can I answer? I lay my hand upon my mouth. I spoke once, twice, but will speak no more.

I know, O Lord, that thou canst do everything, and that nothing is impossible to thee. I have spoken of wonders beyond my knowledge. I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear. But now my eyes have seen thee. Therefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.

THE VOICE OF THE LORD

THE LORD: Against you, Job's friends, my wrath is kindled, for you have not spoken of me the thing that is right. Go to him with seven bullocks and seven rams, and offer up a burnt offering. My servant Job shall pray for you, and, out of regard for him, I will not deal with you according to your folly.

EPILOGUE

And Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar did as the Lord commanded them, and the Lord accepted Job's prayers for them.

Moreover the Lord made Job great, when he prayed for his friends, and gave him twice as much as he had before. His brothers and sisters and all who had known him came and feasted in his house, offering their sympathy in all the misery through which he had passed. Each man presented him with a piece of money and a gold ring. So the Lord blessed the latter end of Job more than the beginning, for he had fourteen thousand sheep, six thousand camels, a thousand yoke of oxen, and a thousand she-asses. He had also seven sons and three daughters. In all the land there were no women found so fair as the daughters of Job. After this Job lived one hundred and forty years, and saw his sons, and his grandsons, four generations. Then Job died, old and full of years.

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Job

II

The Story of the Book

Antiquity's Grandest Effort to 'Justify the Ways of God to Men'

by REV. C. SHEPHERD GIBBS, M.A., B.D.

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IF the reader will take his Bible, preferably for the present purpose a copy of the Revised Version, and will turn over the pages of the Book of Job for himself, in very much the same sort of half-idle, half-curious way in which he would glance at any other book which interested him and which he thought of reading, he can scarcely fail to notice one or two prominent features. He will see almost at once that the introduction and the conclusion are in prose, while the body of the work is poetic; and he probably knows enough of the nature of Hebrew poetry to realize that although the device, so familiar to us, of rhyme is absent, the corresponding Hebrew practice of repeating or elaborating the meaning of a sentence in other words produces very much the same effect. As a rough and ready rule we may say that where the English poet relies to some extent on repetition of sound, his Hebrew forerunner depended on repetition of sense. It is a happy accident that this repetition loses comparatively little by translation.

A little further investigation will show that the whole of this main part of the work also consists of speeches, each of considerable length, and that the characters between whom these speeches are divided are six in number, namely, Job, his three friends, the young man Elihu, and lastly God Himself. It is this division into speeches which has caused the name of "drama" sometimes to be applied to the book; but the word is not very appropriate. Except in the prologue and epilogue there is no action; there is no quick cut-and-thrust of dialogue; and obviously any attempt to present the work upon the stage in the normal way would be foredoomed to failure. Nor indeed was this ever intended. The Jew of this period was not interested like the Greek in the theatre.

A Unique Masterpiece of Psychological Expression

THE word "epic" has also sometimes been used, with little more success; for the characteristic marks of the epic are massiveness of scale and swiftness and vigour of action. Massive the Book of Job certainly is; but the central action is not physical but spiritual. It takes place in the soul. To borrow a much abused but useful term from the vocabulary of today, it is psychological. In reality the Book of Job is one of those huge achievements which resist classification. We may tie our little labels to it; but it remains what it was, unique; like the Pyramids, a landmark in the history of the human race; like "Hamlet" or "Macbeth," still wet with the tears of human tragedy; like "The Imitation of Christ," a chapel of the spirit where wordy argument passes into silence and prayer.

But let us return to the prose prologue and epilogue between which the poem is inserted. To the scholar they are plainly different not only in style from the main bulk of the work, but in date. They present the same sort of appearance, and give rise to the same sort of reflection, as a Saxon archway or Norman tower in a medieval Gothic church. There is no space here to catalogue these differences in detail; but it may be said that they are chiefly either differences in theology (the prose being much cruder in this respect than the poem) or in the type of society which they reflect. It is, of course, well-known that in ancient literature it was almost the rule rather than the exception for an author to include large blocks of material without acknowledgment or alteration from the works of previous writers. Not only was there no law of copyright, but the very idea was non-existent. An author compiled his book in very much the same spirit as—to return to a useful metaphor already employed—a builder in the 14th or 15th century erected a parish church. Where it was possible to use the labours of previous hands he did so, without false shame or false pride, and without any attempt at disguise, or any sense of incongruity between the various styles.

History Touched by the Genius of Poetry

WE may reasonably assume, therefore, that there was in existence a popular legend, very likely as in the case of so many legends with a core of historic fact, but with a considerable accretion of myth. This piece of early folk-lore is used by the author of Job as the foundation on which to build his poem, and is handed on with little alteration of the traditional phraseology in the prologue and epilogue. It is scarcely necessary to point out that the story was not intended to be taken as literal truth.

In its earliest form the legend may well have been a narrative of actual fact; just as the Arthurian legend is probably based on the exploits of a Celtic chieftain who had a genuine existence. But to the author of our book of that name Job as a historic character meant no more than the irrecoverable details of ancient conflicts between Christian Celt and heathen Saxon meant to Tennyson. This is not to say, of course, that the prose portions of the Book of Job are not "genuine," as has sometimes been incautiously asserted. Of course they are genuine, since they form the essential framework around which the poem is built, and without them the poem becomes a mere amorphous mass, flesh without bones. But the story they tell is transmuted by the touch of a genius, as Holinshed's "Chronicles" were by Shakespeare, and Scandinavian myth by Wagner, from bronze into gold.

A summary of the narrative will be found elsewhere in these pages; but its main outlines are familiar to all, not only from the plot of the Book of Job, but from its frequent parallels in human experience of every age and country. It is the common story of the virtuous man overwhelmed by apparently undeserved calamity, and of his struggles to keep his faith in the righteousness of God, and in that "morality" which *must* be, to use Butler's phrase, "the nature of things," unless he is to believe himself a sane person in a mad universe, that is to say, a creature who is wiser and more just than his Creator. The steps by which an anonymous Hebrew more than two millenia ago endeavoured to solve this immemorial problem are given in the series of poetic monologues placed in the mouths of Job and his friends.

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"AND WHEN THEY LIFTED UP THEIR EYES AFAR OFF"

Job's three friends, Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar, lived at some distance from each other, but having learned of the series of calamities which had befallen him, they "made an appointment together to come to mourn with him and to comfort him" (Job ii, 11). Within sight of the house they were shocked to find things worse than they had anticipated. Job, who had formerly received them with the courtesy and lavish hospitality of a great sheikh, sat outside his doors, smitten and afflicted, giving no sign of welcome as they approached. Tradition has located Uz, the land of Job, on the borders of the Arabian desert, and the society described is pastoral.

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"NEITHER HATH THE FALCON'S EYE SEEN IT"

The sport of falconry in the East dates back to remote ages and is still practised in northern Africa and south-west Asia. Bearing a desert falcon on his wrist and with another trained hunting-bird by his side, this Beduin Sheikh ranks hawking high among his recreations. Eastern falconers carry their birds on the right wrist—not on the left like Westerners—protected by scarf or glove. Falcons, in common with other birds of prey, were reckoned as unclean, but the allusions in the Old Testament to the swift, strong flight of the hawk species and to their keenness of vision (Job xxviii, 7) betoken that they were admired, and their ways were referred to in poetic imagery.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

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"WARMED WITH THE FLEECE OF MY SHEEP"

Job in his final protest of integrity says that he has always provided wool from his flocks to make garments for the needy. "If I have seen any perish for want of clothing, or any poor without covering . . . then let mine arm fall from my shoulder blade" (Job xxxi, 19, 22). The patriarchal sheep-owners valued immense flocks more for the fleece than the flesh; though in great households meat might be a daily luxury. Shepherds then as now made themselves coats of sheepskin. But the bulk of clothing worn by Palestinian peasants was and is made from woven wool. They still spin yarn on a simple contrivance and take it to a weaver for conversion into cloth.

Photo: American Colony in Jerusalem

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"EYES WAS I TO THE BLIND"

A blind beggar and his companion are singing near the citadel of Aleppo. An errand-boy with his basket stops to listen, sellers of vegetables returning from their market-stall join him, and soon a crowd collects. Presently a number of small coins will be bestowed "on the poor that crieth" (Job xxix, 12-15). Almsgiving to the needy and especially to those physically afflicted, has ranked high in the list of religious duties since patriarchal times. Job, describing his visits from his country home to the city where he sat in counsel, tells how, as he went through the streets, he was wont to assist the outcast, the widow and the fatherless, receiving blessing of them that were "ready to perish."

Photo, "Daily Mirror"

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The speeches of the friends are, to a mind of a strictly logical cast, somewhat unsatisfying; since they are for the most part merely repetitions of the traditional theological position, and are not in any strict sense replies to the questions of Job. Throughout the book the various interlocutors speak without much reference to each other, nor is any attempt made meticulously to preserve the same thread of interest from one speech to another. The speeches are soliloquies rather than addresses. It is their frequent seeming irrelevance and constant return to the platitudes of contemporary theology which has made "Job's comforters" a byword; but it must be remembered that the Oriental has not often been greatly interested in logic or dialectic, and that, as we shall see, the platitudes expounded by the three friends were at the time the soundest orthodoxy. Their maddening iteration is consummate art. It is only so that the reader, certainly it was only so that the Jewish reader some centuries before Christ, could be made to feel the heartbreaking inadequacy of a creed which, to a prosperous man in good health, usually seemed satisfactory enough.

Obviously such a presentation must sometimes be monotonous. A modern Englishman, used as he is to concise statement and rapid movement, either of argument or action, needs to exercise a little patience before the spell of one of the greatest poets in all Hebrew literature has time to manifest itself. And a contributory cause to the same not altogether unpleasant monotony is the similarity between the three friends. Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite scarcely differ except in name. Attempts have been made to trace distinctions in detail between their various attitudes, but without much success. They are in effect three individual examples of the same general class, well-meaning, sympathetic, timidly pious, and ineffective—members of that most numerous of all religious parties, the platitudinarians.

"WHO PROVIDETH FOR THE RAVEN HIS FOOD?" The untamed raven inhabits the wilderness and abounds in many parts of Palestine. First bird to be mentioned in the Bible—it was sent forth by Noah from the window of the ark—the feeding of "his young ones" is mentioned in Job xxxviii, 41 as an illustration of God's care for all His creatures that cry unto Him. Among the ancients a curious belief prevailed that the raven was a cruel parent, deserting its fledglings so that "they wander for lack of meat" and would starve unless providentially fed.

Photo, Arthur Brook

THE contribution of Elihu, a young man who rushes in with almost comic self-assurance when his elders have finished (Chapters xxxii–xxxvii), is generally believed to be a later addition from another hand. There is no reference to him in the remainder of the poem, and most students of the English text will probably feel that this section is on a lower level than that which precedes and that which follows. Moreover, it ruins the rhythmic movement of the poem; and its ridiculous self-confidence seems to be due to the naiveté of its author, rather than to the intentional introduction of light relief. Inserted as it is, immediately after Job's final solemn and pathetic appeal to the Almighty, when he and his friends wait, as it were, in hushed silence until, at long last, God speaks, it is an intolerable intrusion. Few will quarrel with the verdict that the book gains greatly by its excision.

For slightly less cogent reasons most scholars believe that the two vigorous and graphic descriptions (xl. 15–xli, 34) of the hippopotamus (behemoth) and the crocodile (leviathan) do not belong to the original form of the poem. Opinions differ as to the literary merit of this section. Renan's suggestion is still worth consideration.

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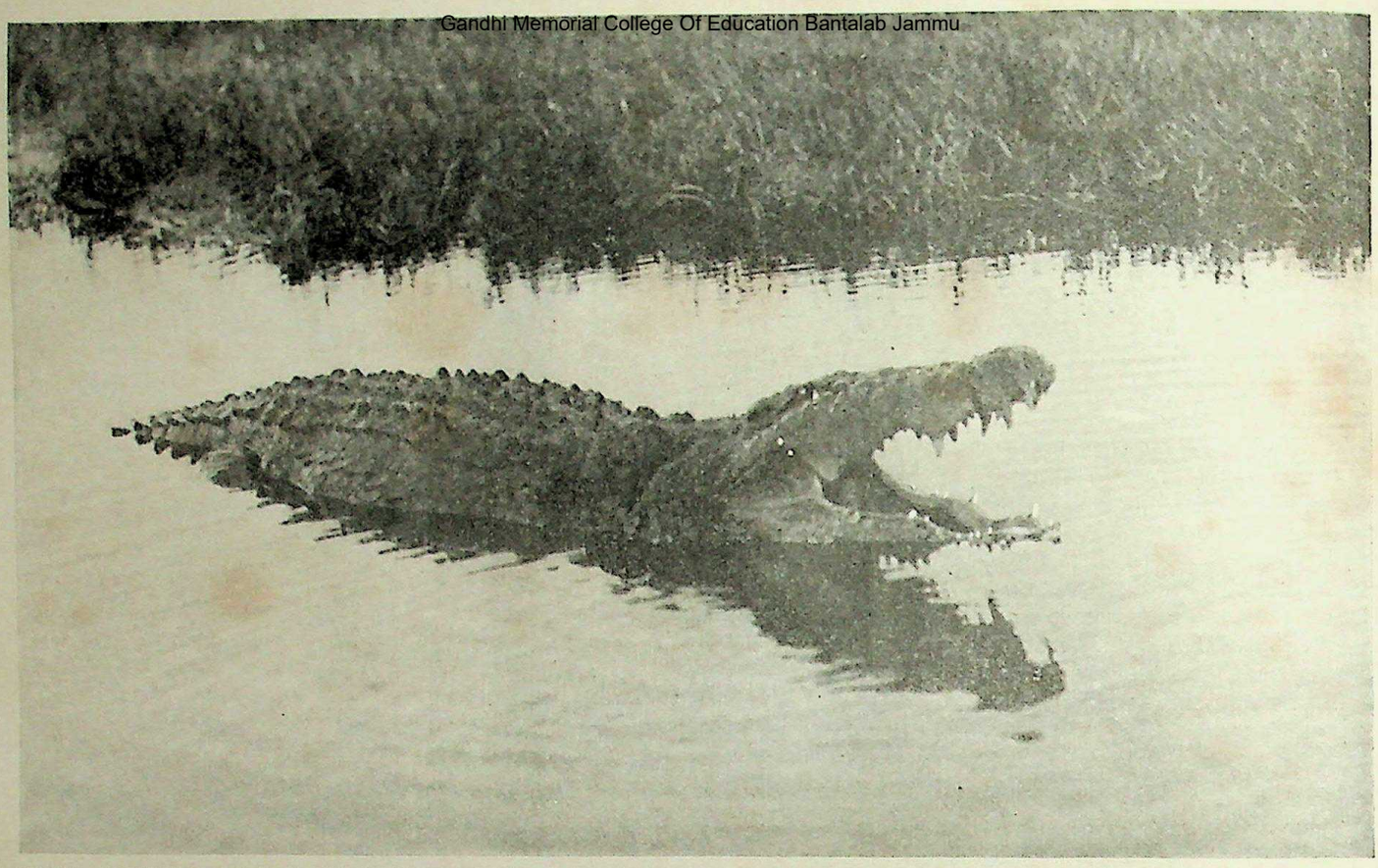

"HIS TEETH ARE TERRIBLE ROUND ABOUT." It is generally agreed that leviathan, described in the Divine speech in the Book of Job, is the crocodile. Possibly the Hebrew poet observed it with the hippopotamus, or behemoth, during a sojourn in Egypt, where both animals were popular divinities. The Nile is called the sea in the Bible (Isaiah xix, 5; xxi, 1); and in Job xli, 31, the foam churned in "the sea" by the crocodile's tail is mentioned. "Who can open the doors of his face" (14) refers to the locked formation of the terrible teeth. The beast's upper jaw is notched to fit the lower canines.

Photo, Mondiale

that they come from the same pen as the rest of the Book of Job, but were not written at the same time, and may not have been intended for insertion here. But it is surely less open to question that in their present position they form a disproportionate exaggeration of subordinate details, and slow down the otherwise increasingly swift movement of the climax—an artistic blunder of which it is difficult to believe the poet would have been guilty. For their own sake they are well worth study, full as they are of close observation, quaint imagery, almost infantile wonder, and occasional delightful inaccuracies; but both they and the main body of the work gain by the severance of the artificial link which binds them.

Structural Details of the Poem

As in the case of most other ancient writings, some other minor insertions and dislocations can be traced, inevitable occurrences in an age when the only means for the reproduction and dissemination of a library work was laborious copying by hand. Most of them are of little importance, but it should be mentioned that Chapter xxviii, forming in itself a complete poem which might be entitled "The Search for Wisdom," is regarded by some with much probability as not originally belonging to the Book of Job. As it stands, though in itself of considerable value, it interferes with the coherence of the context; and to read it as a complete unit in itself deepens rather than lessens its effect.

We may now sum up some of the results so far obtained as to the original structure of the work. They are very generally accepted, with only minor modifications here and there, by Old Testament scholars, and although simple in themselves and easily remembered, they add considerably to our appreciation of one of the noblest and grandest poems of all time. In brief, then, our main conclusions on this head are three.

First, the speeches of Elihu are no part of the original, but an inferior interpolation by a later hand. Secondly, three descriptive passages, to which may be given the titles "The Search for Wisdom," "The Hippopotamus," and "The Crocodile" are to be regarded as complete poems in themselves, of considerable excellence and possibly by the author of Job, but not originally intended to be incorporated in his masterpiece. Thirdly, the book itself was founded on a piece of ancient folklore, the details of which, though taken over by the author from his sources as they stand, have comparatively little bearing on his main purpose.

The only certain fact which can be stated about the date of the Book of Job is that it must be later than the time of the Babylonian exile. It was this bitter and humiliating experience which first compelled the more reflective Jewish minds to attempt to penetrate the immense profundities of the problem of suffering, and to perceive the pitiful inadequacy of the orthodox solution with its facile optimism. What that solution was we shall see before long.

Meanwhile we may notice that the only other Old Testament poet who stands on an equal level with the writer of Job, and whose laurels are still as green, the author of Isaiah xl–lv, was occupied with the same theme, and for the same reason. He, however, was haunted by the suffering of the nation, while it was the suffering of the individual which our author felt most acutely. Some readers may feel that this difference indicates an interval of some years between the two writings. This comparatively late date is confirmed by certain linguistic considerations, such as the occurrence of Aramaic and late Hebrew words. It would seem however from such indications as the reference in xv, 18-19 to a time still

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recent when "no stranger" occupied the land, that we need not come much later than about 500 B.C. It is right to say that some scholars believe the more probable date to be considerably later; but a period about the middle of the 5th century seems to be indicated by the balance of evidence.

Of the author we know nothing except what can be gathered from his work, not even his name. But whoever he may have been he possessed three qualifications not common in themselves, and tenfold more rare in combination: literary craftsmanship, sympathetic understanding of human nature, and a reverent yet passionate faith in God. Of his love for men and his faith in God we must speak at greater length later. His ability as a craftsman has been acknowledged by many competent judges. His careful and affectionate observation of nature is apparent on every page. Job in his loneliness is "a brother to jackals and a companion to ostriches." He wishes that man had the vitality of a tree, which

> Though the root thereof wax old in the earth,
> And the stock thereof die in the ground;
> Yet through the scent of water it will bud,
> And put forth boughs like a plant.

Man is born to trouble "as the sparks fly upwards." The wicked in their hour of punishment are "as stubble before the wind, and as chaff that the storm carrieth away." Human hopes are worn away like the bed of a stream, in which "the waters wear the stones; the overflowings thereof wash away the dust of the earth." The author's gift of apt metaphor frequently shows itself in images of a different kind, as when Job cries that God

> Hath also set me up for His mark.
> His archers compass me round about,
> He cleaveth my reins asunder, and doth not spare;
> He poureth out my gall upon the ground.
> He breaketh me with breach upon breach;
> He runneth upon me like a giant.

Similarly Zophar says of the wicked man that "he shall flee from the iron weapon, and the bow of brass shall strike him through. He draweth it forth, and it cometh out of his body." And who that has once read it can forget the powerful phrase in which Job expresses his longing that his words might be immortal? "Oh that they were inscribed in a book! That with an iron pen and lead they were graven in the rock for ever!" Or the biting irony of the comment addressed to his friends, "No doubt but ye are the people, and wisdom shall die with you." Or the sublimity of the cry, "I know that my Redeemer liveth." Or the pathetic sincerity of the quiet yet tremendous climax on the pinnacle of which the poem reaches its goal and end:

> I had heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear:
> But now mine eye seeth Thee,
> Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent
> In dust and ashes.

What, then, is the question to the answer of which the anonymous poet addressed himself? What is the purpose of a work so evidently inspired by earnest and intense purpose? A great poem is primarily—to employ two ungainly but serviceable words—either escapist or didactic. That is to say, either it resembles the fairy-tales of childhood, in that it plunges us into an artificial but pleasing world in which for a while the pressing cares of everyday life may be forgotten and the wearied spirit find recreation; or else like the parables of the Gospels it introduces us afresh to the difficulties of normal life, but with a change of perspective, an elimination of what appears irrelevant or unduly complex, and a forcible if concealed emphasis on one or two fundamental principles; and its intention is not so much to refresh as to instruct and discipline. If it does not sound too pedantic, we may say that the first is intended to make life pleasanter through temporary oblivion; the second to make life easier by permanent illumination; and both functions have their use. The Iliad, the comedies of Shakespeare, Tennyson's poems on the knights of the Round Table, Walter de la Mare's lyrics, belong to the former class; Lucretius' "On the Nature of Things," Shakespeare's tragedies, Tennyson's "In Memoriam," Robert Bridges' "Testament of Beauty," to the latter. There can be no doubt to which category Job is to be assigned; for here is a book which not only brings us face to face with human experience, but with human experience at its grimmest and deadliest.

THE question which Job is set to answer is one which every thoughtful person has sometimes asked: Why, if God is righteous, must the innocent suffer so often, and so deeply, as on this earth we see they do? That is why the appeal of the book is universal. To appreciate Job's utterances, their wistful longing, their terrible despair, their stubborn irrational hope, one need not have read widely nor be a profound philosopher. To have stood once in one's life by an open grave, or to have looked once in questioning anguish at the silver stars and found them dumb, is qualification enough. Let any reader of these lines who imagines Job to be dull, lay this book aside for a few minutes, close his eyes, and reflect on some of the instances known to him of tragic and undeserved pain; and it will be strange if he does not soon begin to comprehend why Job is still a classic. For it is the mark of a classic not to be "modern" but to be timeless; and however literary fashions may change, on this earth the human heart will always know suffering; nor will the innocent ever be immune, or the guilty always punished, within the limited span of human existence. Few persons who have lived through the Great War, or who are capable of reading a page of the newspaper with sympathetic imagination, or who have visited a hospital, or who have themselves felt the sharp thrust of one intense sorrow, can help being moved by some passages in Job. They still ring true, find echoes in too many a desolate heart.

"BEHOLD NOW BEHEMOTH." Found at Beth-shan in the temple of Ashtaroth, this pottery hippopotamus, dated to about 1300 B.C., reflects the influence in Palestine of Egypt where the animal was sacred. Most commentators are of opinion that behemoth in Job xl, 15, signifies the hippopotamus, and it is thought that the Biblical writer was acquainted with the Nile. Some translators render "shady trees" as "lotuses," under which, in the covert of papyrus reeds, behemoth lay.

Photo, courtesy of Alan Rowe, Pennsylvania University Palestine Expedition

But in the 5th century B.C. the problem was harder, the mists and shadows by which it was surrounded darker, the first steps towards an answer more stumbling

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"DOMINION OVER THE FOWL OF THE AIR."
In the Bible, hunting and fowling as recreations are connected with royalty and the great. References to such sports are employed as familiar symbols in the Book of Job. Various implements, including boomerangs, were used in the chase, and from the days of their bondage in Egypt the Hebrews would have known of a variety of methods of sport. Grounds chosen were by the marshy brooks where the animals assembled, and on the rivers from raft or canoe. Such hunting scenes are conventionally depicted in Egyptian wall-paintings. The one reproduced shows a Theban noble with wife and daughter. His fowling cat holds three birds in its mouth and claws.
British Museum

and uncertain. For this was an age in which man had not yet dared to believe in his own immortality. The only future existence possible to him was held to be an attenuated shadow-life in Sheol, the only sorrows or joys waiting for him there such joys and such sorrows as are open to a ghost. Accordingly, if the righteous were to be rewarded and the wicked punished it must be in this life, on earth, if at all. The syllogism seemed irrefutable. A just being must reward virtue and punish vice. But God is just. Therefore God rewards virtue and punishes vice. How, then, to account for the manifold apparent discrepancies which seemed to introduce endless confusion into so neat a law ?

That is an inquiry the replies to which, given not in Palestine alone, would fill a large volume. It will be remembered, for instance, that still in India the seeming inconsistencies are smoothed out by the ingenious and convenient doctrine of transmigration, which states that while suffering is always and everywhere a punishment for sin, your present sufferings may be a necessary atonement for sins in a previous existence. Hence, if they are atrocious, how abominable must have been your sins !

The Hebrew argument was similar, though it never had recourse to transmigration, and at this time the scope of the law was limited to the space of a single lifetime. Your sorrows are grievous ? Think not to receive sympathy or pity. Be grateful rather to escape contempt. For your sorrows are the measure of your punishment, and the punishment is fitted to the crime. "But," you object, "my sins have been few and slight." Not so, comes the reply, the law cannot err. Though committed perhaps in ignorance, only your sins can have caused your pains.

This is the dogma, known technically as "eudaemonism," to which Job's friends time and again return, and some of their speeches are little more than the continual elaboration of the elementary, and as it seemed self-evident, truth that the fate of the good must be happy, and that of the evil unhappy. Part at least of Job's anguish springs from his knowledge of his own innocence, his resentment of unjust condemnation, and his longing for vindication. So he cries in conscious rectitude, "I will maintain mine own ways" even before God ; and it is this that he means by the familiar and beautiful words, "I know that my Redeemer liveth." Job's redeemer is his Vindicator (the better translation of the word), who will clear his name after death ; and this Vindicator is none other than the Almighty, Who is the All-righteous.

Job's tongue trembles on the very verge of the triumphant claim to personal immortality. He never quite

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enunciates it. But it is this dogged insistence on the fundamental *rightness* of things, on the sanity of the laws of the universe and on the justice of God, which makes that belief inevitable. So distinguished a philosopher as Immanuel Kant held that a future life was a necessary postulate of reason in order to remedy the injustices of this. It appears to be an inevitable rule that whenever men seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, their hope of their own immortality rises confident and strong; and that when their sense of God and of duty begin to decay, their contempt of death decays also. Be that as it may, it was in the certainty that right must eventually prevail, and that in this world too often it does not prevail, that the author of the Book of Job took his first long step towards the Easter faith of the Christian Church.

The Book's Answer to the 'Why' of Suffering

SINCE however owing to the limitations of the best thought of his day he was unable quite to reach this level, what answer does he give? It is at first surprising to have to say that the only approach to a reasonable and logical answer to Job's own poignant question is to be found in the speeches of Elihu, which as we have seen are a later interpolation. Indeed there can be little doubt that the chief purpose of the interpolation was to supply a reasonable explanation of the problem of suffering, an explanation such as he felt existed, though in the book as it stood it was nowhere presented. In brief, Elihu's position is that affliction is essentially educative and remedial.

By calamity the Almighty teaches men their errors, opens their ears to instruction, and commands them to return from iniquity (xxxvi, 8-10). This is one of those completely consistent theories, as pleasingly logical as the correct solution of an algebraic equation, which still commend themselves on the blackboard in the classroom and break down pitiably in the presence of human suffering. It is impossible not to feel in listening to Elihu's calm and reasonable exposition, like the patient explanations of a sensible man to a fractious child, how one cry from the depths of Job's agony sweeps them away like straws. One cannot cure a famine with patent medicines. The message for which the sufferer longs is the cry of a prophet, trumpet-tongued, God-inspired, and he gets the good advice of a sensible man Well, the religion of sensible men will never move mountains, nor will it mend a broken heart.

The answer, then, given by the author of the Book of Job to the most insistent and perplexing of all the questions which have perplexed the minds of men is not, in the strict sense of the word, a reasonable answer. That does not mean that it is contrary to reason. Like great music, or true love, it introduces us to a new world, a world in which ordinary, sensible, practical, everyday considerations shrivel and die and are forgotten. It may seem absurd to a sensible person to say, as the Hebrew poet does say, that when we see God's face suffering no longer matters. But it will not seem absurd to the musician, or to the lover, or to some sufferers. They have knowledge of a world which is entered not by argument, but by an experience which is intimate and immediate, like scent or sight. So the saint knows God, and may know Him well, though what he knows about God may be very little.

It is not too much to say that all the great heresies, and that many individual errors about religion, spring from a pathetic over-confidence in the power of pure reason What is sometimes called the "challenge" of irreligion is not so much a challenge as, in the strict sense of the word, an impertinence. It does not matter. It reminds one of nothing so much as of a deaf man standing on a chair in the Queen's Hall on Wagner night and asking, with patronizing condescension, what all the excitement is about. And to permit such interruptions to distract him from the main business in hand is, both for a musician and for a Christian, a mistake.

Hence the answer of the Almighty to Job in the poem is more adequate than might at first appear; and it is an answer to which the more thoughtful minds in the modern world are paying increasing attention. God's ways are not our ways. We cannot fully explore the abysmal heights and depths of Infinite Wisdom with the tiny torch of human intelligence. However far our researches may penetrate, there must yet remain a huge penumbra beyond. But if we cannot comprehend, we can worship, and in our worship find comfort and hope; since our cry of repentant awe is answered, not by mere vague echoes of our own sighing, but by a Presence and a Voice. Like Job,

> I have uttered that which I understood not,
> Things too wonderful for me, which I knew not . . . .
> I had heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear;
> But now mine eye seeth Thee.
> Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent
> In dust and ashes.

There is another Epilogue to Job, beside that referred to previously in this article, an epilogue in which, as far as is possible on this earth, the ceaseless questionings of human pain do at length find their answer. When Christ died on Golgotha His Cross was both an end and a beginning. It was the end to which many signs had already dimly and indistinctly pointed. Nothing is more wonderful to the reverent and careful student of the Old Testament than the way in which, not only in the Book of Job, the coming of a suffering Redeemer had been anticipated and foretold.

Job's Groping after Christian Certainty

AS in his longing for life after death Job had walked a little way along the road which led to the first Easter, so in his passionate desire for a Vindicator, for a Daysman or mediator who should lay his hand upon both God and man, he saw as in a glass darkly the face of Him Who, centuries later, being God from all eternity, died as Man at a point of time within human history.

No one has yet explained the Cross. It is itself a question. But to how many questions is it not the answer! Job's last word, the final admission in which his soul took refuge, was one of wondering awe. But how much greater the wonder, and how much deeper the awe, if from out of the shadows of his sorrow he could have seen the sorrows of God Himself Incarnate!

And so, in these difficult and painful yet immensely fascinating and adventurous modern days, when the air is filled with memories of war and fears of war, and suffering seems to many a sensitive heart as meaningless and dreadful as ever it was, we ask again the old question. We find again by painful experiment the inadequacy of many well-meaning advisers and comforters. We discover at last, if we are wise and fortunate, some such answer as that of the ancient poet. Yet how much more satisfying our answer than his! "We see not yet all things put under Him. But we see Jesus . . . ."

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Verse from the Book of Job

HIGHEST achievement of the Hebrew poetical genius, the Book of Job presents a magnificently dramatic treatment of the problem of suffering. "Perhaps the greatest masterpiece of the human mind" Victor Hugo pronounced it. The story has universal appeal for all ages. Though oriental it is not especially Jewish; it belongs to a primeval and patriarchal world, but has no features which limit its background to Palestine. Among the Books of the Bible it is unique in its approach to drama. Professor R. C. Moulton defined it as "a dramatic poem framed in an epic story." Prose prologue and epilogue provide the setting for a drama in verse. This begins with Job's curse—the curse like the blessing is a recognized Hebrew poetical form—then follows the debate between Job and his "miserable comforters," with the superb culmination of the poetical conversation between Job and God.

BIBLICAL scholars place the Book of Job with Proverbs and Ecclesiastes in the Wisdom Literature of the Old Testament. The wisdom of Job is nobler, more poetical and philosophic than that of the other two books, which are comparatively secular in tone; they also differ entirely in composition and style. Job has a dramatic theme and clearly defined characterization. The hero is a monument of honesty and patience. His friends have orthodox views in common, but reveal their individualities early in the debate. Eliphaz, mildly conventional, recounts the cautionary tale of his fearful vision, Bildad, self-righteously reactionary, pictures a wicked man's insecurity. Zophar is the most intolerant and brutal in upholding the opinion that Job must have sinned to be so punished.

NATURE similes abound in the verse. Bildad, for instance, begins his picture of the evil-doer with the questions about the reed and the flag; compares his trust to the spider's web, thus building up the image of instability. Job in his despair likens man's life to a flower, a shadow; it dries up as the flood—forcible similes in a land short of water where plants quickly wither. Chapter xxviii contains two sustained poems of great beauty: a description of the miner's life and an ode on wisdom. The former poem—the Revised Version is quoted as the meaning here is clearer—makes no use of similes, but relies on concrete pictures.

VISION OF ELIPHAZ
iv, 13—21

IN thoughts from the visions of the night,
When deep sleep falleth on man,
Fear came upon me, and trembling,
Which made all my bones to shake.
Then a spirit passed before my face;
The hair of my flesh stood up:
It stood still, but I could not discern the form thereof;
An image was before mine eyes,
There was silence, and I heard a voice saying, [God?
Shall mortal man be more just than
Shall a man be more pure than his maker?
Behold, he put no trust in his servants;
And his angels he charged with folly;
How much less in them that dwell in houses of clay,
Whose foundation is in the dust,
Which are crushed before the moth?
They are destroyed from morning to evening:
They perish for ever without regarding it.
Doth not their excellency which is in them go away?
They die, even without wisdom.

MISERABLE COMFORT
viii, 1—3, 6, 8, 10—15

THEN answered Bildad the Shuhite, and said,
How long wilt thou speak these things?
And how long shall the words of thy mouth be like a strong wind?
Doth God pervert judgment?
Or doth the Almighty pervert justice?
If thou wert pure and upright,
Surely now he would awake for thee,
And make the habitation of thy righteousness prosperous.
For enquire, I pray thee, of the former age, [fathers;
And prepare thyself to the search of their
Shall not they teach thee, and tell thee,
And utter words out of their heart?

Can the rush grow up without mire?
Can the flag grow without water?
Whilst it is yet in his greenness, and not cut down,
It withereth before any other herb.
So are the paths of all that forget God;
And the hypocrite's hope shall perish;
Whose hope shall be cut off,
And whose trust shall be a spider's web.
He shall lean upon his house, but it shall not stand; [endure.
He shall hold it fast, but it shall not

JOB IN DEJECTION
xiv, 1, 2, 7—12

MAN that is born of woman is of few days,
And full of trouble.
He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down: [tinueth not.
He fleeth also as a shadow, and con-
For there is hope of a tree, if it be cut down, that it will sprout again,
And that the tender branch thereof will not cease. [earth,
Though the root thereof wax old in the
And the stock thereof die in the ground:
Yet through the scent of water it will bud
And bring forth boughs like a plant.
But man dieth, and wasteth away:
Yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he?
As the waters fail from the sea,
And the flood decayeth and drieth up:
So man lieth down, and riseth not:
Till the heavens be no more, they shall not awake,
Nor be raised out of their sleep.

THE MINER'S WORK
R.V. xxviii, 1—11

SURELY there is a mine for silver,
And a place for gold which they refine.
Iron is taken out of the earth,
And brass is molten out of the stone.
Man setteth an end to darkness,
And searcheth out to the furthest bound
The stones of thick darkness and of the shadow of death.
He breaketh open a shaft away from where men sojourn;
They are forgotten of the foot that passeth by; [and fro.
They hang afar from men, they swing to
As for the earth, out of it cometh bread:
And underneath it is turned up as it were by fire. [sapphires,
The stones thereof are the place of
And it hath dust of gold.
That path no bird of prey knoweth,
Neither hath the falcon's eye seen it:
The proud beasts have not trodden it,
Nor hath the fierce lion passed thereby.
He putteth forth his hand upon the flinty rock;
He overturneth the mountains by the roots. [rocks;
He cutteth out channels among the
And his eye seeth every precious thing.
He bindeth the streams that they trickle not; [forth to light.
And the thing that is hid bringeth he

ODE ON WISDOM
xxviii, 12—23, 28

BUT where shall wisdom be found?
And where is the place of understanding?
Man knoweth not the price thereof;
Neither is it found in the land of the living.
The depth saith, It is not in me:
And the sea saith, It is not with me.
It cannot be gotten for gold,
Neither shall silver be weighed for the price thereof. [Ophir,
It cannot be valued with the gold of
With the precious onyx, or the sapphire.
The gold and the crystal cannot equal it;
And the exchange of it shall not be for jewels of fine gold. [pearls;
No mention shall be made of coral or of
For the price of wisdom is above rubies.
The topaz of Ethiopia shall not equal it,
Neither shall it be valued with pure gold.
Whence then cometh wisdom?
And where is the place of understanding?
Seeing it is hid from the eyes of all living,
And kept close from the fowls of the air.
Destruction and death say, [our ears.
We have heard the fame thereof with
God understandeth the way thereof.
And he knoweth the place thereof.
And unto man he said,
Behold the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; [ing.
And to depart from evil is understand-

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Job

III

The Land of the Book

The Immortal Book in Its Setting of 'Wisdom Literature'

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THE background of Job might be said to be the universe. Its questions and theories, its angers and despairs and flickering faith, are as universal as the spirit of man.

Thus H. G. Wells was justified in clothing the book in modern dress, when he wrote "The Undying Fire." It is, however, noteworthy that, while this modern version is staged at an English seaside resort, the writer has thought fit to introduce a glimpse of the ancient scene:

> But this was the reality, an enduring reality, this sackcloth and these reeking ash-heaps outside the city gates. This was the scene of an unending experiment and an immortal argument. He was Job; the same Job who had sat here for thousands of years, and this lean, vulturous old man in the vast green turban was Eliphaz the Temanite; the smaller man who peered out of the cowl of a kind of hooded shawl was his friend Bildad the Shuhite; the eager, coarse face of the man in unclean linen was Zophar the Naamathite; and this fist-faced younger man who sat with an air of false humility insolently judging them all, was Elihu the son of Barachel the Buzite of the kindred of Ram. . . .
>
> It was queer that there should have ever been the fancy that these men were doctors or schoolmasters or munition makers, a queer veiling of their immortal quality in the transitory garments of a period. For ages they had sat here and disputed, and for ages they had still to sit. A little way off waited the asses and camels and slaves of the three emirs, and the two Ethiopian slaves of Eliphaz had been coming towards them bearing bowls of fine grey ashes. (For Eliphaz for sanitary reasons did not use the common ashes of the midden upon his head.) There, far away, splashed green with palms and pierced between pylons by a glittering arm of the river, were the low brown walls of sun-dried brick, the flat-roofed houses, and the twisted temple towers of the ancient city of Uz, where first this great argument had begun. East and west and north and south stretched the wide levels of the world, dotted with small date trees, and above them was the measureless dome of heaven, set with suns and stars and flooded with a light.

To these vivid words we may add Thomas Carlyle's description of the Arabia of Mahomet in "Heroes and Hero-worship":

> Consider that wide waste horizon of sand, empty, silent, like a sand-sea, dividing habitable place from habitable. You are all alone there, left alone with the Universe; by day a fierce sun blazing down on it with intolerable radiance; by night the great deep heaven with its stars. . . .
>
> They had many prophets, these Arabs; teachers each to his tribe, each according to the light he had. But indeed, have we not from of old the noblest of proofs, still palpable to every one of us, of what devoutness and noblemindedness had dwelt in these rustic, thoughtful peoples? Biblical critics seem agreed that our own "Book of Job" was written in that region of the world. I call that, apart from all theories about it, one of the grandest things ever written with pen. One feels, indeed, as if it were not Hebrew; such a noble universality, different from noble patriotism or sectarianism, reigns in it. A noble book; all men's book! It is our first, oldest statement of the never-ending problem—man's destiny, and God's ways with him here in this earth. And all in such free flowing outlines; grand in its sincerity, in its simplicity; in its epic melody, and repose of reconcilement. There is the seeing eye, the mildly understanding heart. So *true* everywhere; true eyesight and vision for all things; material things no less than spiritual; the horse—"hast thou clothed his neck with *thunder*?"—he "*laughs* at the shaking of the spear!" Such living likenesses were never since drawn. Sublime sorrow, sublime reconciliation: oldest choral melody as of the heart of mankind; so soft and great; as the summer midnight, as the world with its seas and stars! There is nothing written, I think, in the Bible or out of it, of equal literary merit.

The names and homes of Job and his friends show that the setting of our story is indeed to be imagined as lying somewhere in the great region denoted by the term "Arabia." Dr. D. B. Macdonald, the eminent authority on Islam, in his important book, "The Hebrew Literary Genius," has pointed out that "the Hebrews were simply an Arab clan which, under strange and unique guidance, entered Palestine and settled there." "They remained Arab, although they denounced the name. And their literature, throughout all their history and to this day, in its methods of production and in its recorded forms, is of Arab scheme and type."

IT is noteworthy that in more than thirty cases light from Arabic is thrown on the difficult language of the Book of Job. (See the commentary by Driver and Gray).

Another American writer, J. A. Montgomery, in "Arabia and the Bible," has shown how important it is to remember that Palestine was always open to the desert—as it is to this day. The "children of the east," to whom Job belonged, were the Arabs of this desert. Again and again in ancient times they made their way over the Transjordan mountains and crossed the river, to contest the Hebrew settlement in Canaan. A signal example of the way in which history repeats itself is seen in the report of the Palestine Royal Commission, 1937, page 309: "It was no easy task . . . for the Government to prevent the Bedouin from crossing the river and taking part in the disturbances of last year." Antagonism has always been specially severe in the south, where Israel's neighbour was Edom in Bible times.

There have, however, been periods when relations have been friendly. Jacob and Esau have not always been at daggers drawn. And so we find evidence in the Old Testament showing that Edomite wisdom was famous in Israel.

Was Job an Edomite?

"IS wisdom no more in Teman?" So runs the oracle in Jeremiah xlix, 7 (compare Obadiah, verses 8, 9, and Baruch iii, 22, 23) referring to the district of Edom from which Eliphaz comes.

To praise Solomon it is necessary to say that "Solomon's wisdom excelled the wisdom of all the children of the east, and all the wisdom of Egypt. For he was wiser than all men; than Ethan the Ezrahite, and Heman, and Calcol, and Darda, the sons of Mahol; and his fame was in all the nations round about" (I. Kings iv, 30, 31). Comparison of these words with Genesis xxxvi shows that the proper names are those of the sages of Edom. The Septuagint goes so far as to identify Job himself with the Jobab mentioned in Genesis xxxvi, 33, 34. Among modern writers, R. H. Pfeiffer argues that "the Edomite character of the Book of Job appears in the folk-tale, which is the basis for the poem, in the geographical and natural background, and in the philosophical conceptions of the author." Without going so far as that, we may agree that the *dramatis personae* are desert folk, Eliphaz at least being Edomite.

How could such men in such a setting come by their wisdom? Carlyle is quite wrong in the suggestion which he conveys by the use of the word "rustic" in the quotation given above. These Arabs controlled great trade routes, and, like the Hebrews, were in contact, through commerce and war, with the advanced culture of Babylon and Egypt. Along with what

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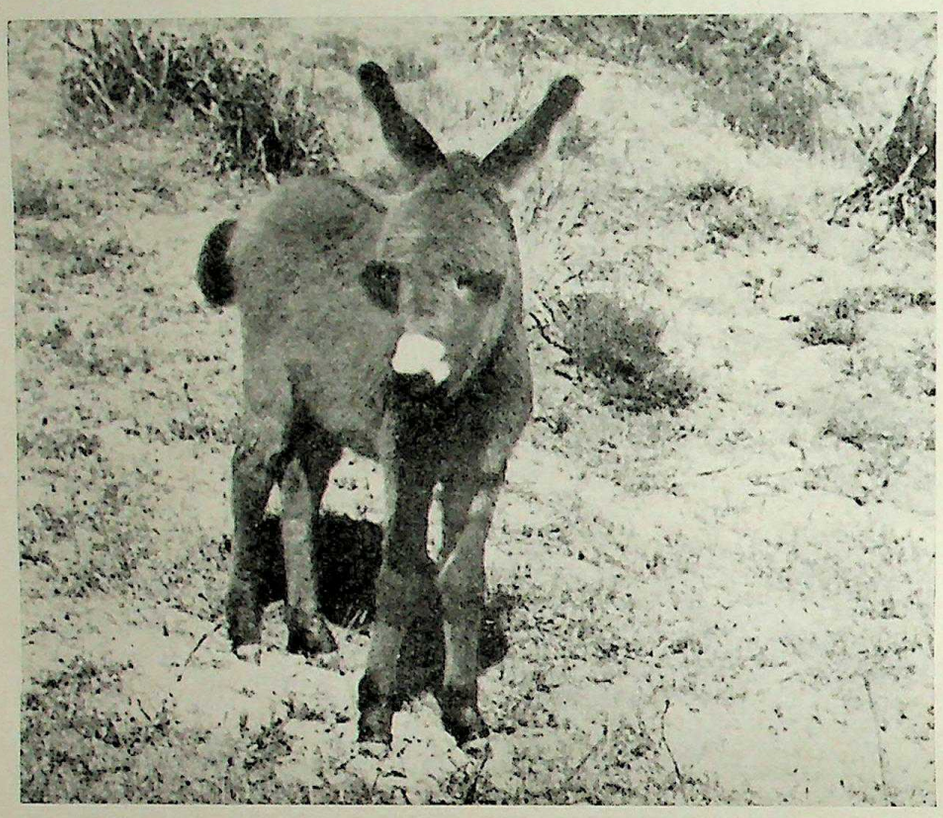

"A WILD ASS'S COLT." In the Book of Job there are several allusions to the wild ass. Its roving love of freedom, its shunning of mankind and its feeding habits are well described in Chapter xxxix, 5-8: "He scorneth the multitude of the city, neither regardeth he the crying of the driver. The range of the mountains is his pasture, and he searcheth after every green thing." In Chapter xi, 12, the "wild ass's colt" is used by Zophar as a symbol of undisciplined free thought.

Photo, Dr. Nachum Gidal

the camels carried, came the talk and thought of strange teachers and story-tellers. Not only from Nile and Euphrates, but also from Indus and Ganges flowed the traffic across Arabia. If we are looking for the original home of the story of the suffering good man, we shall have to consider the claim of India, whose ancient classics tell of a king bearing in some ways a resemblance to Job.

HARISCHANDRA gave up his kingdom to a sage, who also demanded a fee. In order to obtain this, the dethroned king sold his wife and son, the former persuading him to do this, against his will, by words such as the following: "There is no higher righteousness, they say, for a man than this, namely, maintaining his truthfulness, O noble man." The sage, however, was not satisfied, and Harischandra was compelled to sell himself to a repellent outcast, for whom he gathered garments from dead bodies at the burning ground. In this hell-on-earth the king "entered into another birth."

When his former queen brought his son, killed by a snake, he did not recognize them, until she uttered a lament for his sufferings. "There is no such thing as righteousness," she cried; "where are there truth and wisdom and meekness, in that thou, the devotee of righteousness, hast been ousted from thy kingdom?" Then, realizing all, they both decide to die on the son's funeral pyre, assured of immortality. But now the gods intervene, and all three are restored to their former royal estate. Finally the good king refuses to go to heaven without his people, and by his love they are all saved.

In spite of the differences, we may detect the same interest in the problem of undeserved suffering, the same doubt and courage and faith, as in the Book of Job.

Among the treasures collected by "the great and noble Asnappar" (Ezra iv, 10)—the Sardanapalus of the Greeks, now identified with Ashur-bani-pal—in his great library at Nineveh about 640 B.C., were copies of an ancient poem, which expresses some of the leading ideas of Job. The parallel is so interesting that we print a translation of the relevant lines, based on that of Jastrow in the "Journal of Biblical Literature," vol. xxv.

1. I will praise the lord of wisdom.
2. A king—I have been changed into a slave.
   A madman—my companions became estranged from me.
   By day—deep sighs, at night—weeping;
   The month—cries, the year—distress.
   I had reached and passed the allotted time of life;
   Whithersoever I turned—evil upon evil.
   Misery had increased, happiness had disappeared.
   I cried to the god, but he did not show me his countenance.
   I prayed to the goddess, but she did not raise her head.
   The augur could not determine the future by an inspection,
   The necromancer did not by an offering justify my suit,
   The seer I appealed to, but he revealed nothing,
   The magician did not by his rites release me from the ban.
   The like of this had never been seen.
3. Prayer was my practice, sacrificing my law,
   The day of worship of the gods the joy of my heart,
   The day of devotion to the goddess more to me than riches;
   Royal prayer—that was my joy.
   I taught my country to guard the name of god,
   To honour the name of the goddess I accustomed my people.
   The glorification of the king I made like unto that of god.
   And in the fear of the palace I instructed the people.
4. For indeed I thought that such things were pleasing to the god.
   What, however, seems good to oneself, to a god is displeasing;
   What is spurned by oneself finds favour with a god.
   Who is there that can grasp the will of the gods in heaven?
   The plan of a god full of mystery—who can understand it?
   How can mortals learn the way of a god?
   He who is still alive at evening is dead the next morning;
   In an instant he is cast into grief, of a sudden he is crushed;
   For a moment he sings and plays,
   In a twinkling he wails like a mourner.
   Like opening and closing (day and night) their spirit changes;
   If they are hungry they are like a corpse.
   Have they had enough, they consider themselves second to their god;
   If things go well, they prate of mounting to heaven.
   If they are in distress, they speak of descending into Irkalla.
5. An evil demon has taken hold of me,
   From yellowish, the sickness became white,
   It threw me to the ground and stretched me on my back,
   No god came to my aid, taking me by the hand,
   No goddess had compassion for me walking by my side.
   The grave was open, my burial prepared.
   I thought of the day when all my family
   Within the Door-gods adored their deity.
6. Tabi-utul-Bel dwelling in Nippur
   To report to thee hath sent me.
   The face he himself hath shewn to me.
   Extension of life he hath pronounced: he hath taken away weeping.
   This is the dream I saw in the night;
   In the dream it was Ur-Bau himself.
   The strong ruler, decked with the turban, enchanter, bringer of victory.
   Marduk hath sent me.
   To Shubshi-mershe-Nergal he hath brought happiness.
   He heard my prayer and accepted my supplication.
   My sins he caused the wind to carry away.
   Into the midst of the abyss he made the evil spirit return.

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Mine eyes were brightened, mine ears unstopped, my nose made clear;
My voice came back, my whole body was restored.
On the banks of the divine river where doom passeth on men
I had my long locks plucked, of the fetter I was freed.
7. Unto Esagila let the sinner through my guidance look.
In the mouth of the lion devouring me Marduk put a bit.

This poem was so ancient in the time of Ashur-bani-pal that his scribes had to write a commentary on it, and it may well be that here we have the oldest form of the story, which later found its way with the caravans to India, and through Arabia to Palestine.

It has often been observed that the Book of Job shows familiarity with Egypt. It knows the Nile, with its canals and strange animals, as well as the features of the desert. It is therefore deeply interesting to find that among the remains of Egyptian literature, of the period 2000-1800 B.C., there is a poem, which the late J. H. Breasted called "our earliest Book of Job." After verses describing his sufferings and doubts, the poet—in this case a poor man—turns to death as release. We quote from Erman, "The Literature of the Ancient Egyptians," trans. A. M. Blackman (Methuen).

Death is before me today
As when a sick man becomes whole,
As when one walketh abroad after sickness.

Death is before me today
As the odour of myrrh,
As when one sitteth under the sail on a windy day.

Death is before me today
As a well-trodden path,
As when a man returneth from the war to his house.

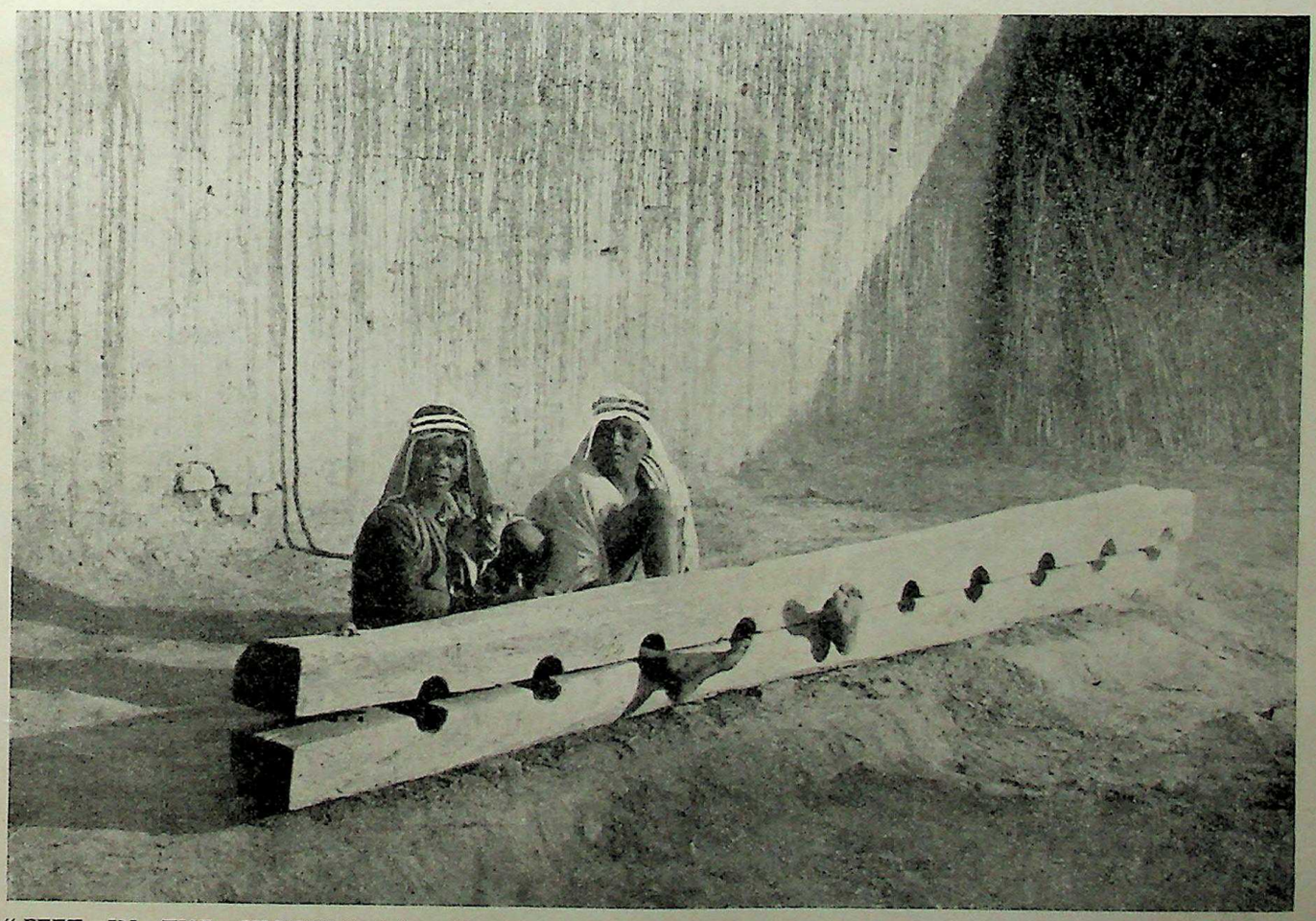
Death is before me today
As when a man longeth to see his house again,
After he hath spent many years in captivity.

From what has been said it will be seen that Job belongs to a class of literature found in many lands of antiquity. The sages of different nations freely exchanged their goods, and it is almost possible to speak of an international Wisdom movement. The main business of these men was the instruction of the young, specially with a view to what we should call the Civil Service. This educational motive is clearly seen in two splendid examples of Jewish Wisdom literature, namely, Proverbs and Ecclesiasticus. Philosophical interests appear in Ecclesiastes, the scepticism of which is answered in the Wisdom of Solomon.

The books just mentioned belong, in their present form, to the period after 300 B.C., and the theory has recently been put forward by a French scholar, A. Causse, that they were propagandist in purpose. It is difficult to regard Job in this light, and most moderns place it about 400 B.C., ascribing its patriarchal atmosphere to the art of the poet.

In view of the ideas expressed by Job, it is impossible to agree with the note in the margin of the Authorized Version: "Moses is thought to have wrote the Book of Job, whilst among the Madianites, Before Christ, circa 1520." The story is probably older than that, but the dialogue must be later. A great German authority, the late Hermann Gunkel, thought that the work came from the age of Jeremiah, *i.e.*, about 600 B.C. The prophet himself was a kind of Job, wishing he had never been born, and arguing audaciously with God. This theory lends a new interest to Ezekiel's mention of Job (Ezekiel xiv, 14).

Both in 600 B.C. and in 400 B.C. the book would find a suitable setting, for those were the times when the Law was being proclaimed in new form, and the Book of Job is obviously a protest against a too definite orthodox view of providence, thus anticipating the teaching of Jesus in Matthew v, 45.



"FEET IN THE STOCKS." Job seeking to know the reasons of his undeserved affliction and pleading with the Almighty says, "Thou puttest my feet also in the stocks" (Job xiii, 27), figuratively expressing his feeling of shackled mental activity. Elihu later on quotes Job's words (xxxiii, 11), solemnly reproving him for imagining that God would in any way be his enemy. Stocks are still in use as a means of punitive detention in the East. The Beduin pictured, gaoled for minor offences, have only one foot each in the instrument; the position is considerably more irksome when both feet are held.

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"AS THE MOUNTAINS ARE ROUND ABOUT JERUSALEM." Looking south-west across the Kidron Valley from the Mount of Olives range, the view covers the Temple Area with much of central Jerusalem. Built on a group of four hills—Mounts Moriah, Zion, Akra and Bezetha—the valleys of which have been almost filled up with the debris of ages, the city is also apparently surrounded by hills. The extensive promontory of the Mount of Olives lies on the east and north-east; west and north rises the central range of Palestine; south are the facing slopes of the Valley of Hinnom. In Psalm cxxv, 2 the security of Zion amid the encircling mountains is compared to Jehovah's protecting care of His people.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

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Psalms

I

The Book in Outline

Prayer and Praise in the World's Sublimest Manual of Devotion

by REV. F. TOWNLEY LORD, B.A., D.D.

Minister of Bloomsbury Central (Baptist) Church; Author of "The Master and His Men," "Christ on the Road," etc.

THE Book of Psalms occupies a unique place in the religious literature of the world. It is often described as the Hymn-book of the second Temple: but while many of the Psalms reflect liturgical usage, and some sections may be regarded as praise-books used by the Levitical choirs, there are others which owe their origin to personal devotion. The Psalter came into being gradually, and thus expresses the religious experience of different times and circumstances. Its songs are songs of the past, but so vividly do they express the hopes and fears of the soul in its relation to God and the world that we can sing many of them still. From the prayer-book of an ancient people the Book of Psalms has become the prayer book of humanity.

Poems do not easily lend themselves to summary, least of all when they are also prayers. We might as well hope to reproduce the glories of a landscape, spreading its spacious charm before us, within the narrow limits of a snapshot. But while no summary can hope to do justice to the lyrical, spiritual and emotional quality of the Psalms, the attempt will be made to catch their religious significance: so that even while we are endeavouring to appreciate the meaning of religion to a people of a bygone age we may realize that ageless inspiration which makes the Psalms so valuable to the modern seeker after God.

The classification of the Hebrew Bible (which is reproduced in the Revised Version) groups the Psalms into five books, comprising respectively Psalms i-xli, xlii-lxxii, lxxiii-lxxxix, xc-cvi, cvii-cl. In our summary we shall follow this classification, grouping the poems (*see* Synopsis overleaf) in respect of the ideas they embody and the spiritual aspirations they represent.

The Psalms of the first Book (i-xli) are probably among the earliest in the collection and have two well-marked features: the frequent use of Jehovah (the Lord) as the name for God and, with few exceptions, the ascription of the poems to David.

Many of these Psalms refer to the majesty of God. He is the Creator:

> The earth is the LORD's, and the fullness thereof;
> The world, and they that dwell therein.
> For he hath founded it upon the seas,
> And established it upon the floods (xxiv, 1f).

In His supremacy God demands the undivided allegiance of His people, and idolatry is condemned.

> Their sorrows shall be multiplied that exchange the LORD for another god;
> Their drink-offerings of blood will I not offer,
> Nor take their names upon my lips.
> The LORD is the portion of mine inheritance and of my cup. (xvi, 4f. R.V.)

But the supremacy of the Lord is not that of a terrible despot, for His conspicuous quality is His loving kindness to His children. They take refuge under His wings (xxxvi, 5f). Psalms ix and x (which originally formed one Psalm composed as an expression of gratitude for some signal deliverance) abound in their praise of God's protecting power.

> The LORD also will be a refuge for the oppressed,
> A refuge in time of trouble.
> And they that know thy name will put their trust in thee:
> For thou, LORD, hast not forsaken them that seek thee (ix, 9f.)
> The helpless committeth himself unto thee;
> Thou hast been the helper of the fatherless. (x, 14. R.V.)

The beauty of the Psalmists' conception of God is nowhere shown more clearly than in the famous 23rd Psalm. Here God is the gracious and beneficent Host at the banquet of life (xxiii, 5): but the idea that gives this Psalm its perennial charm is that of God as the Shepherd.

> The LORD is my shepherd: I shall not want.
> He maketh me to lie down in green pastures:
> He leadeth me beside the still waters:
> He restoreth my soul.

Psalm viii is a poem on the glory of God as this is revealed in the true dignity of man: but this dignity is emphasized against the background of the heavens (the work of God's fingers) and the moon and the stars (which God has ordained). This background of the glory of Nature is presented with great power in Psalm xix.

> The heavens declare the glory of God,
> And the firmament sheweth His handywork.
> Day unto day uttereth speech,
> And night unto night sheweth knowledge.

Truly the day speaks of God's glory, for the sun, most glorious of the heavenly bodies, goes forth as a bridegroom from his canopy to make the complete circuit of the heavens. But no less eloquent of God's glory is the silence of the night.

From the awe-inducing stillness of the night the Psalmist takes us, in Psalm xxix, to the voice of God in the storm. This Psalm, which has been described as the "Psalm of the seven thunders," is one of the finest poetic descriptions of a storm in all literature.

> The voice of the LORD is upon the waters:
> The God of glory thundereth . . .
> The voice of the LORD breaketh the cedars;
> Yea, the LORD breaketh the cedars of Lebanon.
> He maketh them also to skip like a calf;
> Lebanon and Sirion like a young unicorn.
> The voice of the LORD divideth the flames of fire.
> The voice of the LORD shaketh the wilderness.

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Very effective is the contrast drawn in these poems between the lot of the righteous and that of the wicked. Psalm i compares the man who delights in the law of the Lord to a tree planted by rivers of water, bringing forth its fruit in its season: while the wicked are as the chaff which the wind drives away. This theme is continued in Psalm v, a morning prayer composed before going to the sanctuary. The arrogant will not be able to endure the sight of God, but the righteous will be compassed with favour as with a shield. The poet declares his own response to God in the words:

> But as for me, I will come into thy house in the multitude of thy mercy:
> And in thy fear will I worship toward thy holy temple.

Psalm x contains a vigorous characterization of the wicked, with a notable reference to the practical atheism of the proud man whose thoughts are "there is no God" (x, 4). In contrast to this we may note the closing strophe of Psalm xvi where the godly man is described as radiant in all his being through the presence of God.

> I have set the LORD always before me:
> Because he is at my right hand I shall not be moved.
> Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth:
> My flesh also shall rest in hope.

The view generally adopted in the Psalter is that piety brings its blessings, while evil calls down the punishment of God; but occasionally, as we shall have to note throughout our survey, a suggestion of uneasiness creeps in, suggesting that the Psalmists were distressed by the apparent prosperity of men who made no religious pretensions. Psalm xxxvii, in the acrostic form (each stanza beginning with a letter of the Hebrew alphabet in regular succession) was obviously written to induce patience and hope in those who were perplexed in this way. "Fret not thyself because of evil doers" is an exhortation based on the principle, which the Psalm develops, that the wicked will soon be cut down like the grass, whereas eventually the meek will inherit the land and delight themselves in the abundance of peace. It is a fine venture of faith that declares:

> The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD:
> And he delighteth in his way.
> Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down:
> For the LORD upholdeth him with his hand.
> I have been young, and now am old:
> Yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken,
> Nor his seed begging bread. (xxxvii, 23f.)

MANY of the Psalms in this first book depict the soul in its dire need. Psalm iii reveals the author in sore distress: but he cried to the God Who lived in the Temple, and his cry was heard.

> He answereth me out of his holy hill.
> I laid me down and slept,
> I awaked; for the LORD sustaineth me. (iii, 4f. R.V.)

In Psalm vi we have the cry of one in bodily distress: in Psalm vii the plea of an innocent man who relies on the justice of God: in Psalm xiii the cry of faithful Jews against the arrogant tongue of the ungodly: in Psalm xxii the complaint of a godly man that the God of his fathers seems to have deserted him: in Psalm xxxviii a pitiful description of bodily and mental anguish coupled with the desertion of friends and the unscrupulous attack of foes: in Psalm xli the prayer of a sick man against cruel and treacherous foes. The Psalter, of which these Psalms are typical, reveals human experience at its most bitter level, but it is to be noted that the writers constantly rise to great faith in God and the certainty of ultimate blessedness.

> I waited patiently for the LORD;
> And He inclined unto me and heard my cry.
> He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay,
> And set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings.
> And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God. (xl, 1-3.)

THE first book contains also references to sacrifice (xxxvii), to the Temple service (xxiv), to the King (ii, xviii, xx), and suggestions that inward piety is preferable to outward ritual: but these, together with possible intimations of the hope of a future life, will be better considered later in this survey. Here, however, two Psalms may be noticed as revealing a deep reverence for the law. Psalm i, in depicting the blessedness of the upright man, declares his delight

PSALMS: A SYNOPSIS

Book I

The Vision of God...	ix, x, xvi, xxiii, xxiv, xxxvi
God's Glory in Nature	viii, xix, xxix
The Way of Virtue and the Way of Evil	i, v, xxxvii
Cry for Help ...	iii, vi, vii, xxii, xxxviii, xl, xli
The Glory of the Law	ii, xviii, xix, xx, xxiv, xxxvii

Book II

The Need of the Nation	xliv, xlvii, lx, lxv, lxvi, lxviii
The Temple of the Heart	xl, xlii, xliii, li

Book III

The Lesson of History	lxxiv, lxxv, lxxvii, lxxviii, lxxix, lxxx, lxxxii
Glory of Zion ...	lxxxiv, lxxxvii
A Cry from the Depths	vii, xxii, xxxi, lxxxviii

Book IV

Praise Be to God	xc, xci, xcii, c, ciii, civ, cv, cvi,
The Ideal Ruler ...	ci

Book V

Hallelujah	cvii, cxiii-cxviii, cxlvi-cl
Bitter Memories of Exile	cxxxvii
Songs of the Pilgrim Way	cxx-cxxxiv
Alphabet of Loyalty	cxix
The Ever-present God	cxxxix

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"HEAR MY CRY, O GOD; ATTEND UNTO MY PRAYER"

The above words open Psalm lxi, a petition for the restoration and redemption of Israel. Dwelling on past mercies, the poet recalls that the Sanctuary of the Tabernacle at Jerusalem had been granted a possession to his people for ever. Such a prayer is in the heart, if not actually on the lips, of this aged Jew at the Wailing Wall, by the side of the stones of Solomon's Temple. He may be voicing lines from the lament, the responses to which are sung in unison when congregations of his co-religionists gather at this spot to bewail the departed glory of Zion. "For the Temple that is destroyed; We sit in solitude and mourn."

Photo. Martin Munkacsy

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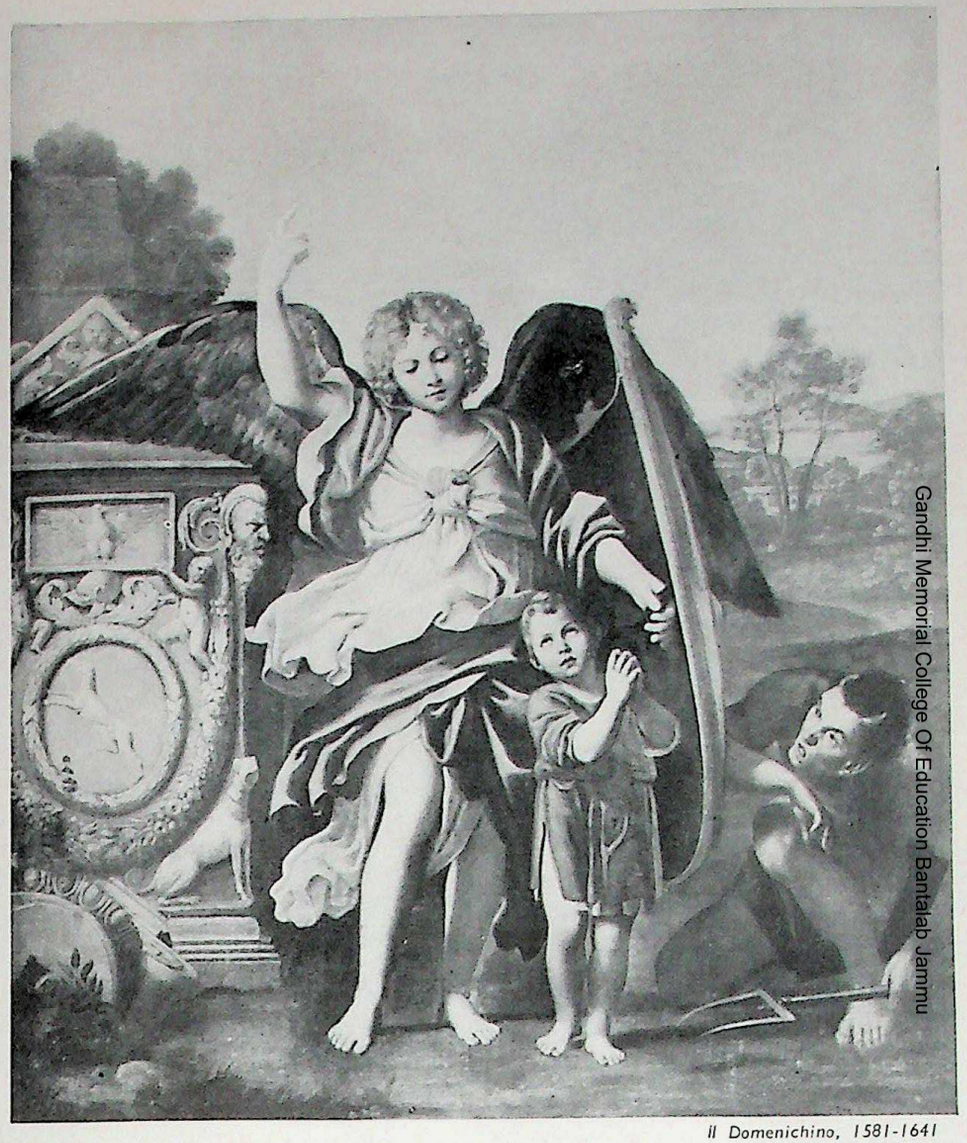
Guercino 1591-1666

"HE SENT HIS ANGEL"

The portrayal of angels is a special feature of Italian religious art. Both pictures reproduced in this page are by early 17th century painters of the Bolognese school. Giovanni Barbieri, known, because of his squint, as Guercino (squint-eyed) depicted (left) a more majestic if less appealing conception of the Guardian Angel than his contemporary, il Domenichino.

In the Old Testament are numerous references to angels as messengers and ministers of grace. None is more beautiful than that in the ninety-first Psalm in which the sacred poet says they are charged by God "to keep thee in all thy ways."



Il Domenichino, 1581-1641

"FOR HE SHALL GIVE HIS ANGELS CHARGE OVER THEE"

The ministry of the guardian angel as spiritual agent of God's protecting care, so beautifully expressed in Psalm xci, is tenderly illustrated in the picture by Il Domenichino (Domenico Zampieri). This Italian painter was at one time hailed as a second Raphael, but is now admired on his true level as a lesser master of graceful talent. His painting, The Guardian Angel, in the National Museum, Naples, particularly recalls the lines in verse 4: "Under his wings shalt thou trust; his truth shall be thy shield and buckler"—angelic thoughts guarding against the suggestions of evil.

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Madame Bouguereau

"SAVE ME FROM THE LION'S MOUTH"

Many of the Psalms are entreaties for God's help in time of danger. It was natural in a pastoral country that poets should draw their imagery from the good shepherd defending his flock. The variety of the short similies used from this source is great. A beautiful example occurs in a passage in Psalm xxii, 19, 21: "But be not thou far from me, O Lord: O my strength, haste thee to help me. Save me from the lion's mouth." Though now extirpated from Palestine, in Biblical times lions were plentiful and are frequently mentioned in the Scriptures. Shepherds, like the youthful David, as depicted by the French painter Madame Bouguereau, sometimes had to rescue their lambs seized from the folds.

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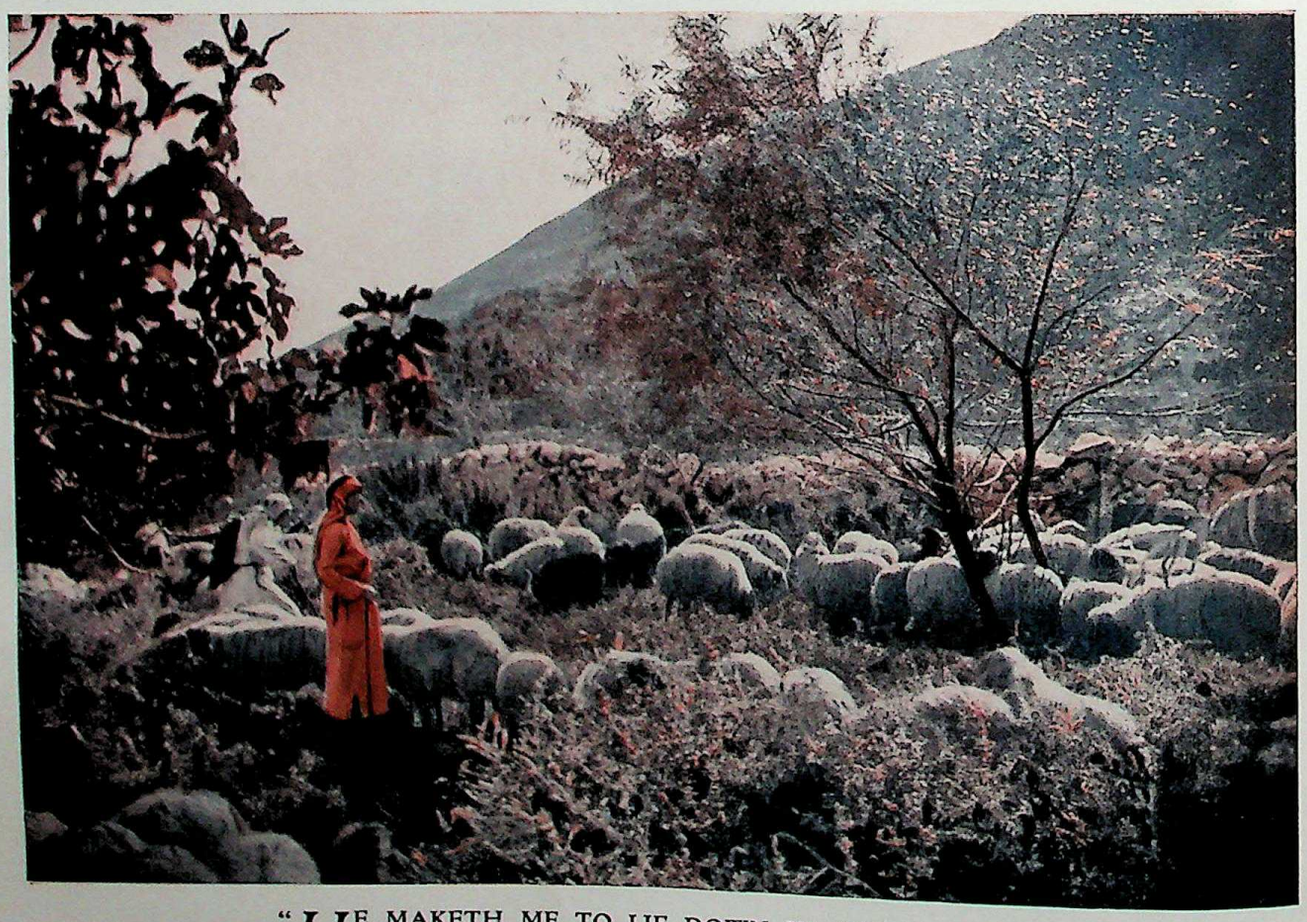
"HE LEADETH ME BESIDE THE STILL WATERS"



"HE MAKETH ME TO LIE DOWN IN GREEN PASTURES"

The first two verses of the lovely, beloved and oft-repeated twenty-third psalm, with its assurance of the sufficiency of God, complete a perfect metaphor for all human needs supplied. The Psalmist knew the main duties of a shepherd were to lead his flocks to green pastures and to find them a safe drinking-place by fresh water. Only in exceptionally fertile districts could they remain stationary; in the desert they were driven from district to district in search of food and drink. For thousands of years springs and rivers have been the cause of tribal conflicts among pastoral peoples in the arid and arid regions of the East.

Photos, American Colony in Jerusalem

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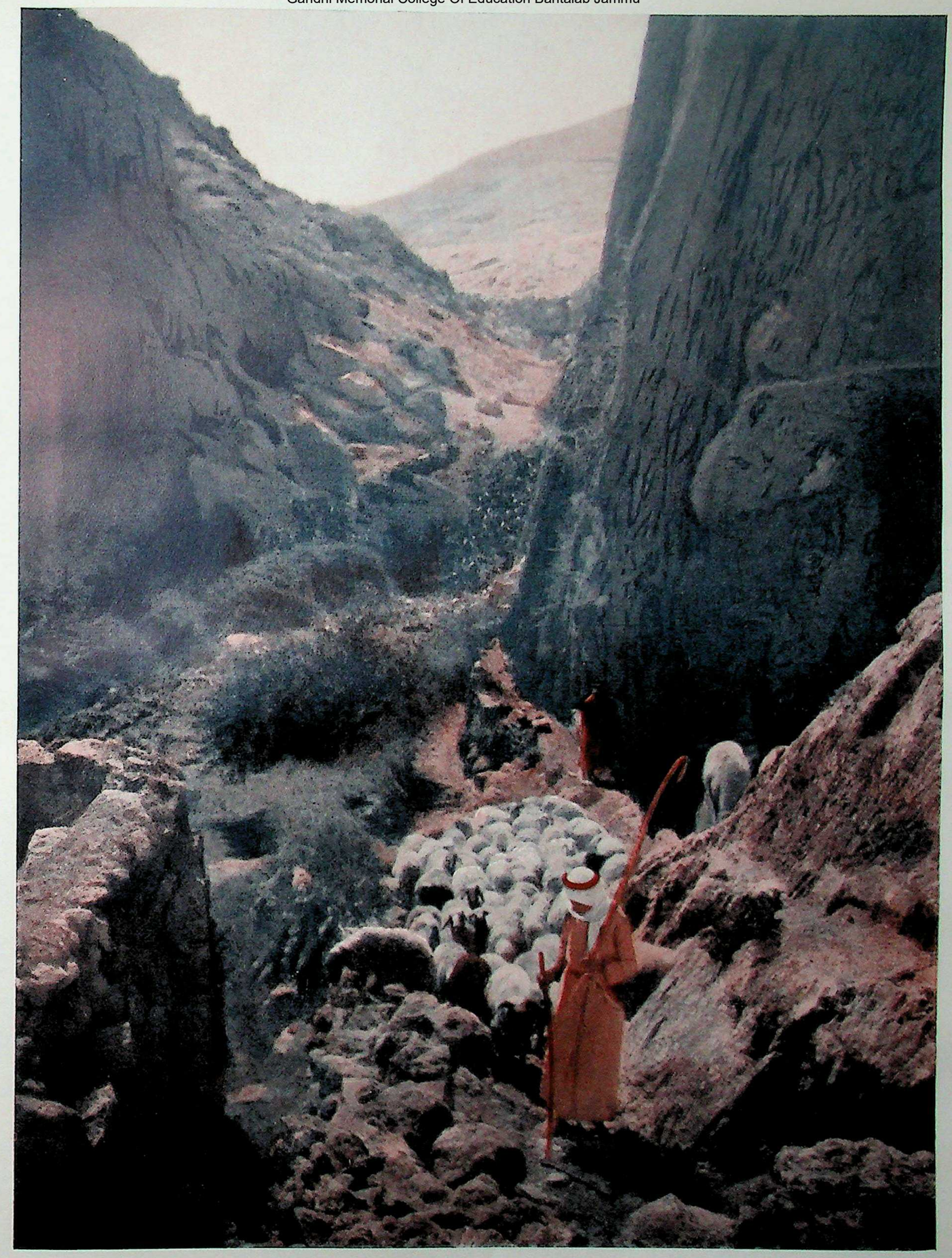

"THY ROD AND THY STAFF THEY COMFORT ME"

In the dusk, when the shepherd can no longer be easily discerned by his sheep, he taps the rocks with his staff as he goes before them to assure them of his presence. The Biblical shepherd usually leads his flock ; he is the protector of his sheep in the shadowy valleys where danger lurks. His staff guides and his rod, or club, protects them from attacks of wild beasts. The metaphor of the Good Shepherd is maintained to the end of the fourth verse in Psalm xxiii. In the last two verses God is Host in the heavenly mansions where goodness and mercy wait on the guests, who safely "dwell in the house of the Lord for ever."

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

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Herbert Schmalz

"IF I FORGET THEE, O JERUSALEM"

Laying aside their harps, the sorrowful daughters of captive Judah mourn as they remember Zion and lament over the destruction of their city and the Temple (Psalm cxxxvii, 3, 4): "They that wasted us required of us mirth, saying, Sing us one of the songs of Zion. How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?"

The picture entitled By the Rivers of Babylon is the work of Herbert Schmalz, a well-known painter of religious and classical subjects in the early years of the present century. Another of his still most popular Biblical illustrations is reproduced in the facing page.

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Herbert Schmalz

"THE KING'S DAUGHTER"

In the royal marriage song, Psalm xlv, which has been thought by some to date from the time of Solomon, the bride is described as a foreign princess. She was the daughter of a great king, if we may judge by the magnificence of her attire and attendance as she came forth to meet the princely bridegroom.

" Her clothing is of wrought gold. She shall be brought unto the king in raiment of needlework. The virgins her companions that follow her shall be brought unto thee. With gladness and rejoicing shall they be brought: They shall enter into the king's palace."

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"HE GIVETH SNOW LIKE WOOL"

The Temple Area is here seen in winter under a coverlet of newly-fallen snow. To the right is the beautiful little edifice of the Sebil Kait Bey, a fountain erected in the 15th century A.D. Of old much of the underlying rock, here and elsewhere in Jerusalem, was excavated into reservoirs for the collection of rain and melting snows in an attempt to meet the water-shortage.

Providential gifts of showers, frost, ice and snowfall are gratefully recognized in Psalm cxlvii. Such heartfelt thanksgiving is understandable in an agricultural land of summer water-famine. Likening the snow to wool, in verse 16, the psalmist had in mind the most valuable quality of fleece, newly-carded to an equable whiteness and softness.

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in the law of the Lord, while Psalm xix sings the praises of the law.

> The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul:
> The testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple.
> The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart:
> The commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes.
> The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring for ever;
> The judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether.
> More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold. (7-10.)

—a passage in which the style of the poem matches the splendour of its thought.

THE second book of the Psalter (Psalms xlii–lxxii) is distinguished by the almost exclusive use of Elohim (God) in place of Jehovah (the Lord) which, as we have seen, is characteristic of the first book. One Psalm in this collection is ascribed to Solomon (lxxii), and a group, Psalms xlii–xlix, are entitled Psalms of the sons of Korah, probably a guild of singers at the time of the second Temple. Most of the Psalms in this collection have the inscription "To the chief musician," an indication that these Psalms were closely connected with the liturgical worship of the Temple. It is likely that they belonged to a group known as "The Precentor's Collection."

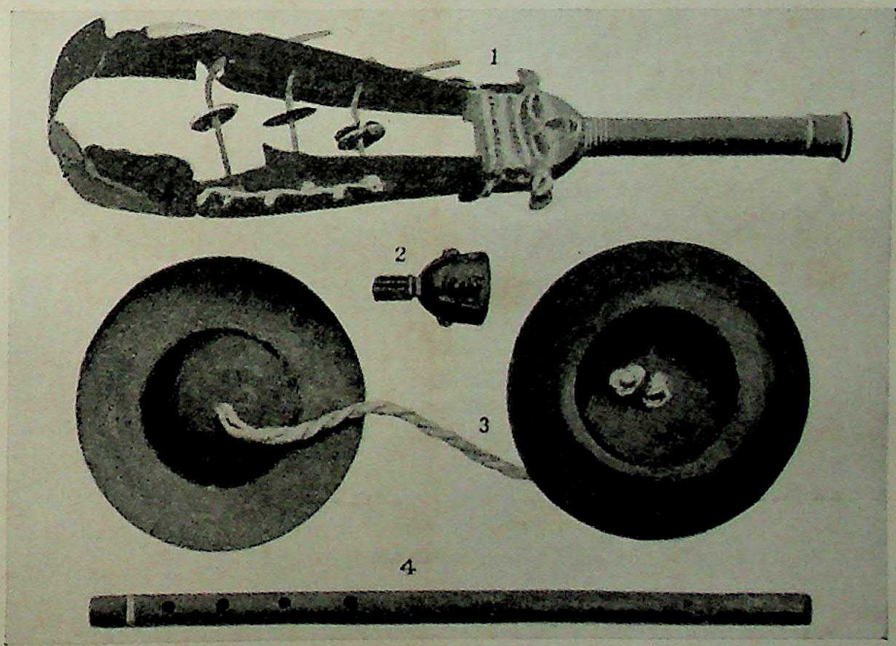
Here we note many Psalms which are prayers for help and deliverance. So Psalm li, 1-12 is a moving expression of penitence and a plea for pardon: Psalm liv prays for deliverance from powerful and bitter foes (cf. Psalms lv and lvi). Again and again we hear the Psalmists' strong confidence in God, so beautifully expressed in Psalm xlvi:

> God is our refuge and strength,
> A very present help in trouble.
> Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed,
> And though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea;
>
> The LORD of Hosts is with us;
> The God of Jacob is our refuge.

It is not always easy to distinguish between Psalms which are personal and those which have a national significance, but two examples of national supplication may be quoted. Psalm xliv is to be interpreted against the background of national distress. Some think that the Psalm depicts the situation of Israel under Antiochus Epiphanes, who polluted the Temple with heathen sacrifice; others that an earlier date is demanded, the period of Hezekiah when the land was suffering from the Assyrian invasion. The Psalm begins by recounting the deliverances which God wrought for His people in olden time.

> We have heard with our ears, O God,
> Our fathers have told us,
> What work thou didst in their days,
> In the times of old,
> How thou didst drive out the heathen with thy hand.

Then the writer claims that the people's trust in God is still complete. They have been faithful to their part of the covenant and have not "stretched out hands to any strange god." Yet God seems to have forsaken them and left them to the mercy of cruel



"PRAISE HIM WITH STRINGED INSTRUMENTS . . AND CYMBALS." The doxology which closes the Psalter is a majestic invitation to praise God with music in His sanctuary. From the time of David musical services were conducted. The harp played was a small portable one, much like that seen on the left in the photograph of an Egyptian painted wooden figure of the 13th century B.C. The other Egyptian instruments shown are also similar to those used by the Hebrews: the sistrum (1) or rattle; (2) bell; (3) cymbals, clashed together "with high sounding" clang, and (4) flute, simplest form of wind instrument. Another favourite instrument was the psaltery, a primitive ten-stringed violin.

British Museum

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enemies. The Psalm closes with an urgent plea for God's help.

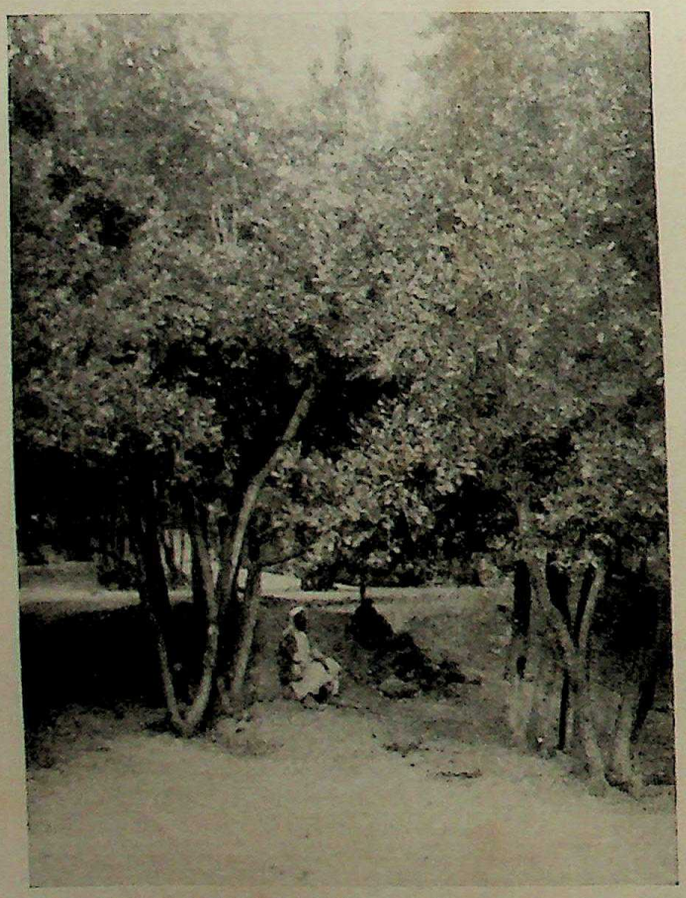
Awake, why sleepest thou, O LORD ?
Arise, cast us not off for ever.
Wherefore hidest thou thy face,
And forgettest our affliction and our oppression ?
For our soul is bowed down to the dust :
Our belly cleaveth unto the earth.
Arise for our help,
And redeem us for thy mercies' sake.

Psalm lx was composed in the gloom following a great national disaster. The very earth seemed to be shaken by the calamities which had come upon the Jews.

Thou hast made the earth to tremble ;
Thou hast broken it :
Heal the breaches thereof ; for it shaketh.
Thou hast shewed thy people hard things :
Thou hast made us to drink the wine of astonishment.
Thou hast given a banner to them that fear thee.

Whatever this disaster may have been it did not extinguish their faith in God, for the Psalm magnificently closes on the words :

Give us help from trouble :
For vain is the help of man.
Through God we shall do valiantly :
For he it is that shall tread down our enemies.



"GREEN BAY TREE." The flourishing prosperity of the wicked is compared in Psalm xxxvii, 35, to the spreading of a green bay tree. A pleasant retreat in the shade of such trees is pictured. Some commentators, however, prefer the rendering of the Septuagint: "rising like the cedars of Lebanon"; while the Revised Version has "spreading himself like a green tree in its native soil," and names no species.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

Strong in this section of the Psalter is the emphasis on thanksgiving. Psalm xlvii echoes the refrain "Sing praises to God, sing praises," and the nations of the earth are invited to join in this rejoicing :

O clap your hands, all ye people ;
Shout unto God with the voice of triumph.
For the LORD most high is terrible ;
He is a great King over all the earth.

Psalm xlviii is a lyric in praise of God's deliverance of His people (probably from Sennacherib) and in thanksgiving for the wonder and stability of Zion.

Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised
In the city of our God, in the mountain of his holiness.
Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth,
Is mount Zion . . . .
We have thought of Thy lovingkindness, O God,
In the midst of thy temple.
According to thy name, O God,
So is thy praise unto the ends of the earth.

Psalm lxvi celebrates a great deliverance, the first twelve verses suggesting national, and the last eight personal gratitude.

Come and see the works of God :
He is terrible in his doing toward the children of men.
He turned the sea into dry land :
They went through the river on foot :
There did we rejoice in him . . . .
O bless our God, ye people,
And make the voice of his praise to be heard.

I will go into thy house with burnt offerings :
I will pay thee my vows . . .
Come and hear, all ye that fear God,
And I will declare what He hath done for my soul.

Psalm lxviii, one of the greatest in the whole collection, presents God as the leader of His people through peril into victory. The Psalmist reviews the wonders of the Exodus, the wilderness wanderings, the entry into Canaan and the choice of Zion as God's abode, all in language of sustained beauty, ending on a call to praise. Verses 24-27 picture a procession to the Temple celebrating the glory of the conquering King, leading to a picture of the day when all kings shall pay Him homage.

Ascribe ye strength unto God :
His excellency is over Israel,
And his strength is in the clouds.
O God, thou art terrible out of thy holy places :
The God of Israel is he that giveth strength and power unto his people.
Blessed be God.

Finally, we may notice Psalm lxv, a hymn of praise unto God for the blessings of a fruitful earth.

Thou crownest the year with thy goodness ;
And thy paths drop fatness.
They drop upon the pastures of the wilderness :
And the little hills rejoice on every side.
The pastures are clothed with flocks ;
The valleys also are covered over with corn ;
They shout for joy, they also sing.

Some of the Psalms in Book Two reflect a great affection for the Temple. Psalms xlii and xliii, for example, breathe the spirit of devotion to the sanctuary.

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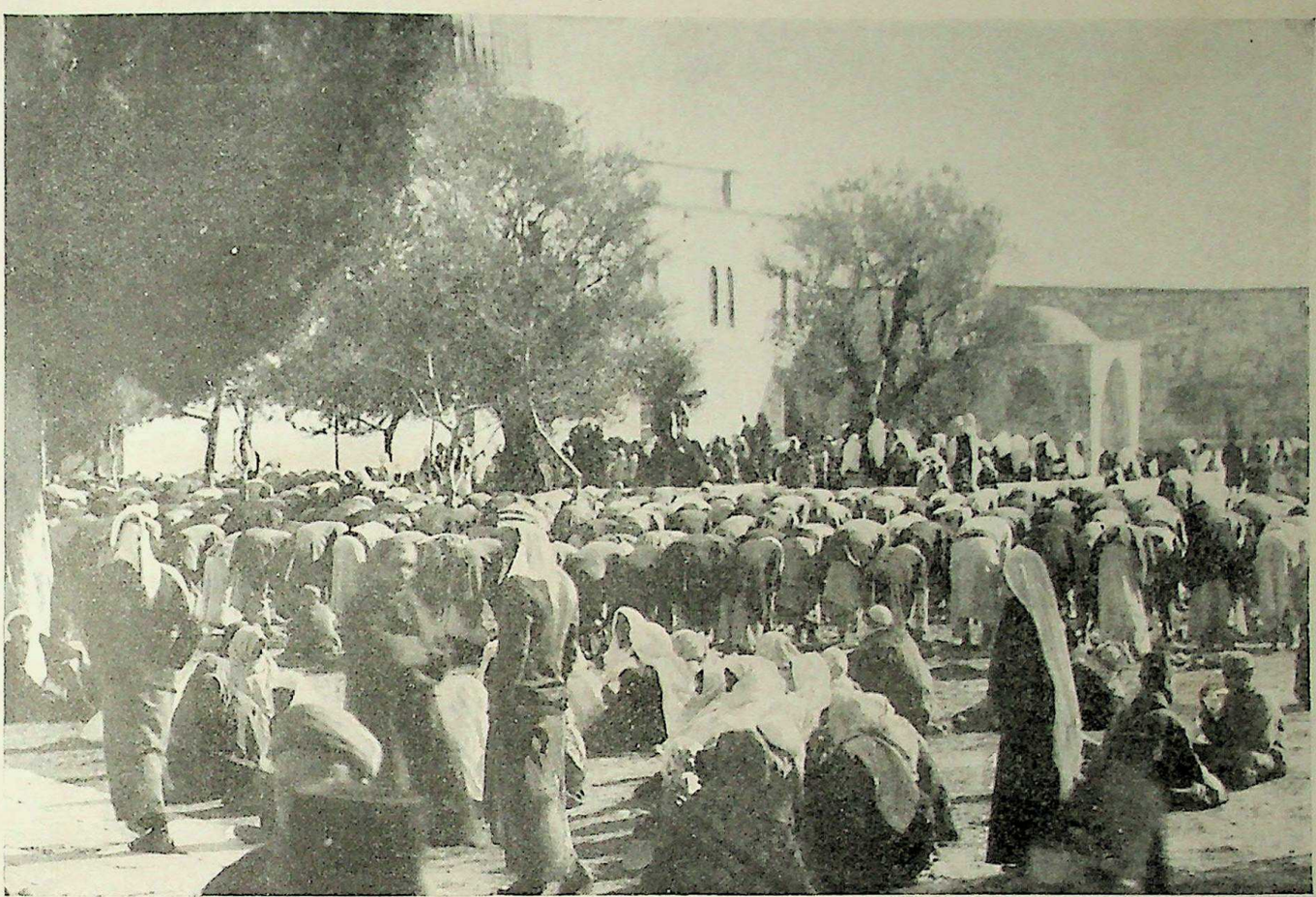

"O COME, LET US WORSHIP AND BOW DOWN." Finding the Jerusalem mosques overcrowded at the hour of prayer, these Arab worshippers perform their religious rites outside the Dome of the Rock on the Temple Area. The sacred precincts in "the city of God" are revered by Christian, Jew and Moslem. Looking at this scene, the words of Psalm xcv are recalled, with its invitation to enter the sanctuary of prayer and praise with joyful thanksgiving and its warning from the past history of Israel: "Harden not your heart, as in the provocation, And as in the day of temptation in the wilderness."

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

In xlii, 1-5 an exile recalls happy memories of worship in the Temple, and in the Psalm following there is a fervent prayer for the restoration of God's shrine:

O send out thy light and thy truth: let them lead me;
Let them bring me unto thy holy hill,
And to thy tabernacles.
Then will I go unto the altar of God,
Unto God my exceeding joy.

But there are indications here and there of an attitude which exalts the piety of the heart rather than external forms of worship. The thirst of the soul for the living God (xlii, 1, 2) demands something more than the beauty of the Temple worship. Psalm l declares that God looks to conduct rather than ritual (echoing the teaching of Psalm xl, 6f). God is pictured as coming to judgement to investigate the real nature of the worship rendered to Him by His people. The sacrifice of animals is not condemned, but many of the sacrifices are considered unworthy of God, and the spirituality of true worship is emphasized.

Will I eat the flesh of bulls, or drink the blood of goats?
Offer unto God the sacrifice of thanksgiving;
And pay thy vows unto the most High.

The Psalmist condemns those who, while engaging in ritual observances, hate correction or moral discipline, and who are themselves guilty of the sins of theft, adultery, falsehood and slander.

Now consider this, ye that forget God.
Whoso offereth the sacrifice of thanksgiving glorifieth Me:
And to him that ordereth his conversation aright
Will I shew the salvation of God.

This spiritual attitude is clearly summed up in the famous lines from Psalm li, 15f.

O LORD open thou my lips,
And my mouth shall shew forth thy praise.
For thou delightest not in sacrifice, else would I give it.
Thou delightest not in burnt offering.
The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit:
A broken and a contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise.

BOOK Three in the Psalter comprises two groups of Psalms, lxxiii–lxxxiii being described as Psalms of Asaph, while lxxxiv, lxxxv, lxxxvii, lxxxviii are called Psalms of the Sons of Korah. Like the Korahites, the Sons of Asaph were a guild of singers connected with the Temple (cf. II. Chronicles xx, 19; Ezra ii, 41; Nehemiah vii, 44). Psalm lxxiii, with which the Asaph group begins, deals with the problem of the prosperity of the wicked and the sufferings of the righteous, and in view of its suggestions on the question of immortality the consideration of it may well be deferred until we survey that hope in the Psalter as a whole. In general the Psalms of Asaph are national and historical, setting forth God's working in history and expressing the needs of the nation. The Psalms

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of the Sons of Korah have a special value through their exaltation of the Temple worship.

Here God is presented under the figure of the Shepherd: "we Thy people and the sheep of Thy pasture will give Thee thanks for ever" (Psalm lxxix, 13; cf. lxxiv, 1; lxxvii, 20; lxxx, 1); and as Judge. "God is the judge: He putteth down one and setteth up another" (lxxv, 7). He is the defender of His people (lxxvi, 3-6) and the vindicator of the poor(lxxxii). But it is the evidence of God in the working of Hebrew history that the Psalms contained in this group specially emphasize.

Psalm lxxiv is a plea to God to intervene on behalf of His people. His people are in a sorry plight, for heathen foes have invaded the land, brought Jerusalem to ruins, burnt the Temple and all the synagogues:

They have cast fire into thy sanctuary:
They have defiled by casting down the dwelling place of thy name to the ground
They said in their hearts, Let us destroy them together:
They have burnt up all the synagogues of God in the land.
We see not our signs:
There is no more any prophet:
Neither is there among us any that knoweth how long. (lxxiv, 7f.)

God's help is invoked because of what He has already done for the nation:

Remember thy congregation which thou hast purchased of old:
The rod of thine inheritance which thou hast redeemed;
This mount Zion, wherein thou hast dwelt. (lxxiv, 2-3.)

For God is my King of old,
Working salvation in the midst of the earth.
Thou didst divide the sea by thy strength:
Thou brakest the heads of the dragons in the waters.
Thou brakest the heads of leviathan in pieces
And gavest him to be meat to the people inhabiting the wilderness.
Thou didst cleave the fountain and the flood:

O deliver not the soul of thy turtledove unto the multitude of the wicked:
Forget not the congregation of thy poor for ever.
Have respect unto the covenant. (lxxiv, 12f.)

This reference to God's working in the past is brought out in some of the Psalms as a warning against apostasy. In a series of pictures we see God's mighty marvels, and the punishment inflicted on the people for their sins. So Psalm lxxviii recounts the wonders of the Exodus and the wilderness wanderings:

Marvellous things did he in the sight of their fathers,
In the land of Egypt, in the field of Zoan.
He divided the sea, and caused them to pass through:
And he made the waters to stand as an heap.
In the daytime also he led them with a cloud
And all the night with a light of fire.
He clave the rocks in the wilderness,
And gave them drink out of the great depths.
He brought streams also out of the rock,
And caused waters to run down like rivers. (lxxviii, 12f.)

In spite of such signal blessings the people forgot their Deliverer and were punished. God overlooked their sinfulness, yet again and again they forgot Him.

But he, being full of compassion, forgave their iniquity and destroyed them not:
Yea, many a time turned he his anger away,
And did not stir up all his wrath.
For he remembered that they were but flesh;
A wind that passeth away, and cometh not again.
How oft did they provoke him in the wilderness,
And grieve him in the desert! (lxxviii, 38f.)

In Canaan Israel was guilty of idolatry, provoking God to anger with their high places, and moving Him to jealousy by their graven images. It was on this account that God chose Judah instead of Israel, making Zion His sanctuary and David His king.

Moreover he refused the tabernacle of Joseph
And chose not the tribe of Ephraim:
But chose the tribe of Judah,
The mount Zion which he loved.
And he built his sanctuary like high palaces,
Like the earth which he hath established for ever. (lxxviii, 67f.)

Psalm lxxxi, which begins as a call to the people to keep festival, emphasizes in a similar way God's claim upon His people by reason of His gracious dealings with them. In spite of Israel's ingratitude and disobedience, blessings are promised if the people will turn again unto Him. It is on this note that the Psalm beautifully closes.

Oh that my people would hearken unto me,
And Israel would walk in my ways!
I should soon subdue their enemies,
And turn my hand against their adversaries.
The haters of the LORD should submit themselves unto him,
But their time should endure for ever.
He should feed them also with the finest of the wheat:
And with honey out of the rock should I satisfy thee.

Two psalms in this group, both entitled Psalms of the sons of Korah, beautifully depict the exaltation of Zion. Psalm lxxxiv is a pilgrim song. With the Psalmist we enter the Holy City and catch sight of the Hill of Zion. We hear him as he pours out his longing for the Temple.

My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the LORD:
My heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God.
Yea, the sparrow hath found an house,
And the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young,
Even thine altars, O LORD of hosts,
My King, and my God.

How happy are they who seek God in His Temple! They gain confidence, for they find the God Who, as His people pass through the glen of weariness, brings forth fountains for their refreshing.

For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand.
I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God,
Than to dwell in the tents of wickedness.

Psalm lxxxvii carries on this theme, praising Zion as the favoured city of God and looking forward to the day when she will be the metropolis of His kingdom throughout the world. It requires little imagination to realize how this Psalm would be sung with great fervour by Jews scattered under stress of persecution.

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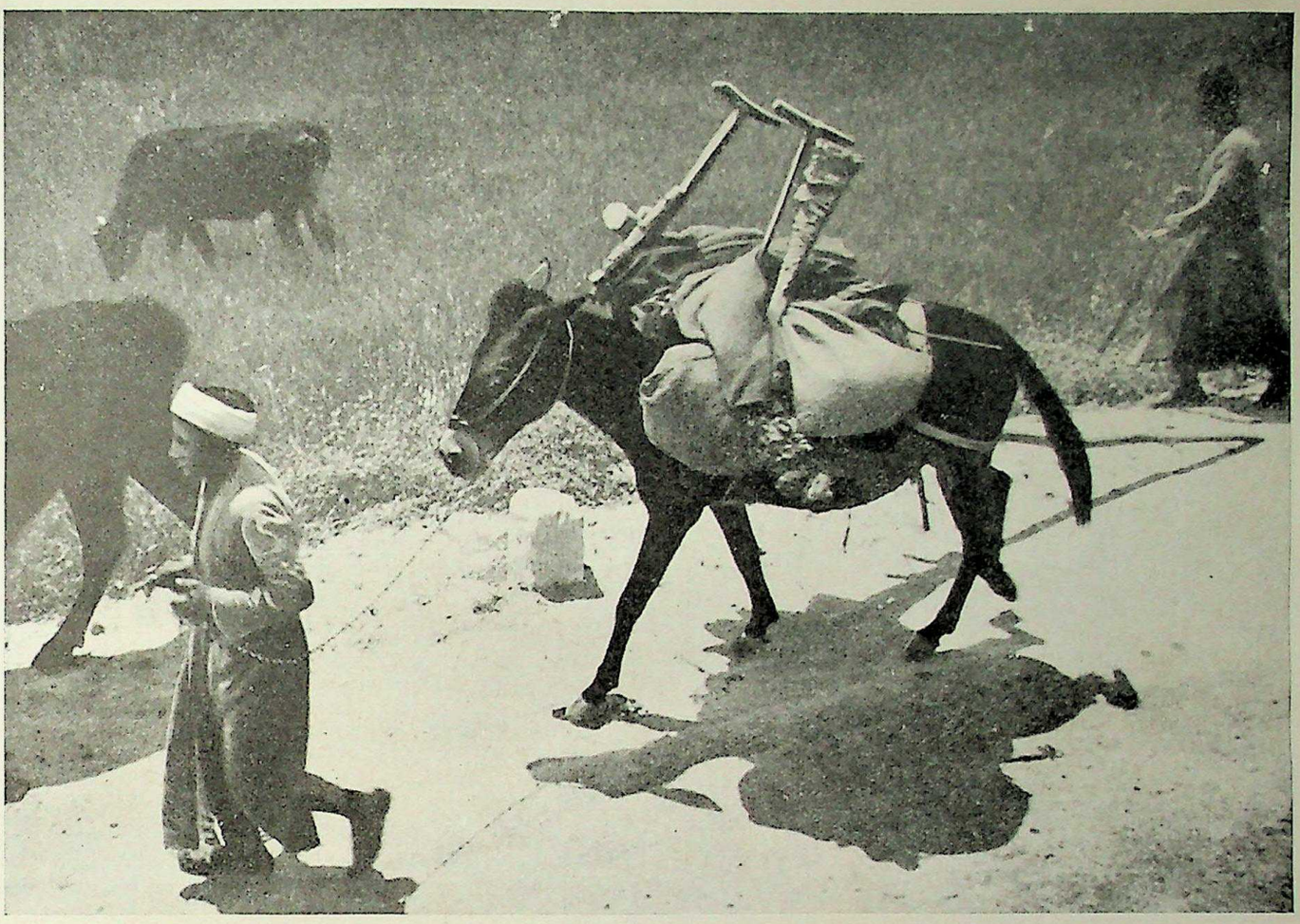

"LABOUR UNTIL THE EVENING." The mule carries the light plough of these tillers of the soil, homeward-bound with oxen liberated from the yoke after the day's toil. "Man goeth forth unto his work and to his labour until the evening," states verse 23 of that magnificent Creation hymn, Psalm civ. The culture of most arable land in Palestine has gone on unchanged since the words were written. Glorifying the Creator, the Hebrew poet stresses the thought in this psalm that all life is in and of God and concludes with a paean of praise affirming that "the Lord shall rejoice in his works."

Photo, Press Topics

From far-off lands they turned their eyes toward the city of their fathers and sang

Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God.

And of Zion it shall be said, This and that man was born in her :
And the highest himself shall establish her.
The LORD shall count, when he writeth up the people
That this man was born there.
As well the singers as the players on instruments shall be there.
(Singing) All my springs are in thee.

Before we leave this section of the Psalter mention should be made of Psalm lxxxviii, which has been described as the gloomiest of all the plaintive Psalms. Earlier in the Psalter we come across extreme depression (*e.g.*, Psalms vii, xxii, xxxi) but on this occasion no ray of light appears to break the gloom. The writer apparently is suffering from some dread disease which has afflicted him from his youth, possibly leprosy. Not only does this give him pain, but it also cuts him off from his friends. His life is more like a living death, and as he has no hope beyond the grave his condition seems beyond relief. Although he feels that his plight is due to the withdrawal of the divine favour he makes a pathetic appeal. A quotation from this Psalm (R.V.) will indicate how the psalmist's view needed enlightenment as regards both this life and life beyond the grave.

For my soul is full of troubles,
And my life draweth nigh unto Sheol.
I am counted with them that go down into the pit ;
I am as a man that hath no help :
Cast off among the dead,
Like the slain that lie in the grave,
Whom thou rememberest no more. . .
I have called daily upon thee, O LORD,
I have spread forth my hands unto thee.
Wilt thou shew wonders to the dead ?
Shall they that are deceased arise and praise thee ?
Shall thy lovingkindness be declared in the grave ?

BOOK Four of the Psalter (Psalms xc–cvi) is a group of songs which are mostly of a comparatively late date, references to the Temple worship indicating that sacrifice and public worship were once again possible in the restored sanctuary. There is a great emphasis on praise (xcv, 1 ; xcvi, 1 ; xcviii, 1), and offerings are to be made in the courts of the Temple (xcvi, 8). An interesting reference is that to the musical accompaniment of worship. "Sing praises unto the Lord with the harp, With the harp and the voice of melody, With trumpets and sound of cornet" (xcviii, 4f). In this group we find the penitential note, the language of some of the Psalms suggesting the national humiliation of the Exile. But the dominant theme is that of praise unto God, Who merits it on the ground of His compassion and lovingkindness, and His faithfulness to His people in time past.

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"SING UNTO THE LORD A NEW SONG." Music appeals strongly to most Orientals, but instruments as in Biblical days are played mainly to accompany the voice. On his primitive guitar the boy pictured, with fingers protected by a plectrum, thrums monotonously to enhance the simple melody of his song. The Eastern musical scale is defective and there is no symphony.

Photo, Nachum Gidal

Psalm xc declares that God is unchanging, the refuge of changing and erring men.

> LORD, thou hast been our dwelling place
> In all generations.
> Before the mountains were brought forth,
> Or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world,
> Even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God.

The unchanging character of God is emphasized by contrast with the frailty of human life.

> The days of our years are threescore years and ten ;
> And if by reason of strength they be fourscore years,
> Yet is their strength labour and sorrow,
> For it is soon cut off, and we fly away.

His majesty was seen in creation. Psalm civ is a poetical version of the Genesis creation story.

> O LORD my God, thou art very great ;
> Thou art clothed with honour and majesty :
> Who coverest thyself with light as with a garment :
> Who stretchest out the heavens like a curtain :
> Who layeth the beams of his chambers in the waters :
> Who maketh the clouds his chariot :
> Who walketh upon the wings of the wind :
> Who maketh his angels spirits ;
> His ministers a flaming fire :
> Who laid the foundations of the earth,
> That it should not be removed for ever.

The Psalm expresses wonder at the variety of God's works and the wisdom they show, and gives a description of the sea and its occupants.

> The earth is full of thy riches.
> So is this great and wide sea,
> Wherein are things creeping innumerable,
> Both small and great beasts
> There go the ships :
> There is that leviathan whom thou hast made to play therein.

Psalm cv summons the people to the praise of Jehovah on account of His faithfulness to His covenant, and recounts His guidance of His people through the dangers of the Exodus and the wilderness wanderings.

For the worthy worship of such a Creator and Preserver a group of Psalms was composed (xcii–c), and according to the Talmud there was one for each day of the week. Psalm xcii, for example, was for use on the sabbath. It calls for praise to God on account of what He has done, and predicts the ultimate ruin of the wicked and the final triumph of the righteous. The important feature of these praises is their exaltation of God as king. Clearly they were inspired by some signal deliverance, probably the deliverance from the Babylonian exile. God had shown His wondrous sovereignty by rescuing His people and enabling them to restore both their city and their sanctuary.

> O come, let us sing unto the LORD,
> Let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation.
> Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving.
> Let us make a joyful noise unto him with psalms.
> For the LORD is a great God,
> And a great King above all gods. (xcv, 1f.)

He alone is worthy of worship. The nations and the earth are called upon to serve Him and declare His sovereignty.

> Tremble before him, all the earth.
> Say among the nations, the LORD reigneth. (xcvi, 9f.)

> Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice ;
> Let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof ;
> Let the field exult, and all that is therein ;
> Then shall all the trees of the wood sing for joy.
> (xcvi, 11f.)

Unhappily, such wonderful manifestations of God's care for His people were not always acknowledged in Israel's life, and the note of contrition, which is a feature of so many of the Psalms, is expressed in Psalm cvi, which surveys Hebrew history from Abraham to Joshua.

> We have sinned with our fathers,
> We have committed iniquity, we have done wickedly,
> . . . . . .
> They soon forgat his works ;
> They waited not for his counsel :
> But lusted exceedingly in the wilderness,
> And tempted God in the desert.
> . . . .
> (They) mingled themselves with the nations,
> And learned their works :
> And they served their idols,
> Which became a snare unto them. (cvi, 6, 13-14, 35-36 R.V.)

In spite of this deep consciousness of national ingratitude the Psalmists' belief in the lovingkindness of God is so strong that even a Psalm of contrition can end on a note of doxology. If only God's people are repentant they will find Him abundant in mercy. This sublime confidence is beautifully expressed in Psalm xci, beginning

> He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High
> Shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.

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"I AM TOSSED UP AND DOWN AS THE LOCUST." From Jerusalem were photographed these myriads of locusts, black speckles on the evening sky. They are tossed about before the wind in the manner which supplied the author of Psalm cix with his metaphor descriptive of the anguished uncertainty to which he had been reduced by the wickedness of his enemies. Remote from the spirit of Christianity is the theme of cursing which finds expression in this Psalm. By verse 23—in which the simile of the locust occurs—fierce imprecations have given way to prayer for rescue. The first person singular is often used in Psalms as a personification of the nation. The inference in this case is, however, uncertain.

Photo. H. J. Shepstone

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and rising to great heights in the closing verses:

Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him:
I will set him on high, because he hath known my name.
He shall call upon me, and I will answer him:
I will be with him in trouble;
I will deliver him, and honour him.
With long life will I satisfy him
And shew him my salvation.

In words which have become famous Psalm ciii exults in the tender mercy of God.

Bless the LORD, O my soul,
And forget not all his benefits:
Who forgiveth all thine iniquities;
Who healeth all thy diseases;
Who redeemeth thy life from destruction;
Who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies;
Who satisfieth thy mouth with good things;
So that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's.

BEARDED LIKE A SON OF AARON. The swarthy-complexioned Yemenite Jews of Southern Arabia claim descent from the tribe of Gad. Long side curls and beards untrimmed at the corners are worn by the men in obedience to the laws which originally concerned the priestly sons of Aaron (Leviticus xxi, 5). Much perfumed oil is used to keep the hair glossy, recalling the words of Psalm cxxxiii, 1, 2, in which the pleasantness of brethren dwelling in unity is likened to "the precious ointment upon the head, That ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard."

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

One Psalm in this collection may be noted as showing similarity with the kind of teaching more familiar in the Book of Proverbs. Psalm ci is the vow of a ruler to conduct himself and his kingdom in the right way. The main point of this Psalm is that the ruler sets before himself a high standard which he also expects in others. Thus he declares his own intentions.

I will behave myself wisely in a perfect way.
I will walk within my house with a perfect heart.
I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes.
A froward heart shall depart from me.
I will know no evil thing.

His requirements in his subjects are set forth in this declaration of his policy.

Whoso privily slandereth his neighbour, him will I cut off:
Him that hath an high look and a proud heart will not I suffer.
Mine eyes shall be upon the faithful of the land,
That they may dwell with me:
He that walketh in a perfect way, he shall serve me.
He that worketh deceit shall not dwell within my house.
He that telleth lies shall not tarry in my sight

THE last book of the Psalter (Psalms cvii–cl), which seems originally to have been joined with Book Four, abounds in references to the thought and experience of the Exilic and post-Exilic periods. Many of these Psalms have a liturgical character, bearing traces of having been composed for public worship. Psalm cxv, for instance, was composed for use in the Temple. It requires little imagination to hear the congregation singing (perhaps in the antiphonal style with two sets of singers, singing alternate lines)

O Israel, trust thou in the LORD:
He is their help and their shield.
O house of Aaron, trust in the LORD:
He is their help and their shield.
Ye that fear the LORD, trust in the LORD:
He is their help and their shield.

Similarly, Psalm cxviii (R.V.) lends itself to antiphonal singing.

O give thanks unto the LORD, for he is good:
For His mercy endureth for ever.
Let Israel now say
That His mercy endureth for ever.
Let the house of Aaron now say
That His mercy endureth for ever.

Psalm cxxxvi takes up the same refrain, declaring God's care for His people both in creation and in history, and calling upon the people to praise Him, "for His mercy endureth for ever." But even in these congregational hymns we occasionally detect the expression of personal piety.

What shall I render unto the LORD
For all His benefits toward me?
I will take the cup of salvation
And call upon the name of the LORD.
I will pay my vows unto the LORD
Yea, in the presence of all His people. (cxvi, 12f. R.V.)

A number of Psalms in this group, obviously owing their existence to liturgical needs, are distinguished by their note of praise. Psalms cxlvi–cl all begin and end with the same formula "Praise ye the Lord." They have similarity in language and form, as well as theme.

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"A JOYFUL MOTHER OF CHILDREN." After school hours the children, with smiling faces, pour out into the sunshine eager to go home. Young mothers wait to collect the infants. In Palestine a dual system of education exists on a racial basis. One system is maintained for Arabic-speaking children, the other for Jewish children. Many of the latter are supported by the Zionist Organization. The headquarters of the Government Department of Education is in Jerusalem and includes an inspectorate for Arabic and Jewish elementary and public school systems. In addition there are good Christian schools.

Photo, "Daily Mirror"

Similarly, Psalms cxiii–cxviii are "Hallelujah" songs. Taken together these celebrate the goodness and greatness of God as revealed both in nature and in great historic deliverances. As an example of this theme of praise we may quote Psalm cvii (R.V.), remarkable for its vivid imagery.

Beginning with a summons to give thanks unto God the Psalm proceeds to describe in detail four different kinds of need, and how in each case God hears the cry for help. Thus travellers who have lost their way in the wilderness and the desert cry unto God.

They wandered in the wilderness in a desert way;
They found no city of habitation.
Hungry and thirsty,
Their soul fainted in them.
Then they cried unto the LORD in their trouble,
And he delivered them out of their distresses.
He led them also by a straight way,
That they might go to a city of habitation.

Then we have the cry of men imprisoned because they defied God.

Such as sat in darkness and in the shadow of death,
Being bound in affliction and iron;
Because they rebelled against the words of God,
And contemned the counsel of the Most High:
Therefore he brought down their heart with labour:
They fell down, and there was none to help.
Then they cried unto the LORD in their trouble,
And he saved them out of their distresses.

Similarly, men afflicted by God on account of their sins, men whose souls abhor all manner of meat and who draw near to the gates of death, find an answer to their petitions. Finally, in this section of the Psalm, we have a description of men in peril on the sea.

They that go down to the sea in ships,
That do business in great waters;
These see the works of the LORD,
And his wonders in the deep.
For he commandeth, and raiseth the stormy wind,
Which lifteth up the waves thereof.
They mount up to the heaven, they go down
again to the depths;
Their soul melteth away because of trouble.
They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man,
And are at their wits' end.
Then they cry unto the LORD in their trouble,
And he bringeth them out of their distresses.
He maketh the storm a calm,
So that the waves thereof are still.
Then are they glad because they be quiet;
So he bringeth them unto the haven where they
would be.

These signal deliverances prompt the cry:

Oh that men would praise the LORD for his goodness,
And for his wonderful works to the children of men!
Let them exalt him also in the assembly of the people,
And praise him in the seat of the elders.

By contrast to these songs of exultation we may notice a little gem, Psalm cxxxvii. Written late enough after the Exile to allow for its tragic experiences, this Psalm recalls the days when the Jews in Babylon

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were asked to sing and play. But how could they sing under such conditions ?

By the rivers of Babylon,
There we sat down, yea, we wept
When we remembered Zion.
Upon the willows in the midst thereof
We hanged up our harps.
For there they that led us captive required of us songs,
And they that wasted us required of us mirth, saying,
Sing us one of the songs of Zion.
How shall we sing the LORD's song
In a strange land ?

The Psalm closes on a strong vindictive note, for vengeance is invoked on Edom and Babylon. But not even the terrible ending :

O daughter of Babylon, that art to be destroyed ;
Happy shall he be, that rewardeth thee
As thou hast served us.
Happy shall he be that taketh and dasheth thy little ones
Against the rock

can eradicate the pathetic beauty of the beginning. To read this, and others of the imprecatory Psalms, is to realize that the Hebrews had to travel far before they reached the conception of forgiveness as it is set forth in the Gospels. There is no point to be gained by dwelling on the note of fierce vengeance that is scattered through some of the poems in the Psalter, though we may note that such imprecations are to be found in Psalms lviii, lxix, lxxxiii and cix.

Psalms cxx–cxxxiv form a group by themselves. They have been described as "brief, bright and beautiful." Each is entitled "A Song of the going up." It is thought that these fifteen songs were sung by bands of pilgrims who came to Jerusalem for the great annual feasts. They speak of the pilgrims' joy when invited to attend the feast, and abound in expressions of the faith and confidence in God that are the marks of personal religion. With what joy the pilgrims approached the hill of Zion !

I was glad when they said unto me,
Let us go unto the house of the LORD.
Our feet are standing
Within thy gates, O Jerusalem :
Jerusalem that art builded
As a city that is compact together. (cxxii, 1f, R.V.)

WHAT sublime confidence in God these poems reveal ! One of them, famous in Christian appreciation, sings of God as Israel's guardian ; it is quoted in full in page 584.

The safety of God's people is beautifully expressed in Psalm cxxv (R.V.)

They that trust in the LORD
Are as mount Zion, which cannot be moved but abideth for ever.
As the mountains are round about Jerusalem
So the LORD is round about his people
From this time forth and for evermore

Psalm cxxxiii (R.V.) expresses the beauty of brotherly fellowship.

Behold, how good and pleasant it is
For brethren to dwell together in unity !
It is like the precious oil upon the head,
That ran down upon the beard,
Even Aaron's beard ;
That came down upon the skirt of his garments ;
Like the dew of Hermon,
That cometh down upon the mountains of Zion :
For there the LORD commanded the blessing,
Even life for evermore.

Before we leave this section we may notice part of Psalm cxxxv (R.V.), which pictures the transcendence of God by contrast with the helplessness of heathen deities.

The idols of the nations are silver and gold,
The work of men's hands.
They have mouths, but they speak not ;
Eyes have they, but they see not ;
They have ears, but they hear not ;
Neither is there any breath in their mouths.
They that make them shall be like unto them.

All we can say is, that if the pilgrims approached the hill of Zion in the frame of mind indicated by these songs their souls were well prepared for the worship of the sanctuary.

PSALM cxix, consisting of 176 verses, is a collection of short sayings which declare the beauty of God's word, and the happiness that comes to those who study it and apply it in their lives. It is arranged alphabetically with twenty-two stanzas corresponding to the twenty-two consonants in the Hebrew alphabet. In theme this Psalm is reminiscent of Psalm xix. In the latter Psalm eight different terms were used to describe the revealed word of God : Law, admonition, word, precept, statute, command, ordinance, saying. Psalm cxix (here quoted from the R.V.) incorporates all these terms in each of the twenty-two stanzas which compose it. As we might expect, there is some repetition, but in spite of the artificial construction of the verses the teaching is clear and forceful. It includes not only expressions of the beauty and value of the Word of God, but also petitions for strength with which to follow it.

The keynote is :

Blessed are they that are perfect in the way,
Who walk in the law of the LORD.
Blessed are they that keep his testimonies,
That seek him with the whole heart.

God's law is the way for youth.

Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way ?
By taking heed thereto according to thy word.

It gives comfort in distress, promotes unselfishness and godly fear, and is the source of the highest wisdom.

I have more understanding than all my teachers . . .
I understand more than the aged,
Because I have kept thy precepts.
I have refrained my feet from every evil way
That I might observe thy word.

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It gives light and joy; is a lamp unto the feet and a light upon the path. It is pure and just, and abides because it is the reflection of the eternal nature of God.

For ever, O LORD,
Thy word is settled in heaven.
Thy faithfulness is unto all generations.
Thou hast established the earth, and it abideth.
They abide this day according to thine ordinances;
For all things are thy servants

One Psalm in this section calls for special notice on account of its emphasis on the omniscience and omnipresence of God. That He knows all is shown by His knowledge of human life in all its aspects.

O LORD, Thou hast searched me and known me.
Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising.
Thou understandest my thoughts afar off.
Thou searchest out my path and my lying-down,
And art acquainted with all my ways.
For there is not a word in my tongue,
But lo, O LORD, Thou knowest it altogether.
Thou hast beset me behind and before,
And laid thine hand upon me
Such knowledge is too wonderful for me:
It is high, I cannot attain unto it. (cxxxix, 1f, R.V.)

Then follows a description of God's presence everywhere:

Whither shall I go from thy spirit?
Or whither shall I flee from thy presence?
If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there;
If I make my bed in Sheol, behold, thou art there.
If I take the wings of the morning,
And dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea,
Even there shall thy hand lead me,
And thy right hand shall hold me. (R.V.)

Book Five closes, as do all the Books of the Psalter, with a doxology. This closing Psalm is most impressive; it is quoted in full on page 584.

In our survey of the Psalms two questions have been left to the end: the presence of the Messianic Hope in the Psalter, and the possibility of references to the idea of immortality. Both these topics fall more properly within the article dealing with the theological teaching of the Psalter, but some notice may here be taken of Psalms in which the two ideas may be considered to be present.

READERS of the Psalms cannot fail to notice frequent references to a glorious future which stands out by contrast with the tribulations of the present When the national life was at its lowest ebb both the Psalmists and those who sang their songs were sustained by a hope that never failed them. God will vindicate both Himself and His people. Psalm xciii, for instance, sings of the glorious reign of God.

The LORD reigneth: He is apparelled with majesty:
The LORD is apparelled: He hath girded Himself with strength. (R.V.)

Psalm xcvi, as we have seen, calls upon all nations to praise God Who is the universal king. The sovereignty of God assures a glorious future for His people. Just as He had wrought wonders for them in the past, so He would reward the righteous. The future will be rich in temporal blessings for Israel, for Zion and the cities of Judah will be built again. There will be

BY THE WATERS OF BABYLON. Rising in the Caucasus, the Euphrates widens to a considerable river in Syria and Upper Mesopotamia, but has lost importance near ancient Babylon owing to much diversion into canals for irrigation purposes. When, however, its waters are seen through an opalescent haze shot with the afterglow of sunset, the effect—looking in the direction of the ruins of that city once "the Chaldean's pride"—is beautiful enough to bring thoughts of Psalm cxxxvii, lament of the exiled Hebrews. "By the rivers of Babylon, There we sat down, yea, we wept, When we remembered Zion."

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

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spiritual blessings, too. Psalm lxxxv gives a memorable picture of the glory of the time to come.

> Mercy and truth are met together;
> Righteousness and peace have kissed each other.
> Truth springeth out of the earth;
> And righteousness hath looked down from heaven. (R.V.)

Some of the Psalms link this expectation with a king of David's line. Psalm ii, for example, pictures a king who, as God's anointed, is threatened by rebel princes. But they are warned that such rebellion is folly, inasmuch as the dominion of God's anointed rests upon the covenant made by God. Whether the reference here is to a personal ruler or, as some think, to the nation, we are left in no doubt in the case of Psalm lxxxix. Here the divine covenant with David is recalled (cf. II. Samuel vii).

> I have made a covenant with my chosen,
> I have sworn unto David my servant.
> Thy seed will I establish for ever,
> And build up thy throne to all generations.

Psalm lxxii develops this theme, giving us an ideal picture of God's vice-regent on earth. He is to rule from the Euphrates to the ends of the earth. All men are to be blessed in him, while the poor and needy are to be the special objects of his care.

> The kings of Tarshish and the isles shall bring presents:
> The kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts.
> Yea, all kings shall fall down before him:
> All nations shall serve him.
> For he shall deliver the needy when he crieth,
> And the poor, that hath no helper. (R.V.)

WHILE it is necessary to bear in mind that the outlook of the Psalmists was predominantly national, it is a sure instinct that has led Christian thinkers to see in some of these ancient poems descriptions which find their true fulfilment in Jesus Christ. It would be untrue to say that the Old Testament had arrived at the conception of a suffering Messiah in the sense in which, from the Christian point of view, we understand that term. Yet we cannot help regarding the beautiful description of suffering in Psalm xxii as fully realized in the Passion of Christ. The important feature of this Psalm is the extent of the blessing contemplated through the sufferings of God's servant. "All the families of the nations," and generations yet unborn, are to share in these blessings. The opening words of this Psalm, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" fell from our Lord's lips as He hung on the Cross, while the sufferings portrayed in the Psalm bear a close resemblance to Christ's sufferings before and during the Crucifixion.

In regard to the expectation of a future life, four passages in the Psalter demand attention. Sheol, as the abode of the departed, is often referred to in the Psalms (*e.g.*, Psalms xviii, 5; xxx, 3; xlix, 15f.; lv, 15; lxxxix, 48, etc.). In the early thought of the Hebrews the dead were conceived as existing beyond the grave, but there is little to attract in the pale and colourless idea of Sheol. This cheerless outlook was accepted so long as Israel's hope lay in the future of the family or the nation. But with the failure of the national expectation (involved in the destruction of the Judaean kingdom) and the rise of individualism Hebrew thought took a new direction. We cannot say that there is any *doctrine* of immortality in the Psalms, but we certainly find what may be called ventures of faith.

In Psalm xvi we have the suggestion that God will not abandon the soul of His servant to Sheol (often translated as hell in the A.V.), but will rescue him from the terrors of the grave, revealing to him the pleasures of life in His presence.

> For Thou wilt not leave my soul to Sheol;
> Neither wilt thou suffer thine holy one to see corruption.
> Thou wilt show me the path of life.
> In thy presence is fulness of joy:
> In thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore. (R.V.)

Psalm xvii, 15 expresses the confident belief

> As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness.
> I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness.

In this case everything depends on the interpretation of "when I awake." Possible interpretations are the awakening from sleep, from a night of sorrow, or from death. Many commentators hold that the awakening is to be understood as that from a night of sorrow and anxiety. Psalm xlix, 14f. contains a contrast between the lot of the wicked and that of the upright. Of the former it is said that "Death shall be their shepherd," but the hope of the righteous is expressed in the words:

> God will redeem my soul from the power of Sheol:
> For He shall receive me. (R.V.)

The most significant of these passages is Psalm lxxiii, 23f. (R.V.):

> Nevertheless, I am continually with thee:
> Thou hast holden my right hand.
> Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel
> And afterward receive me to glory.
> Whom have I in heaven but thee?
> And there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee.
> My flesh and my heart faileth:
> God is the strength of my heart and my portion for ever.

Amid the difficulties, both of text and of interpretation, in these passages, we may surely conclude that the Psalmists were making a great venture of faith, the basis of which lay in the idea of fellowship with God. Especially of Psalm lxxiii can it be said that the poet gives us "a strength of conviction of the reality of personal union with God, under which the thought of death, as it were, fades into the background and is ignored."

IT is fitting that our brief survey of the Psalms should end on this note. Often in tribulation and perplexity, the writers never lost their belief in the God Who had so signally blessed their race. And as we listen to them pouring forth their praises, yearnings and aspirations we can understand why through all the centuries the Psalter has played so great a part in the devotional life of the Christian Church.

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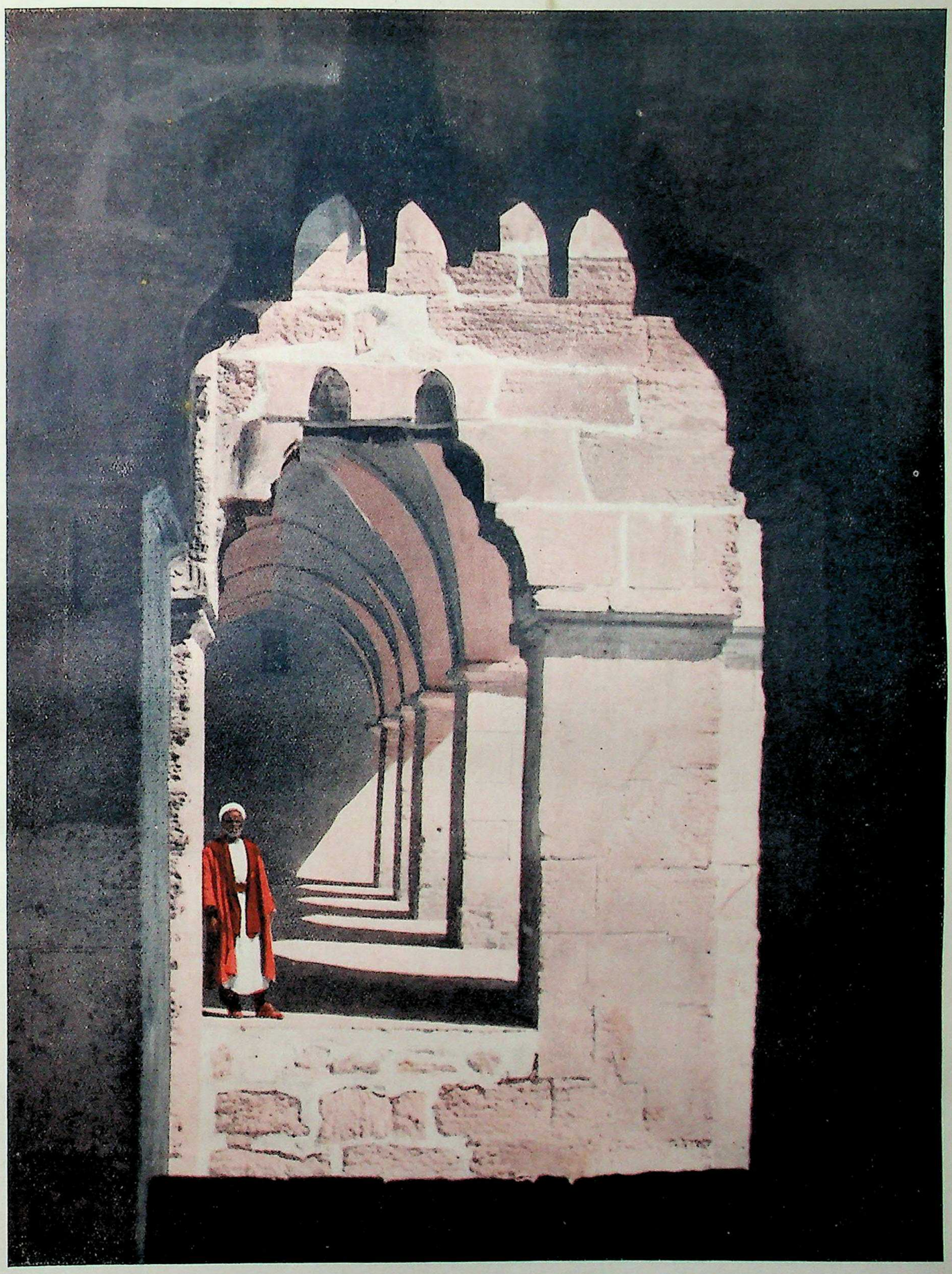

"ENTER INTO HIS . . . COURTS WITH PRAISE"

The cloisters pictured are on the west side of Jerusalem's Temple Area, near the Haram-esh-Sherif, noble sanctuary of the Moslems, precincts of the Dome of the Rock. Beautiful proportion and simplicity of decoration mark the elegant Saracenic design of this arched walk. The ancient site of the Temple and its courts is enclosed on the north and west by buildings and cloisters, and on the east and south by the city wall. This rocky platform probably has a longer continuity of living religious association than any other place in the world. Psalm c is a gracious invitation to all the inhabitants of the earth to come into the sanctuary of Zion and worship God.

Israel American Colony, Jerusalem

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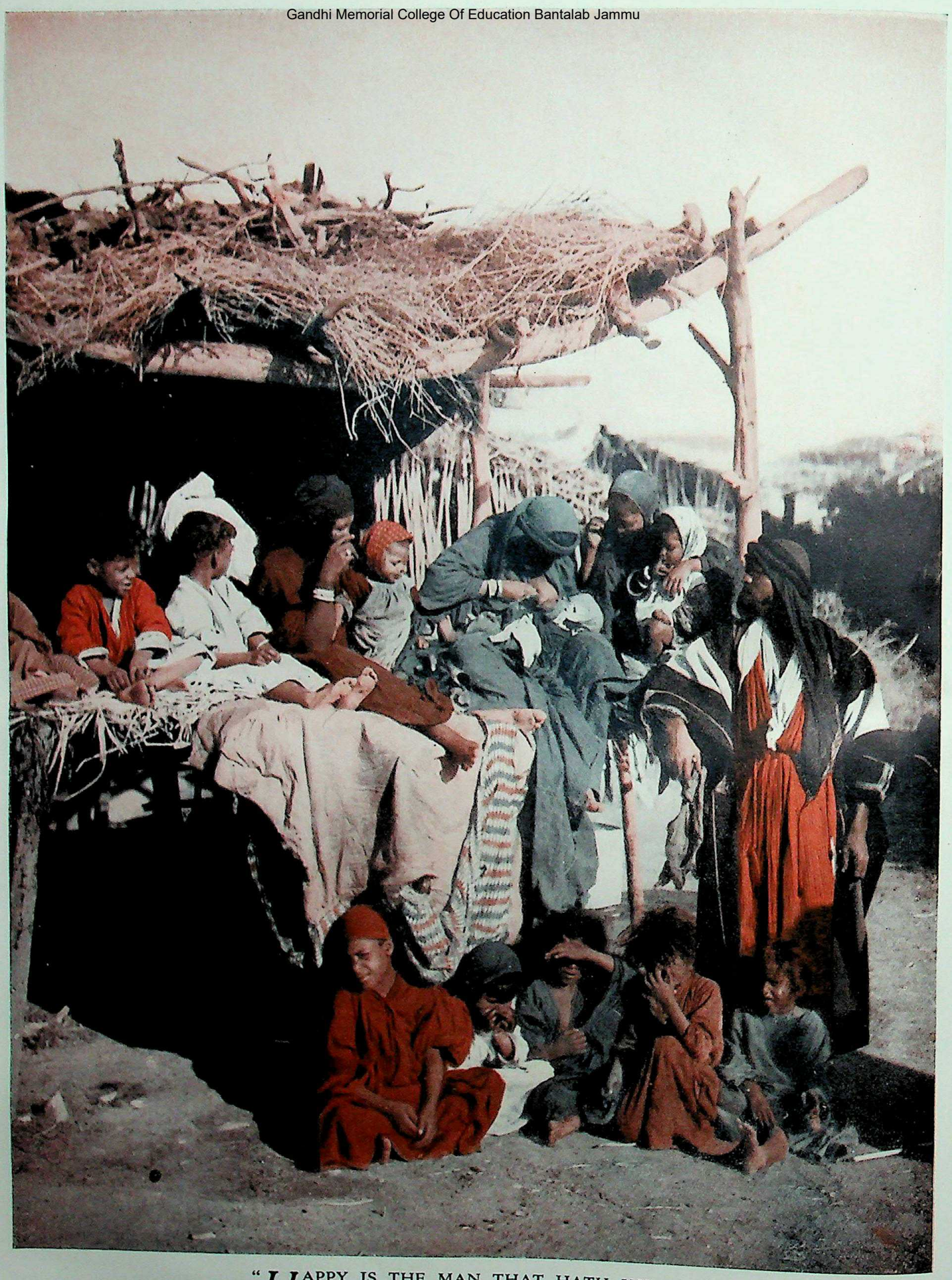

"HAPPY IS THE MAN THAT HATH HIS QUIVER FULL OF THEM"

The mother of all the children seen in this intimate view of home life at Jericho nurses the latest arrival. Her family of thirteen, however, is not large as families are reckoned among the dark-skinned Beduin of the district, where wives are as the "fruitful vine" (Psalm cxxviii, 3). Responsibility does not weigh heavily on the father of the family; life is too primitive. He can therefore rejoice with the psalmist: "As arrows in the hand of the mighty man, So are the children of youth" (Psalm cxxvii, 4, R.V.). These people, sleeping in crude shelters elevated like the one pictured as a protection from rats and prowling beasts, eke out an existence by the cultivation of fruit and cereals and the raising of sheep and goats.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

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"BLESSED IS HE THAT CONSIDERETH THE POOR"

In Palestine and Syria many beggars are to be seen by the roadside—among them the blind, lame and diseased, as in Biblical days. Despite recent systematic efforts to educate the people and improve living conditions there are still large numbers of unfortunates to be raised up " out of the dust " (Psalm cxiii, 7). Casual almsgiving, a virtue highly praised in the Old Testament, barely enables them to eke out a miserable existence. The barbed wire seen behind this beggar woman is in a way symbolical of her position as an undesirable and outcast. Villages and cultivated areas hedged about with such entanglements are a common sight in the troubled Syria of our time.

Photo, Keystone

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"AT THE BRIGHTNESS BEFORE HIM HIS THICK CLOUDS PASSED"

In that magnificent song of deliverance, Psalm xviii, ascribed to David (cf. II. Samuel xxii) but considered by scholars to be partly or wholly the work of a later writer or writers, a poetical description of a theophany or Divine descent for the purpose of rescue occurs in verses 3-12. Very lovely is the imagery of the light breaking through the storm clouds above the sea: "He made darkness his hiding place, his pavilion round about him; Darkness of waters, thick clouds of the skies. At the brightness before him his thick clouds passed" (verses 11. 12; R.V.).

The beautiful scene appropriately pictured above is of dawn on the Sea of Galilee.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

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LITERARY BEAUTY OF THE BIBLE. XVIII

Psalms of Prayer and Praise

APTLY described as the "very heart of the Bible," the Book of Psalms is the greatest anthology of religious lyrics in the world. Its composition extends over hundreds of years. The popular title, Psalms of David, is in accordance with a Hebrew literary custom which attributed authorship of a work to the most notable person connected with it, or famous exponent of the subject. That David was a poet of genius we know (*see* II. Samuel i). Psalms xix and xxiii are among those ascribed to him; the latter is by common consent the most beautiful hymn in any literature. The ideas expressed in it of God, as the Good Shepherd and as the Host in "the house of the Lord," are ones that would have come from the heart of the shepherd king, whose greatest, but unfulfilled, wish was to build the Temple.

THE literary glory of the Psalter is the wealth of imagery employed by its poets. Nature to the Hebrews was beneficent, sharing with man the joy of creation, but not the sorrows. Personification such as occurs in the line of Psalm xix describing the sun "as the bridegroom coming out of his chamber," gives great animation to the verses recording the primitive writer's observation of the sky and its wonders. Many of the Psalms are constructed for part-singing. Among these are the processional hymns, chanted by pilgrims going up to worship in Jerusalem. Psalm lxxxiv is one of the loveliest of these with its imagery of the sparrow and swallow. As the pilgrims near Jerusalem they traverse the Valley of Baca, or Weeping, so-called because it was the burial ground.

ANOTHER well-known song of pilgrimage, Psalm cxxi, belongs to a group in the Psalter of "songs of degrees" or "of ascent." The change of person after the opening four lines probably denotes that the hymn was sung in two parts. Of comparatively late date is Psalm cxxxvii, the poignant lament of captive Jews in Babylon. Its opening verses have a perpetual appeal to all in exile. The stately and musical doxology, Psalm cl, ends the Psalter. The other psalms from which selections are given below consist in the main of joyful praises of Divine Goodness and Majesty and of humble recognition of man's unworthiness and complete dependence upon Him Who is the Everlasting Lord.

GOD'S GLORY MANIFEST
Psalm xix, 1—6

THE heavens declare the glory of God;
And the firmament sheweth His handywork.
Day unto day uttereth speech, [ledge.
And night unto night sheweth know-
There is no speech nor language,
Where their voice is not heard. [earth,
Their line is gone out through all the
And their words to the end of the world.
In them hath He set a tabernacle for the sun, [his chamber,
Which is as a bridegroom coming out of
And rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race. [heaven,
His going forth is from the end of the
And his circuit unto the ends of it:
And there is nothing hid from the heat thereof.

THE GOOD SHEPHERD
Psalm xxiii

THE LORD is my shepherd;
I shall not want. [pastures;
He maketh me to lie down in green
He leadeth me beside the still waters.
He restoreth my soul:
He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake.
Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I will fear no evil: for Thou art with me;
Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me.

Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies:
Thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life:
And I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.

THE KING OF GLORY
Psalm xxiv

THE earth is the LORD'S, and the fulness thereof;
The world, and they that dwell therein.
For he hath founded it upon the seas,
And established it upon the floods.
Who shall ascend into the hill of the LORD?
Or who shall stand in his holy place?
He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; [vanity,
Who hath not lifted up his soul unto
Nor sworn deceitfully.
He shall receive the blessing from the LORD,
And righteousness from the God of his salvation.
This is the generation of them that seek him,
That seek thy face, O Jacob. Selah.
Lift up your heads, O ye gates;
And be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors;
And the King of glory shall come in.
Who is this King of glory?
The LORD strong and mighty,
The LORD mighty in battle.
Lift up your heads, O ye gates;
Even lift them up, ye everlasting doors;
And the King of glory shall come in,
Who is this King of glory?
The LORD of hosts,
He is the King of glory. Selah.

AS THE HART
Psalm xlii, 1—5, 11

AS the hart panteth after the water brooks,
So panteth my soul after thee, O God.
My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: [God?
When shall I come and appear before
My tears have been my meat day and night,
While they continually say unto me, Where is thy God?
When I remember these things, I pour out my soul in me:
For I had gone with the multitude, I went with them to the house of God.
With the voice of joy and praise, with a multitude that kept holyday.
Why art thou cast down, O my soul?
And why art thou disquieted in me?
Hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him
For the help of his countenance.
Why art thou cast down, O my soul?
And why art thou disquieted within me?
Hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him,
Who is the health of my countenance, and my God.

GIVE EAR, O GOD
Psalm lv, 1—2, 4—6

GIVE ear to my prayer, O God;
And hide not thyself from my supplication.
Attend unto me, and hear me: [noise;
I mourn in my complaint, and make a
My heart is sore pained within me:
And the terrors of death are fallen upon me.
Fearfulness and trembling are come upon me,
And horror hath overwhelmed me.
And I said, Oh that I had wings like a dove! [rest.
For then would I fly away, and be at

LET GOD ARISE
Psalm lxviii, 1—3

LET God arise, let his enemies be scattered: [him.
Let them also that hate him flee before
As smoke is driven away, so drive them away:
As wax melteth before the fire,
So let the wicked perish at the presence of God.
But let the righteous be glad;
Let them rejoice before God:
Yea, let them exceedingly rejoice.

TRUST IN THE LORD
Psalm lxxi, 1—5, 7—8

IN thee, O LORD, do I put my trust:
Let me never be put to confusion.
Deliver me in thy righteousness, and cause me to escape:
Incline thine ear unto me, and save me.
Be thou my strong habitation, whereunto I may continually resort:
Thou hast given commandment to save me;
For thou art my rock and my fortress.
Deliver me, O my God, out of the hand of the wicked, [cruel man.
Out of the hand of the unrighteous and
For thou art my hope, O Lord GOD:
Thou art my trust from my youth.
I am as a wonder unto many;
But thou art my strong refuge.
Let my mouth be filled with thy praise
And with thy honour all the day.

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PROCESSIONAL
Psalm lxxxiv, 1—4, 10—12

HOW amiable are Thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts!
My soul longeth, yea even fainteth for the courts of the Lord:
My heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God.
Yea, the sparrow hath found an house,
And the swallow a nest for herself,
Where she may lay her young,
Even Thine altars, O LORD of hosts,
My King, and my God.
Blessed are they that dwell in Thy house:
They will be still praising Thee. Selah.

For a day in Thy courts is better than a thousand.
I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God,
Than to dwell in the tents of wickedness.
For the LORD God is a sun and shield:
The LORD will give grace and glory:
No good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.
O LORD of hosts,
Blessed is the man that trusteth in Thee.

A TALE THAT IS TOLD
Psalm xc, 1—2, 4—10, 12

LORD, thou hast been our dwelling place
In all generations.
Before the mountains were brought forth,
Or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world,
Even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God.
For a thousand years in thy sight
Are but as yesterday when it is past,
And as a watch in the night.
Thou carriest them away as with a flood; they are as a sleep:
In the morning they are like grass which groweth up.
In the morning it flourisheth, and groweth up;
In the evening it is cut down, and withereth.
For we are consumed by thine anger,
And by thy wrath are we troubled.
Thou hast set our iniquities before thee,
Our secret sins in the light of thy countenance.
For all our days are passed away in thy wrath:
We spend our years as a tale that is told.
The days of our years are three-score years and ten;
And if by reason of strength they be fourscore years,
Yet is their strength labour and sorrow;
For it is soon cut off, and we fly away.
So teach us to number our days,
That we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.

JOYFUL NOISE
Psalm xcv

O COME, let us sing unto the LORD:
Let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation.
Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving,
And make a joyful noise unto him with psalms.
For the LORD is a great God,
And a great King above all gods.
In his hand are the deep places of the earth:
The strength of the hills is his also.
The sea is his, and he made it:
And his hands formed the dry land.
O come, let us worship, and bow down:
Let us kneel before the LORD our maker.
For he is our God:
And we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand.
To day if ye will hear his voice,
Harden not your heart, as in the provocation,
And as in the day of temptation in the wilderness:
When your fathers tempted me,
Proved me, and saw my work.
Forty years long was I grieved with this generation,
And said, It is a people that do err in their heart.
And they have not known my ways:
Unto whom I sware in my wrath
That they should not enter into my rest.

HEAR MY PRAYER
Psalm cii, 1—12

HEAR my prayer, O LORD,
And let my cry come unto thee.
Hide not thy face from me in the day when I am in trouble;
Incline thine ear unto me:
In the day when I call answer me speedily.
For my days are consumed like smoke,
And my bones are burned as an hearth.
My heart is smitten, and withered like grass;
So that I forget to eat my bread.
By reason of the voice of my groaning
My bones cleave to my skin.
I am like a pelican of the wilderness:
I am like an owl of the desert.
I watch, and am as a sparrow
Alone upon the house top.
Mine enemies reproach me all the day;
And they that are mad against me are sworn against me.
For I have eaten ashes like bread,
And mingled my drink with weeping,
Because of thine indignation and thy wrath:
For thou hast lifted me up, and cast me down.
My days are like a shadow that declineth;
And I am withered like grass.
But thou, O LORD, shalt endure for ever;
And thy remembrance unto all generations.

BLESS THE LORD
Psalm ciii, 1—5, 8—14, 22

BLESS the LORD, O my soul:
And all that is within me, bless his holy name.
Bless the LORD, O my soul,
And forget not all his benefits:
Who forgiveth all thine iniquities;
Who healeth all thy diseases;
Who redeemeth thy life from destruction;
Who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies;
Who satisfieth thy mouth with good things;
So that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's.
The LORD is merciful and gracious,
Slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy.
He will not always chide:
Neither will he keep his anger for ever.
He hath not dealt with us after our sins;
Nor rewarded us according to our iniquities.
For as the heaven is high above the earth,
So great is his mercy toward them that fear him.
As far as the east is from the west,
So far hath he removed our transgressions from us.
Like as a father pitieth his children,
So the LORD pitieth them that fear him.
For he knoweth our frame;
He remembereth that we are dust.
Bless the LORD, all his works
In all places of his dominion:
Bless the LORD, O my soul.

PILGRIM SONG
Psalm cxxi

I WILL lift up mine eyes unto the hills,
From whence cometh my help.
My help cometh from the LORD,
Which made heaven and earth.

He will not suffer thy foot to be moved:
He that keepeth thee will not slumber.
Behold, He that keepeth Israel
Shall neither slumber nor sleep.

The LORD is thy keeper:
The LORD is thy shade upon thy right hand.
The sun shall not smite thee by day,
Nor the moon by night.

The LORD shall preserve thee from all evil:
He shall preserve thy soul.
The LORD shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in
From this time forth, and even for evermore.

LAMENT IN EXILE
Psalm cxxxvii

BY the rivers of Babylon,
There we sat down, yea, we wept,
When we remembered Zion.
We hanged our harps upon the willows
In the midst thereof.
For there they that carried us away captive required of us a song;
And they that wasted us required of us mirth, saying,
Sing us one of the songs of Zion.
How shall we sing the LORD's song
In a strange land?
If I forget thee, O Jerusalem,
Let my right hand forget her cunning.

PRAISE THE LORD
Psalm cxlviii, 1—4, 7—13

PRAISE ye the LORD.
Praise ye the LORD from the heavens:
Praise him in the heights.
Praise ye him, all his angels:
Praise ye him, all his hosts.
Praise ye him, sun and moon:
Praise him, all ye stars of light.
Praise him, ye heavens of heavens,
And ye waters that be above the heavens.
Praise the LORD from the earth,
Ye dragons, and all ye deeps:
Fire, and hail; snow, and vapour;
Stormy wind, fulfilling his word:
Mountains, and all hills;
Fruitful trees, and all cedars:
Beasts, and all cattle;
Creeping things, and flying fowl;
Kings of the earth, and all people;
Princes, and all judges of the earth:
Both young men, and maidens;
Old men, and children:
Let them praise the name of the LORD:

DOXOLOGY
Psalm cl

PRAISE ye the LORD.
Praise God in His sanctuary:
Praise him in the firmament of His power.
Praise him for his mighty acts:
Praise him according to His excellent greatness.
Praise him with the sound of the trumpet:
Praise him with the psaltery and harp.
Praise him with the timbrel and dance:
Praise him with stringed instruments and organs.
Praise him upon the loud cymbals.
Praise him upon the high sounding cymbals.
Let everything that hath breath praise the LORD.
Praise ye the LORD.

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Psalms

II

The Story of the Book

The Psalter as the Mirror of Israel's Religious Development

by REV. THOMAS WALKER, D.D. (Lond.)

Author of "Jewish Views of Jesus," "Hebrew Religion between the Testaments," etc.

THE Hebrew Psalms do not stand alone in a class all to themselves in the literature of the ancient world. The Psalter is not an isolated phenomenon in old world religion. Long before the rise of the monarchy in Israel Egypt had psalms of no mean order. Egypt, too, was constantly, though indirectly, represented in the immediate neighbours of Israel. The Philistines on the low-lying country near the sea, from whom, strangely enough, Palestine got its name, whatever may have been their original home, had probably moved up thither from the delta of the Nile. They had towns and temples, and presumably a ritual of their own. David, when he was dismissed from the army of Saul, crossed the boundary out of his native land into the territory of the Philistines. For a while he lived on their border in closest contact with them. Later he became their collector of tribute from the conquered among the Israelites. There were also Egyptian colonists in Phoenicia. David's son Solomon, when under his father's inspiration he set about building the first Temple to be erected in the new kingdom, called in the workmen of Hiram from Phoenicia. The Temple, when it was completed, turned out to be a modified Egyptian type of sanctuary. With the idea of a temple there may have come also from the same source the idea of a psalter.

From that time onward through the whole of the pre-exilic period direct influence of Egypt on Israel is evident. Solomon had a queen who was the daughter of the king of Egypt. This lady of high rank in Egyptian society seems to have fitted herself into worship at the newly erected sanctuary in Jerusalem. The records show that she did not turn the heart of the king after other gods. In the following century Elijah encountered adverse religious influences on the people in the Northern Kingdom such as came from Phoenicia, where there were contingents of Egyptian colonists. In the 8th century B.C. Isaiah had to keep his eye on those who had in mind an alliance with Egypt. In the 7th century B.C. the Egyptian forces appeared in Palestine. Early in the next century after the fall of Jerusalem some of the fugitives made their way to Egypt. The tone of the earlier Egyptian psalms had continued in educated circles throughout these centuries. There was also a religious revival in Egypt beginning towards the end of the 8th century B.C., which greatly increased the popularity of these psalms. The likenesses between them and the psalms of the Hebrew Psalter are very noticeable, especially where the psalmists are extolling the great Creator and His work for men and beasts and birds.

Psalmody in Israel's Early Days

SONGS and psalms were a necessity of early tribal life when few, if any, were able to read or write. The song was the natural vehicle of tribal history. The psalm was a necessary accompaniment of tribal worship. By songs and psalms the fathers in the tribe and the priests of the tribesmen handed on the traditions which kept them for so long a social and religious unit. Episodes in tribal experience which really mattered would be commemorated, probably at great length, in song. Vital ideas that gathered round the essential religious ceremonies of the several tribes would be kept alive in psalms, which were short and at first, may be, crude in their expression, and certainly so often repeated that they would not be likely at any time to be lost altogether. At crucial moments some member of the tribe would be inspired to bring in a new song, and so the tribal psalmody would grow.

Oral Transmission of Tribal Songs

JUST as all very early poets had their reciters whose business it was to transmit by recitation the works of their masters, so tribal songs and psalms were for generations transmitted by recitation. At crises in tribal history companies of singing men such as Saul met and joined (I. Samuel x, 11) must have been a common feature of tribal life. They would sing or howl old tribal songs and psalms. The emergence of David probably marks the point when a first serious effort was made to commit some of these tribal compositions to writing. That moment comes in the history of every people, and the genius who undertakes the task is never without ability to improve and adapt to the new circumstances both the form and the content of the tribal lore. Here and there very old forms and ideas peep through from behind the words of some of the psalms of the Hebrew Psalter. What those old forms and ideas were like before a person like David touched them to their great improvement one can only dimly imagine.

The tradition which connects David with the rise of a psalter in Israel is very clear and persistent. There is no good reason for doubting the essential accuracy of that tradition. When he was a youth he was called in to play on the harp and to improvize for the comfort of a man who was breaking down under the strain of a responsibility which was becoming far too great for him to bear.

Strictly speaking, a psalm is a sacred song which is sung to the accompaniment of a stringed instrument. In a psalm the psalmist praises God while playing on the harp. He sings to his instrument. Naturally, then, some of the musical instructions which go back to ancient times and which appear in the headings of some of the psalms refer to the kind of stringed instrument of music that is to be used in the rendering of them. The precentor is there reminded that the musical instrument to be used is to be set to suit tenor voices or bass voices or is to be such as is known by a certain popular name. However many the strings of these early instruments may have been, their range could not have been more than three or four notes. The tunes, too, in use at so early a time must have been of the simplest kind. They must also have been very short; therefore, in the course of rendering even a psalm

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of only moderate length, the melody must have been repeated again and again with an impressiveness such as is often felt where a song ranging over a very few notes is taken up and sung time after time by a company of kindred folk.

David had both men and women singers in the service of his court. These would be available for worship hours. David also certainly tried to fulfil his kingly duty as the chief worshipper at the sanctuary attached to his palace. It is very likely that he was the first exemplification of the tradition in Israel that the king must be able to read and write. That tradition represented that, while a priest might be illiterate, a king could never be. What, therefore, lies behind the tradition that connects the name of David with the rise of a psalter in Israel may be just this: that in his work of reorganizing the life of the tribes in order to make a real nation of them he so modified the type of worship hitherto prevalent among them that much of its uncouthness of expression immediately disappeared from his own temporary sanctuary on Zion, and the influence of his example was such as to facilitate a beginning in the same direction in the local sanctuaries throughout the land. The harper pouring out his soul to the accompaniment of snatches of music became, through him, the type to which all music and singing in worship of God should conform.

That David himself also was a composer of songs need not be doubted. That he should have taken as his basis sometimes an old song is just what other poets in his circumstances are known to have done. But that he was thought to be capable of original poetic contributions is evident. One of the oldest and most beautiful of poems which had a place in a popular song book of his people is ascribed to him—the lament over Saul and Jonathan. Several poetic compositions tucked in at the end of the second roll of the Book of Samuel are associated with his name. One of these which appears again in the Psalter as the eighteenth psalm in its original form has been accepted by some competent judges as one of David's very own.

THAT psalm indeed may be taken with confidence to be at any rate typical of one kind which came to be spoken of as Davidic, namely, the type which envisaged an Israelitish kingdom in which the king by the favour of God would be in the midst of the people as the most perfect man among them, and the chief among the worshippers of God. Right in the heart of the Psalter there appears a reference to the prayers of David the son of Jesse. It is not without significance that these words follow a psalm which carries the simple title, "of Solomon." Therein a righteous king is prayed for. A Davidic psalm was, then, for one thing, a psalm in which a worthy king could be assumed as the leader in public worship coming to God with his people. As the chief need in those far-off days was a good king, and the first Temple was a royal chapel attached to the palace, it is not surprising that

"IN A DRY AND THIRSTY LAND." More than a thousand feet above the level of the Dead Sea, the Wilderness of Judea, east of Jerusalem, extends from a little north of the latitude of Jericho to Engedi. Its arid limestone hills are patched with thorny shrubs and coarse grass, withering in the summer. Psalm lxiii—ascribed to David, "when he was in the wilderness of Judah" hiding from Saul—gives in its first verse an impression of this desolate, ravine-scored region: "O God, thou art my God . . . my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land where no water is."

Photo, Press Topics

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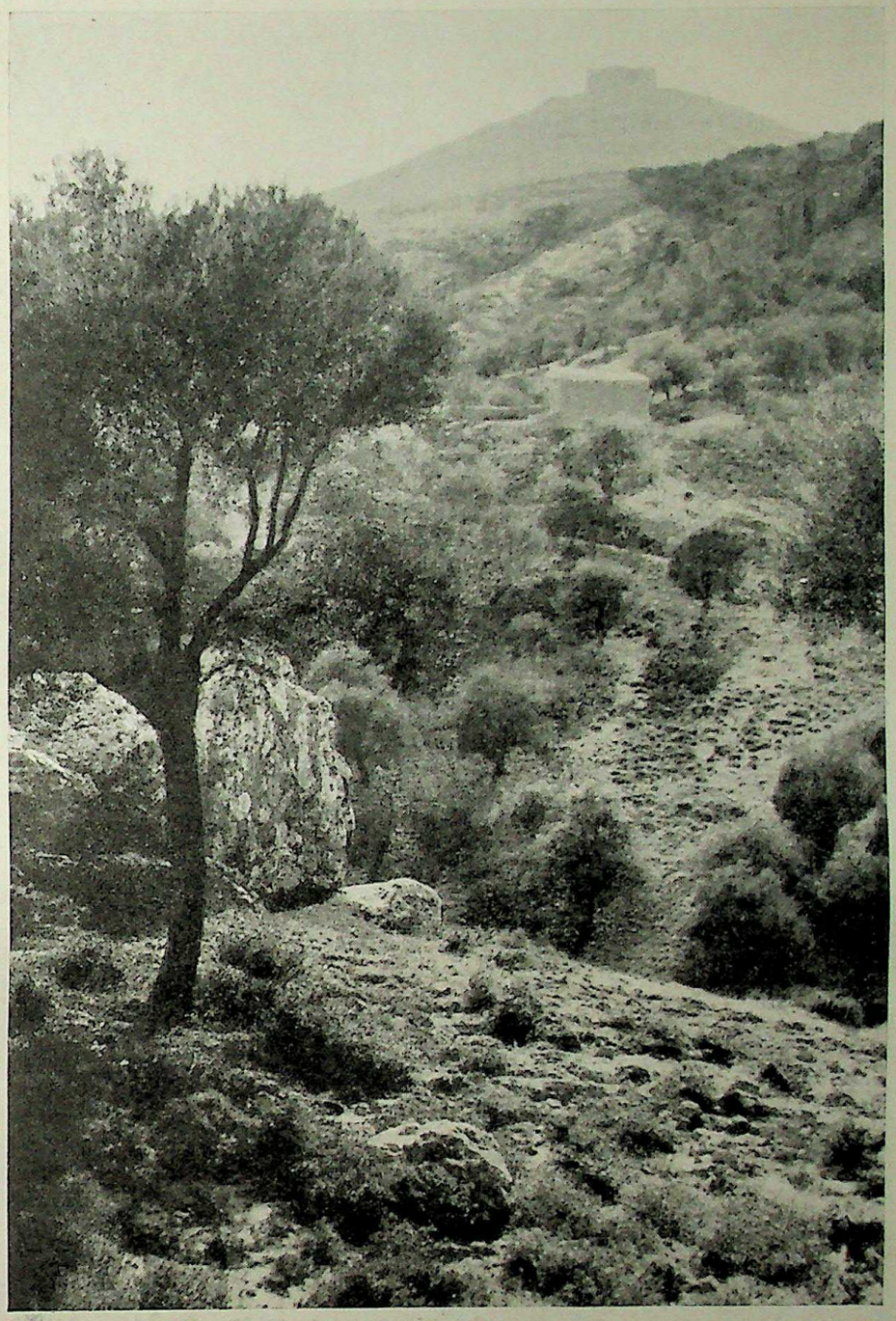
the king and God as king should appear so frequently in psalms that are marked in the Psalter as Davidic.

That some relics of psalms from this early period have survived in the Psalter is very likely. Probably, however, no psalms of this epoch in the history of Israel have come down just as they were composed or written. Hymns even that are transmitted in writing are not the sort of material likely to remain for long in a stereotyped form. At every repetition or copying of them for official use there would be the urge to revise them.

The general lines along which such revision would go are not difficult to guess. Early compositions would be modified in order to be of service to congregations of worshippers who were far removed from the moment of their first appearance. Psalms that had been called forth by a definite historical situation now long passed would be generalized so as to make them suitable for use on other and similar occasions. In the psalms of the Psalter clear historical allusions have, for the most part, been removed. Hence attempts to fasten a psalm to a particular historical occasion have almost invariably failed. For the understanding of a psalm all that is needed is to discern the type of occasion for which it was intended to be used. Psalms in which the original composers made, and the original worshippers recognized definite historical references, have been edited for general use in worship.



HIGH AS THE HILL OF BASHAN. In the triumphal song, Psalm lxviii, Zion on "the hill of God" is described as the spiritual centre of the world; even the heights of Bashan must acknowledge its glory (verses 15, 16). Bashan, north-east of Palestine, conquered from Og, was granted by Moses to the half-tribe of Manasseh. On the peak, seen above, is the ruined castle of Kalaat er-Rabad built in the 12th century, a strong link in the Saracen chain of fortresses.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

THERE are some aspects of early psalmody that have only to be mentioned to be appreciated. Hebrew psalms reveal the same characteristic as is discernible in the psalms of other ancient peoples—what is known as parallelism. Sometimes the thought of the first line of a verse is repeated in a different form in the second line of it. The second line is in that case a more or less clear echo of the first line. At times however the second line comes back on one as a sharp contrast to the first line. Occasionally also there is even a third line serving much the same purpose. Yet again the supplementary line or lines may be used to develop the theme of the first line. There are other varieties of the same sort of thing, but throughout there is always clearly noticeable a certain balance of significant words. The reader should learn to appreciate this. Careful reading of the psalms aloud in a good English translation can make these features of the poetry of the psalms remarkably clear to the listener. The introduction of a chorus to be repeated at stated intervals is also to be noted in some psalms. They may well have been congregational responses to the stanza sung by the choir. An example of this—"For his mercy endureth for ever"—is found in Psalm cxxxvi.

Certain psalms were intended for use in connexion with sacrificial services, some at various public sacrifices, others on the occasion of the presentation of private offerings to God in fulfilment of vows and such like. In each case the reader should try to discern the sacrificial moment in the psalm. In some psalms that is quite easy; in others, less so. Sometimes after some confession in which the worshipper has examined himself and given himself time to appreciate that the sacrifice he is about to offer must be related to his state of mind and heart, the sacrifice is definitely mentioned. Sometimes the moment of the sacrifice is to be inferred from the sudden change from entreaty to praise. There are points even where priestly formulae are discernible. Some verses

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"THERE GO THE SHIPS." Haifa, unthought of by the Psalmist, but now one of the chief ports of Palestine, is thus attractively pictured from Mount Carmel. The tree-bordered street going down to the sea gives a pleasant impression of the residential quarter. The harbour, opened in 1933, has yearly brought an increase of shipping. Sufficient depth is provided for the accommodation of liners; an entrance 600 feet wide gives access to the enclosed area of water. The main backwater, seen in the photograph, runs from west to east for a length of 1½ miles; the lee backwater extends ½ mile north.

Photo, Fox

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also were certainly intended on the public occasions when the particular psalms were in use to be the sacrificial cries of the crowds of worshippers assembled in the court of the Temple. At more private ceremonies a leaflet with a single psalm or selection of quotations from psalms would be used, the priest and the solitary worshipper each having his part to recite.

A very frequent and yet now very obscure note appears in relatively early psalms. *Selah* indicates some type of lifting up of the voice or music or both at stated intervals in the worship. It may at times signify the moment or moments when the sacrifice or sacrifices were offered, the lighting of the sacrificial fires being accompanied by the shouts of the people in accordance with some ritual direction. In processionals it may mark the points at which the singing ceased for a while, and the instrumental music continued, perhaps in greater volume and preparatory to another outburst of song, which sometimes, it is clear, was to be in an entirely different mood. That this notation does not appear in later psalms may mean that this element in the worship was taken in hand in the interval and better organized to the great increase of dignity in the divine service. The later psalms from which it is absent often reveal moments at which it is intended that the ordinary worshipper who has been listening to the Temple choir rendering a psalm or series of psalms is expected to chime in with his response, and sometimes the responses are actually given.

FURTHER, the way in which reference to the chief musician or precentor appears at the head of so many early psalms suggests that psalms were originally kept in leaflet form. Ordinary transmission of a psalm would continue to be oral. Young choristers would learn them by singing with the senior members of the Temple choir. Ordinary worshippers would get to know them by learning them by ear, and by the faithful fulfilment of the duty of teacher on the part of the father in the home. The written copies would be in the library of the sanctuary and in charge of the official precentor. In early days a great deal was left to him. Sometimes he would arrange that distinct types of psalms be sung together or portions of psalms be put together to form a new psalm to suit some special occasion. At one time it would be arranged that the psalm be sung in unison by a single choir or by the whole of the assembled crowd of worshippers. In the latter case it would be sung to some popular melody, which would require no learning. At another time one with a strong voice would be assigned to sing a portion of the psalm, and the choir would sing in response. Yet again two choirs might be used, the one singing in response to the other. On more private occasions the priest and the solitary worshipper might share the chanting or repetition of a psalm between them. In this connexion the sudden change of speaker in a psalm should be noticed, and these devices of rendering recalled. A psalm is often immediately made more intelligible if such change of speakers is observed.

THAT there was singing in the worship of the first Temple seems obvious. It is assumed in some things which were said by the great prophets to their people. Thus Isaiah's account of his experience in the Temple in the year in which king Uzziah died is hardly intelligible, if the service was not being led by two sides of a choir singing a liturgy alternately. In his day Amos protested against a type of worship such as David may have worked hard to get rid of. The worshippers sang at the sacrificial services songs to the accompaniment of instruments of music, like David. David himself could dance before the Lord in a garment becoming a leader in worship, and he could also refuse to drink of water got at too great a risk to his men, and pour it out as a drink-offering unto the Lord. These folk had kept up the outward forms of the Davidic tradition, its songs and its music, but they had forgotten its spirit. A measure of the old disorder of pre-Davidic times had returned.

The words of Amos, it should also be observed, were spoken to people at a sanctuary in the Northern Kingdom. After the division of the land into two sections politically, it seems that the Davidic tradition in psalmody was still followed in places in the northern part of the country. The words of Hosea, who belonged to the north, make it even clearer than do the words of Amos that the people were used to psalm singing. Some of the ancient headings to individual psalms would lead one to suppose that in these early days some of the hymns at some of the sanctuaries were sung to the same tunes as were some of the folk songs. That habit may at times have made against orderliness at certain points in the worship. That is probably what Amos, for one thing, had in mind.

What, however, is of chief interest here is the use of psalms at northern sanctuaries and the continuance of the Davidic tradition there. At the break-up of the Northern Kingdom some—both priests and people—must have made their way to the south. Not all who remained, it may be safely assumed, contracted marriages with the imported population. Psalms of the north would survive, even the Psalter-leaves of some of the sanctuaries might be brought through in safety by devoted priests. Among such evidently northern survivals one should not be

TRIBUTES TO THE PSALMS

William Wilberforce (1759-1833). I am reading the Psalms just now . . . . What wonderful compositions! What a decisive proof of the Divine origin of the religion to which they belong! There is in the world nothing else like them.

Thomas Carlyle (1795-1881). David's life and history, as written in those Psalms of his, I consider to be the truest emblem ever given of a man's moral progress and warfare here below. All earnest souls will ever discern in it the faithful struggle of an earnest human soul towards what is good and best. Struggle often baffled, sore baffled, down as into entire wreck: yet a struggle never ended; ever, with tears, repentance, true, unconquerable purpose, begun anew.

John Ruskin (1819-1900). It is strange that of all the pieces of the Bible which my mother thus taught me, that which cost me most to learn, and which was, to my child's mind, chiefly repulsive—the 119th Psalm—has now become of all the most precious to me in its overflowing and glorious passion of love for the law of God.

Rowland E. Prothero, Lord Ernle (1852-1937). To weary travellers of every condition and at every period of history, the Psalms have been rivers of refreshment and wells of consolation. They alone have known no limitations to a particular age, country, or form of faith. In them the spirit of controversy and the war of creeds are forgotten: love of the Psalter has united the Anglican and Roman Catholic, Presbyterian and Nonconformist. Over the parched fields of theological strife the breath of the Psalms sweeps, fresh and balmy. For centuries the supplications of Christians, clothed in the language of the Psalter, have risen like incense to the altar-throne of God; in them have been expressed, from age to age, the devotion and the theology of religious communions that in all else were at deadly feud. Surviving all the changes in Church and State, in modes of thought, in habits of life, in forms of expression, the Psalms, as devotional exercises, have sunk into our hearts; as sublime poetry, have fired our imaginations; as illustrations of human life, have arrested our minds and stored our memories. In the Psalms the vast hosts of suffering humanity have found . . . . the deepest expression of their hopes and fears.

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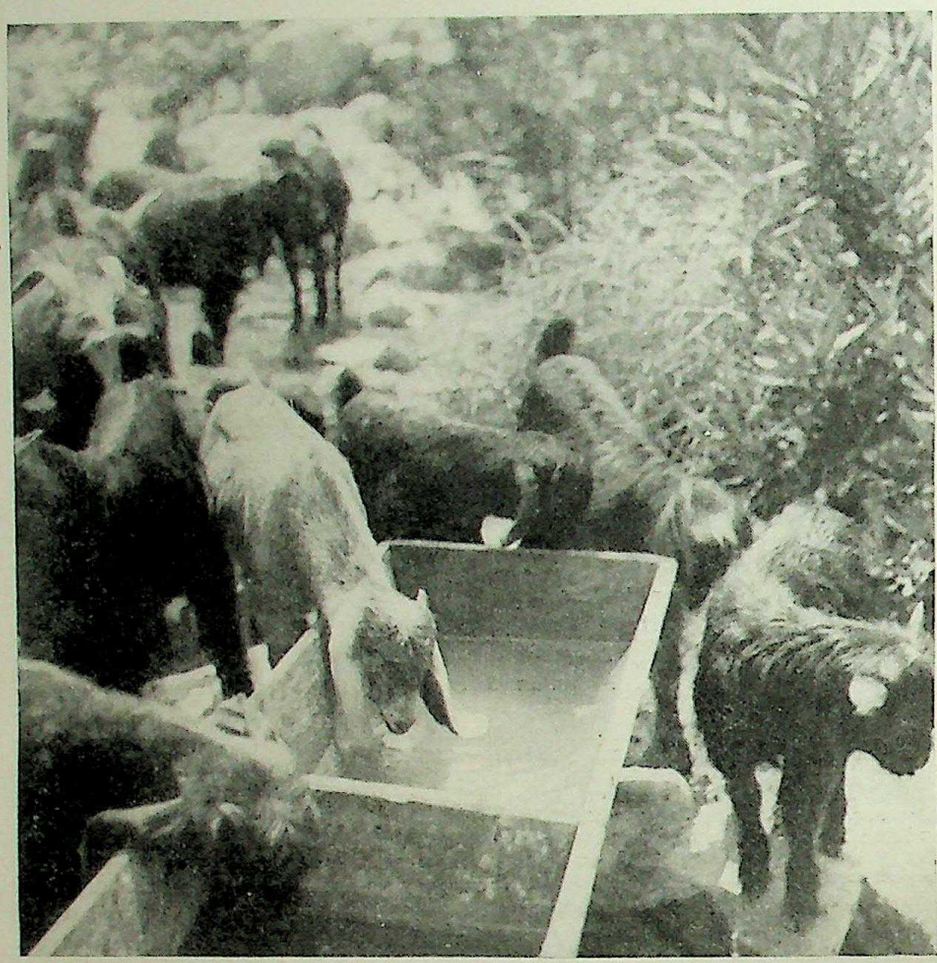

"THEY GIVE DRINK TO EVERY BEAST OF THE FIELD." The Psalmist, meditating on God's wonderful providence for His creation, observes "He sendeth the springs into the valleys, Which run among the hills," so that all the animals may have water (Psalm civ, 10, 11). Beside such well-springs have been placed stone troughs since ancient Biblical times. The goats gathered to quench their thirst at the one pictured are of both the short-eared and long-eared varieties. The latter, known by the name of Syrian goat, is the commonest breed in Palestine.

Photo, Nachum Gidal

surprised to find so-called Davidic psalms. The fact that Elijah retreated to Horeb for a renewal of inspiration and Hosea professed inspiration by Jehovah should make one expect that in psalms, whose northern ancestry is clear, that very name for God should appear. Where it does appear it is not necessary to assume the clumsy hand of an editor who had not the courage to do his work thoroughly.

Yet again it is safe to assume that the Davidic type of psalmody also encouraged a more personal approach to God than had been up to then very usual. Some early psalms may have been born of personal experience and in the process of growth became psalms for public worship. In that case it was not very difficult for the individual worshipper to recover for himself and appreciate the personal application of some Temple hymn. Not to speak of his inquiries of the Lord at crises in his public life, one of the most life-like pictures of David that has been handed down is that in which he goes into an inner room of the palace and lies on the floor all the night, with prayer and fasting beseeching the Lord to spare the life of his sick child. Then when he discovers that his prayer cannot be granted he gets up, washes himself, dresses suitably, and goes to his temporary royal chapel and worships, to the surprise of his very religiously obtuse courtiers. That is the type of experience that begets the sort of psalm suited for use by the solitary individual in his effort to come alone to God in prayer. In their original form some psalms of this order now in the Psalter come down from before the Exile. The ascription of them to David and others may mean as much—an acknowledgment of the old oral or written foundations on which the psalms in question were built up.

The songs of Zion that the exiles took with them and preserved either by oral transmission or in writing must have included some treasures from the sanctuaries of the north. They must also have included psalms that were composed for, or very easily adaptable to, the individual life and needs of the solitary worshipper, as well as those that were peculiarly serviceable in the public worship of the community.

The opening years of the 6th century B.C. saw leading families of Hebrew ancestry—both lay and priestly—involved in that system of forced emigrations which in those early days was so often an essential part of the foreign policy of the conqueror in war. The first colony of folk from Jerusalem and its neighbourhood was then established in Babylonia, and of them was the prophet Ezekiel. His first task was to get them to settle and to lay aside all vain hopes of a sudden and complete reversal of their misfortunes. Meanwhile, for a decade or more the prophet Jeremiah continued his ministrations in the old capital city of his people, till revolt against its greatly reduced status brought the final disaster. Thereupon still larger colonies of exiles were established in Babylonia. After the first shock of so great and tragic a change had passed, many of these colonists settled down to rebuild life for themselves in a new environment, and on the whole they were treated in such manner as encouraged them to do so. This isolation of the pick of the leading families in the conquered community was epoch-making, especially for religion.

Prayer and Praise in the Land of Exile

FOR the purposes of worship these Jewish colonists were compelled to resort to an unsacrificial assembling of themselves for singing and prayer, reading and exhortation. At those assemblies there could not be any offering of sacrifices such as had been hitherto customary amongst them on their native heath. Hence these people had thrust upon them an exceptional opportunity of appreciating the point of view of the more advanced of their prophets with regard to the sacrifices at the Temple. Prayer and praise were more than ever seen to be of the very essence of religion and worship. It was not that it was ever entering into their minds at this time to scrap officially the sacrificial system. In the worship, especially of the first generation of these exiles, such early psalms as survived among them to be used in these changed circumstances must have stirred them to imagine the actual scenes in the temple, when sacrifices, public and private, were offered. But for all that the relation between prayer

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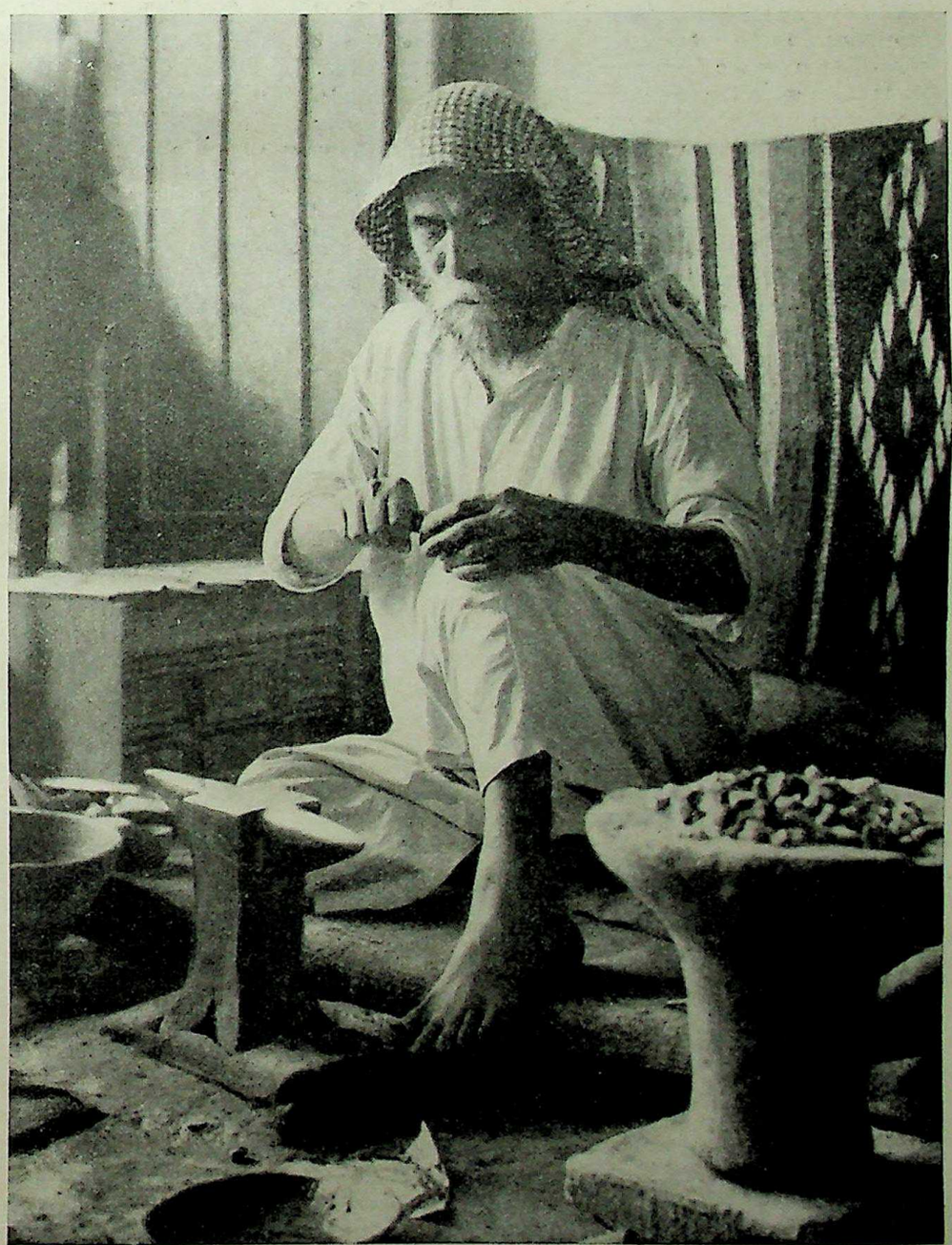
and praise and sacrifice became clearer to an increasing number of them. In the prayer and praise services which were still possible to them and much appreciated by them; they began to see more distinctly that there lay the substance of acceptable worship in the sight of Jehovah their God.

This tendency among them was further facilitated by the evident disposition in the preachers, to whom they had listened and were still listening, to make much more of the individual soul in religion and worship than hitherto had been the case. From different points of view and with differing emphasis both Ezekiel and Jeremiah had done much to make each soul among them realize his worth to God, and the grounds on which he was acceptable or otherwise to the Deity to whom he presumed to offer reasonable service in worship. Of course such individualism in religion, when it was taken seriously, raised new problems. The suffering of the innocent with the guilty, and even because of and on behalf of them, was felt to be a bewildering tragedy in the operation of God's providence—a tragedy that it could never be felt to be when the family or tribe or nation was the foremost concern in all religious observance. But it brought home to the ordinary worshipper as never before the idea that the root of all religion for the individual lay in knowledge of the will of God, and in a heart to do that will, when it became known. Accompanying this there was an increase of ability to see the nonsense of idolatry. Whereas, to begin with, most of them had got no farther than to think of Jehovah as the supreme One among the gods, now some were learning to laugh at the idea of the existence of other gods, and to develop an abhorrence of idols and idolatry.

The Babylonians, too, among whom they were placed, made use of psalms of some merit in their worship. The substance of some of these, like their own, had been orally transmitted from very ancient times. On the way down through the centuries they had been revised, as old Israelitish material among themselves had been, to meet the new needs of ever-changing times. It is not likely that these Babylonian psalms would have much direct influence upon the minds of these Hebrew colonists with their growing aversion to idols. Likenesses that were discernible between these psalms and their own would be due to their common origin. Such folk as these were would not be disposed to take any of them over. Resemblances might even, thinking as they then were doing, have moved them to the revision of such psalms as they had in use among them. The oral form and any written copies of psalms in use would soon reveal marks of this disposition to move away definitely from the prevailing Babylonian type. Actually in many of them there was not only a disposition, but also an enthusiasm for isolation of themselves for the sake of the higher ends of religion which they were coming to appreciate. Here their revision of existing psalms would be of the type that would differentiate them from and not assimilate them to the Babylonian style. In many original compositions of the period there would be no conscious imitation.



"AS SILVER TRIED IN A FURNACE OF EARTH." In this cupboard-like workshop the silversmith fashions all kinds of delicate pieces of his ware on the anvil. To the right is the earthenware brazier in which the metal is treated. Silver was made into choice vessels and in bulk was the medium of exchange in Old Testament times; it does not appear to have been coined. Gold was in greater demand for jewelry. The simile of silver "purified seven times" from dross is used in Psalm xii, 6 to express the perfection of the word of God.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

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This also was not due to any stupidity such as would make them refuse light or help from a quarter other than their own, for when the political course of events brought them into contact with the Persians some of them at any rate were not slow to learn anything that was helpful, for example, concerning the life beyond death.

Many of these colonists settled down in Babylonia, and their descendants never returned permanently to the old country. There were opportunities of making a living such probably as they had never had before, and the colonies, self-contained as they often were, were yet large and varied enough to satisfy their ordinary social requirements. Some even got employment in good non-Jewish circles. Some, too, rose to prominence in the life of the community at large. Many of the offspring of these lived on there for centuries without losing their racial and religious identity. They continued their distinctive assemblies and built up and sustained their traditions. In later centuries some of the most highly educated among the Jews were to be found in Babylonia. From them came the more complete of the two Talmuds. But there were also among these colonists those who were full of the idea of a re-establishment of themselves in the old country around a re-erected temple. Stray families who were unable to settle must have stolen back to Palestine at an early date. It was not, however, until the rule of the Persians began to be felt that an organized effort at return from exile was made on the part of any considerable number of the colonists. That return, too, was probably part of a movement of populations such as was in those days often part of the policy of the conqueror for the consolidation of his extended territories.

Every circumstance known favours the idea that by the time that return came about the old hymns which had been brought away orally or written by the exiles had undergone great, and some of them even revolutionary changes. Some of them indeed may have been very soon dropped altogether as unsuitable to the new circumstances and inconsistent with the changed ideas of God and worship. Those that were retained were modified by the new experience of worship right away altogether from the temple and its sacrifices, by the more personal relation to God that had become more fully experienced among them, by the disgust at idolatry which had manifested itself among them as never before, by the desire to be more separate in religion from other peoples of similar ancestry to themselves, and by the new ideas coming from sources which they thought more commendable.

Distance Bridged by a Common Worship

BETWEEN those who returned to settle again in a rebuilt Jerusalem and its neighbourhood and those who chose to stay where they were, the bond of union was probably felt most in those revised psalms, which the latter kept as the nucleus of their worship without sacrifices, and which the former took with them in some form to give the desired tone to the restored sacrificial services at the re-erected temple. Some radically revised psalms united from the first the hearts of the two sections of what was now fast becoming Judaism. Besides that, psalms that were entirely new would be mostly of the type that could be used apart from the sacrifices. All the circumstances of this time, too, would favour the rise and increase of the homiletic type of psalm. The psalm as a vehicle of teaching and as a repository of devout meditation would be likely to emerge or grow in favour—poetic compositions that from the very moment of their existence would find their natural home in the inner chamber and the synagogue rather than in the courts and services of the Temple. The results of this period become visible as soon as opportunities were given to make a real start with a hymn book for worship at the second temple. All these elements appear with much else in the very first edition. That they persist and increase along with other elements only serves to show that the sacrificial service which was restored at Jerusalem was in a measure from the first and thereafter increasingly a prophetically—indeed a mystically—interpreted sacrificial system.

The Rolls that Compose the Hebrew Psalter

THE present Hebrew Psalter is the result of a combination of a series of psalter rolls or of their remains. Early psalter rolls were probably smaller in size than the rolls which were used for reading only. Probably each roll has in it several series of hymns that had for a time a separate existence. But be that as it may, five rolls are clearly discernible within the Psalter. At the end of each of the following psalms, xli, lxxii, xc, and cvi, there occurs a doxology that does not actually belong to the psalm to which it seems to be attached. It is intended to be taken to be the doxology of the particular psalter roll which ended with the preceding psalm. The appearance of these doxologies in the text of the Psalter serves to indicate the boundaries of four early psalters or of their remains. The psalms from cvii onward form by themselves a fifth psalter roll. Instead of finishing with a doxology this roll finds its completion in a series of hallelujah choruses. The first and fifth of these rolls, it should be observed, are much the same in length, and can be taken as representative of the normal bulk of an early psalter roll. The second roll is slightly less in size than these. Very remarkably, on the assumption that the first roll began at psalm iii, which is very likely, the twelfth psalm in each roll is a version of the same psalm. Toward the close of these two rolls other duplications appear. It is natural to suppose that these are relics of more extensive duplications, and that the second roll was at first of normal size. In that case either the final editor or more probably one of his predecessors in the work of psalm editing reduced the duplications to suit his plan.

The first roll containing psalms iii-xli may be taken to be substantially—some later editing in detail being allowed for—the psalter of the "back to David" movement which for a while centred round Zerubbabel, the surviving representative of the ancient royal house. This mass movement of returned Judaeans was concerned not only with the rebuilding of the Temple, but also with the re-establishment of national life in the old country during the closing decades of the 6th century B.C. The latter aspect of the movement had, of course, to be kept as unobtrusive as possible. But it could hardly be entirely concealed. Social and political difficulties faced the newcomers and their supporters on arrival, but in the end the Temple was rebuilt, and religious services which in the meantime had probably been held in a tent were transferred to the new sanctuary. Times were hard, and it was difficult to keep things going.

Years passed with little improvement, and possibly their first leader disappeared mysteriously, as the result of some intrigue of those who were not friendly to the movement. These psalms reflect this period. The people who made use of them in their original form had enthusiasm for the Anointed One. Their faith was that

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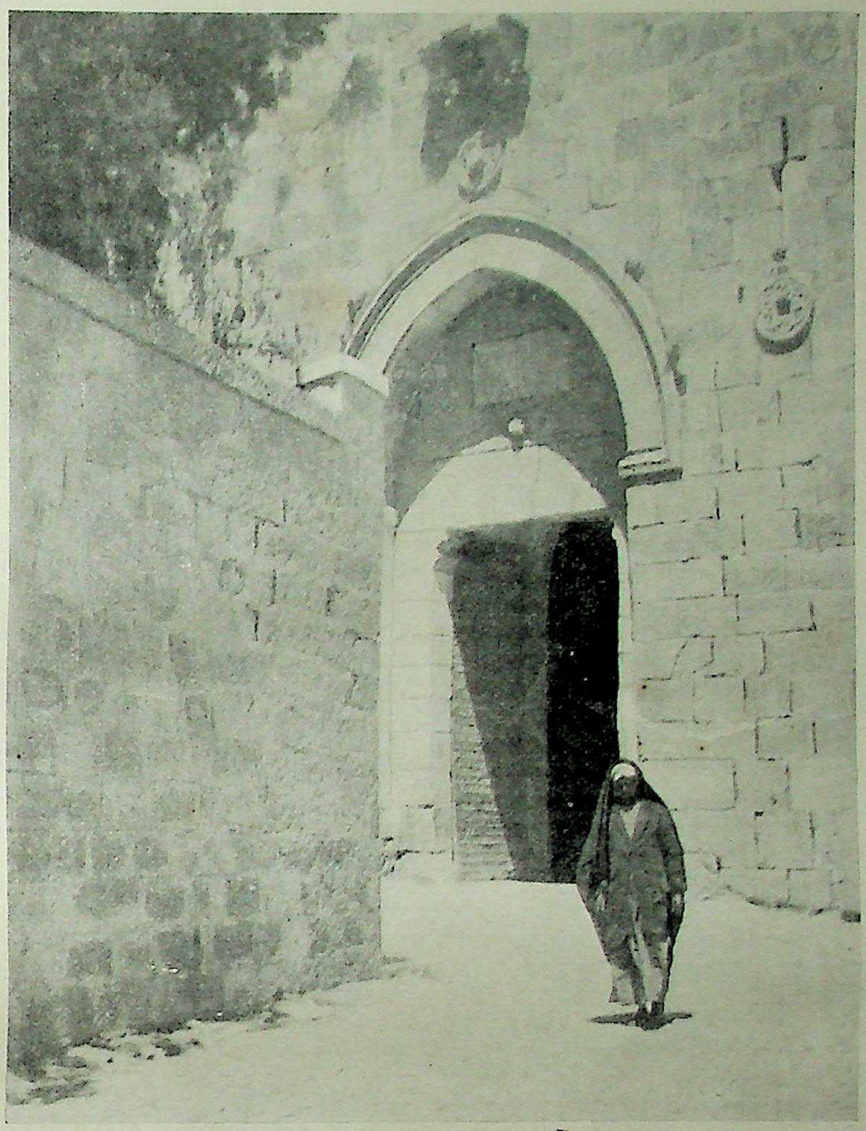
in spite of appearances to the contrary Jehovah would secure that they should inherit the land. They were god-fearing folk who had learned from experience that religion was to seek to do the will of God, and that that will must be done from the heart. They had many enemies, and they knew that of themselves they were hardly equal to winning through. To them, however, Jehovah was king, and in spite of the afflictions that had come upon His earthly representative they sought, as perhaps things were not too well organized, in simple religious services to keep alive their faith that by the power of God they, the meek, would in the end inherit the land. The simple musical directions of earlier times sufficed to keep in some order their hours of worship together. There was no opportunity just yet for any elaborate organization of the praise section of their worship. The singers among them had not the status of Levites. The "back to David" spirit of this psalter is seen not only in the Davidic ascription at the head of practically every psalm of it, but also in the attempt by someone to connect here and there a psalm with some episode of the period covered by the books of Samuel. The annotator probably annotated from memory, or else he followed traditions that were not exactly the same as those that are utilized in the Samuel books. The same hand is seen to have been at work in the second roll. These two rolls which had had a separate existence were now together in his hands.



DAVID'S GATE ON THE SUMMIT OF ZION. Although the city of David, referred to as Zion, was actually on the slope of Ophel, the royal Psalmist is commemorated in that part of Jerusalem which was later built on Mount Zion. Past David's Tower, near the Jaffa Gate, runs Zion Street southward to David's Gate. Constructed in 1541, it is in a battlement of the city wall from the top of which is a fine view of the Moslem so-called Tomb of David on Zion's slope.

Photo, G. J. H. Ovenden

The second psalter roll, containing now psalms xlii–lxxii, is in some respects unique. In the first section of it all the psalms are associated with the sons of Korah. The second half of it professes to be of the Davidic type. Dividing these two sections there is a stray psalm of Asaph ancestry, and in completion of the Davidic section there appears a psalm that is a prayer for the king's son, in which the prayers so-called, of David are thought to reach their climax. The hymns of the Korah type assume the existence of a sanctuary in a well-watered place. The city in which the sanctuary is placed has a river. The sanctuary seems to have been a tent or tabernacle. In fact, more than one dwelling-place or tabernacle of God seems to be assumed. Again and again God is referred to as the God of Jacob. The geographical references in these psalms are such as would be natural to one who lived or had lived in the Northern Kingdom. If here and there the words of a psalm have been adapted to fit in with the existence of a temple, and that temple Zion, that may only mean that a real clue is supplied to the origin of this psalter roll and to its historical significance.

It should not be too readily assumed that all people of Israelite descent who were left in the old country either after the fall of Samaria or after the desolation of Jerusalem straightway proceeded to intermarry with the imported population. The latter seem to have been placed on the most attractive part of the land, and to have formed with those with whom they married a compact colony near its centre. Many probably continued much as they had been. The experience of these would be much the same as those in exile. They would continue to worship as best they could. They would use old psalms, revised as required. In the north and in the south, also across Jordan possibly, such people lived on. Any mass movement from Babylonia on the part of returning exiles would have to reckon with these, and to depend on them for support. That even Samaritans wanted to rush in in support favours the idea that non-Samaritans did so as well in great numbers. This second psalter roll represents, then, the heritage of these devout Palestinians of purer Israelitish ancestry, and is indicative of their willingness to conform to the idea of a central sanctuary for the whole land. There is no difficulty in the fact that a stray psalm of the Asaph type should be in the psalter of these people. One sanctuary might use some of another sanctuary's hymns. Neither is there any difficulty in the way of believing that psalms of the Davidic type were allowed to be sung at sanctuaries in the Northern Kingdom. The inclusion of a prayer for Solomon as the very last of these Davidic psalms may be taken to signify the mind of these Palestinians of the

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North, that they were prepared to let bygones be bygones. They had no mind to continue the old disruption. They professed themselves in favour of a united front.

The third psalter roll, the remains of which are Psalms lxxiii–lxxxix, was the psalter of the Asaph choir singers. The bulk of this surviving fragment of a roll which probably was originally one of normal size is ascribed to Asaph. The appendix professes to give samples of Davidic, Korahite and other early types of psalms. This roll may be taken with good reason to be the landmark in a new historical development affecting the psalmody of the new temple. For some generations things went hard with the people who tried to focus the religious life of the land at the recently re-erected sanctuary. They seem to have gone from bad to worse, till they became about the middle of the 5th century B.C. a matter of grave concern to some of their kinsmen who were resident outside Palestine. Nehemiah is representative of these. He arrived on the scene, and tackled the financial and other problems of the community in and around Jerusalem. He rallied them to work on the old and still broken-down city. He took measures to improve the services for worship at the Temple. A sign of his success in this respect is to be seen in the fact that then or very soon afterward the choir appeared again in the Temple services, and it was only a matter of a very short time ere the singers had got for themselves the status of Levites. The old Asaph choir, though of Northern origin, had made a name for itself in connexion with the services of the first Temple. These singers were now probably reconstituted as a choir—a move which besides being helpful to the worship was also such as would facilitate the desired national unity.

This roll then marks the completion of the first stage in the reorganization of the praise services of the second temple. The newly reconstituted choir appeared with its revised hymnary, its collection of hymns of a very Northern complexion adapted for the use of people who had made up their minds to forget their divisions and unite as folk who had a common religious ancestry and history around the re-built Zion. Psalm ii with its Messianic challenge and faith and hope may well have been the preface of the Psalter, when it reached that stage in its development when it consisted of three small psalter rolls which together were representative of the main sections of the community whose heart was bent upon keeping itself unspotted from the nations, whose thoughts were not its thoughts and whose ways were not its ways.

'Back to Moses' Movement Reflected in the Psalter

THE fourth roll—or the remnant of it which appears in the Psalter, Psalms xc–cvi—represents the "back to Moses" movement which seems to have become stronger as the "back to David" movement moderated with the partial and not unsubstantial accomplishment of its purpose. In this association the name of Ezra may at least be taken as symbolic of the direction in which things were now moving. To take an example, the sacrificial services were becoming more elaborate, and with this elaboration they were becoming as regards their execution more privately carried through.

This Levitical reorganization introduced a more dignified method of offering sacrifices, and necessitated a greater interpretation of the sacrificial ceremonial by song. These "back to Moses" enthusiasts, therefore, felt the need of hymns or series of hymns to be used at these services. This roll gives glimpses of their efforts to supply this need. The Greeks by this time had come into power. It was the 3rd century B.C., and as an outcome of the conquests of Alexander the Great there had taken place some redistribution of the Jewish sections of the population. Consequently there were now, for one thing, large colonies of Jews in Egypt, such as were ultimately to necessitate the production of a Greek version of the books of the Old Testament, and later even the erection of a temple there. In this very roll occurs the psalm, namely, civ, in which Egyptian influence is so marked that many are convinced that there is to be discerned in it direct borrowing from a well-known Egyptian psalm of some antiquity. The writer or writers of this hymn roll profess to perpetuate the Mosaic tradition in one series of hymns, and to continue the Davidic tradition in another series. This, too, is the section of the Psalter most in favour with the writer of Chronicles, who belongs to the middle of the century.

Growing Importance of Temple Music

WITH the Chronicler as guide here, one learns that the musical part of the Temple services had in the interval undergone drastic reorganization. The singers were now the chief among the Levites. They had now a very much larger orchestra than they had had hitherto. The instrumentalists were now also distinct from the singers. Obviously Greek influence had been telling on the situation, and to Egypt the Greeks themselves owed much in music. Probably there should at this time be recognized a fusion of Greek and Egyptian influence through the colonists to the southward, and through them also support for the revival of the Mosaic tradition which itself had associations with Egypt. Behind this psalter roll was a vast elaboration of the Temple services such as had the support of the Jews resident in Egypt. At this time, however, there was no thought of elevating the text of the various hymn books to the status of a sacred book, as had already happened first with the Pentateuch and more recently with the Prophets. A comparison of the version of some psalms in the Psalter with the version made use of by the Chronicler reveals that as yet no particular care was being taken to secure the use of an officially-authorized text.

The fifth roll, Psalms cvii–cl, implies yet another stage in the history of the Psalter. The compiler of this roll in this "back to Moses" period may have thought of the so-called five books of Moses and set to work to complete the work of psalm-collecting in like fashion. He may have taken the last hymn from the fourth roll to give him a start with his own and to suggest continuity. His chief interests are clearly reflected in two series of psalms—one series is Psalm cxix, which is devoted to commendation of faithfulness to and delight in the Torah or Law, and the other is the revised pilgrim hymn book, Psalms cxx–cxxxiv. These he has framed in a series of praises, and hallelujahs. Here and there psalms of the Davidic type appear in his collection—a few that may have been in private use, or excluded at earlier revisions of the psalter rolls or possibly just picked up from pilgrims. His chief concern is that there be faithfulness to the revealed will of Jehovah in the Law. This concern of his may reflect his awareness of the perils to the religion of his people which were obviously to be incidental to the spread of Greek culture among them. The times, too, were such that pilgrimages to Jerusalem had once more become a regular institution. By this compiler or one of his immediate successors, the five psalter rolls were revised and put in order as they are now, Psalm i being added as a preface to the whole

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"THE RIGHTEOUS SHALL FLOURISH LIKE A PALM TREE"

In a grove of stately date palms, sheep crop the grass—withered, but the best pasturage to be found by Beduin during the rainless season in an oasis of the Arabian desert. The date palm was regarded as a thing of beauty by the Hebrew poets and sacred by the Semitic peoples from remote ages, since its fruit was an essential article of diet. In Psalm xcii, 12, a song in praise of Providence, the tree is chosen as a simile for the good fortune of the righteous. Palm branches, borne as a sign of rejoicing at festivals. are used by Moslems as mourning emblems and to decorate graves.

Photo, Mondiale

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Frederick, Lord Leighton, 1830-1896

"THE PSALMIST OF ISRAEL"

In the dignified and sympathetic picture of David (Leathart Collection), painted in 1865, Lord Leighton has portrayed the shepherd-king after his abdication in favour of Solomon. From the roof of his palace in Jerusalem, David, uncrowned, gazes at the mountains of Judea. "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help."

Poet, soldier and sincere worshipper of God, he could look back on a life "full of days, riches and honour," of profound sorrow, human frailty, remorse and courageous atonement. A man capable of majestic response to the rhythm of spiritual beauty, he is fittingly immortalized by the association of the complete Psalter with his name.

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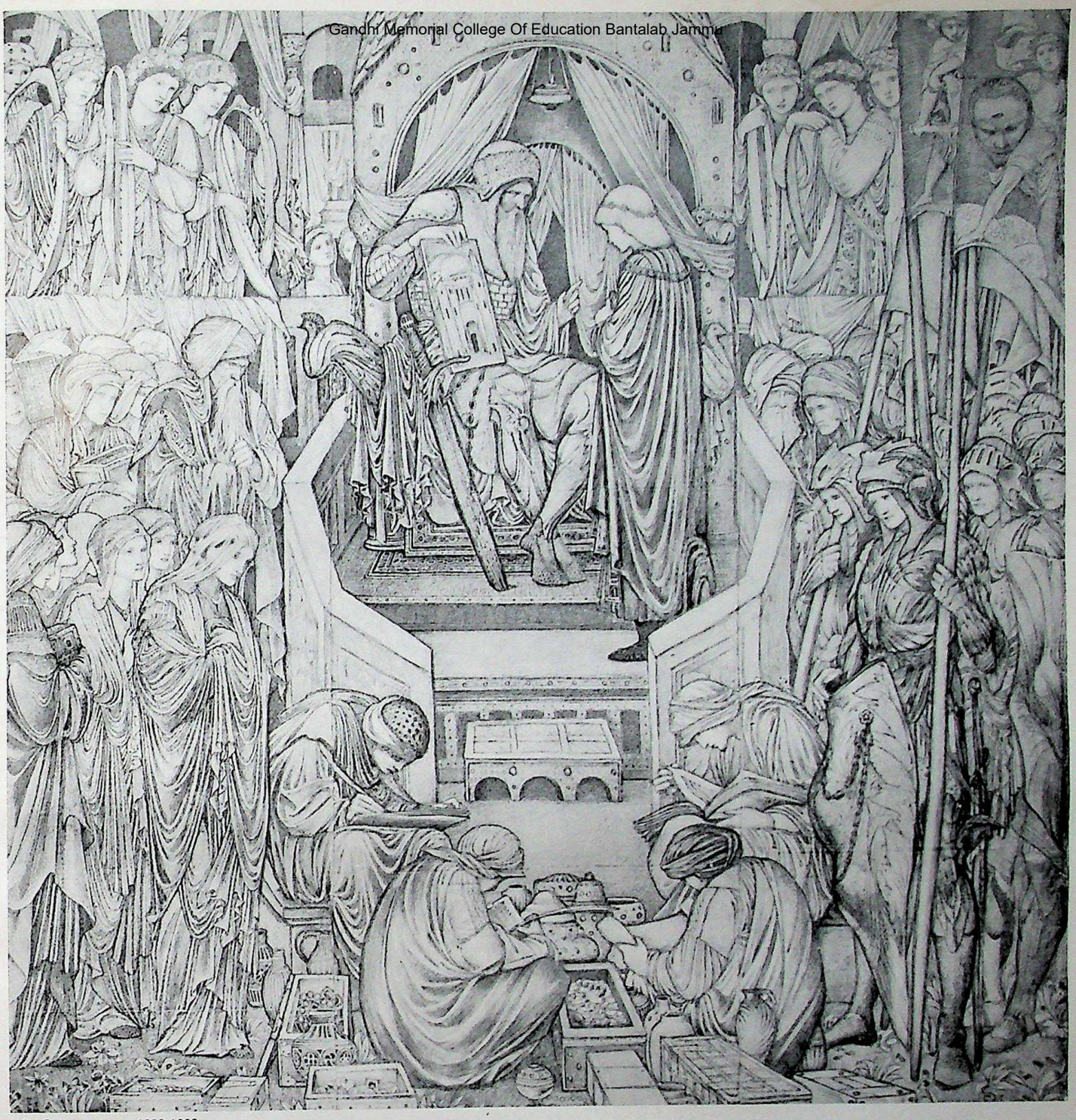

Sir E. Burne-Jones, 1833-1898

"BUILD THE HOUSE OF THE LORD THY GOD"

King David instructing Solomon about the building of the Temple, is the subject of this fine drawing by Sir Edward Burne-Jones. The grace and delicacy of the detail enhance rather than detract from the charm of the linear design. In the background is the musicians' gallery filled with professional players on stringed instruments "made for praising." Many are the allusions in the Psalter to sacred music, arranged by David, which later accompanied the Temple services. In the foreground is depicted a procession of the people bearing precious gifts, which they offered willingly for the construction and adornment of the house of God.

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"HE APPOINTED THE MOON FOR SEASONS"

The glory of the Creator and His power in the heavens, earth, and sea are reviewed in the beautiful nature poem, Psalm civ. The light is His garment, the clouds are His chariot, the winds His messengers. There is no idea of development in the Hebrew poet's view of nature. The creation which praises God, expresses Him and is complete; thus the mountains are everlasting and the moon is appointed for seasons —or established for ever "as a faithful witness in heaven" (Psalm lxxxix, 37). In this tranquil nocturne at Meiron, north-west of Safad, the moonlight falls on the tomb of Rabbi Simeon, Jewish teacher in the 2nd century A.D. Here pilgrims resort annually on the feast of Lag be-Omer, known in Palestine as the Scholars' Festival.

Photo: Nachum Gidal

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"SHE WORKETH WILLINGLY WITH HER HANDS"

Many of the peasant women in Palestine are skilled in needlecraft, making "fine linen" and silk clothing for themselves, or more often for sale, like the virtuous housewife in Proverbs xxxi, 22, 24. They also embroider effective trimmings. In warm weather a favourite place for a sewing party is by the village wall. These girls wear an outer garment with very wide sleeves, over a skirt. The crescent of coins set edgewise on the head holds in position the veil, most distinguishing feature of their dress. It may be of cotton, silk or gauze; white, black, or dark blue. It is usually swept back, but is sufficiently long to bring part of it over the shoulder to veil the face below the eyes or to serve as a scarf at the discretion of the wearer.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

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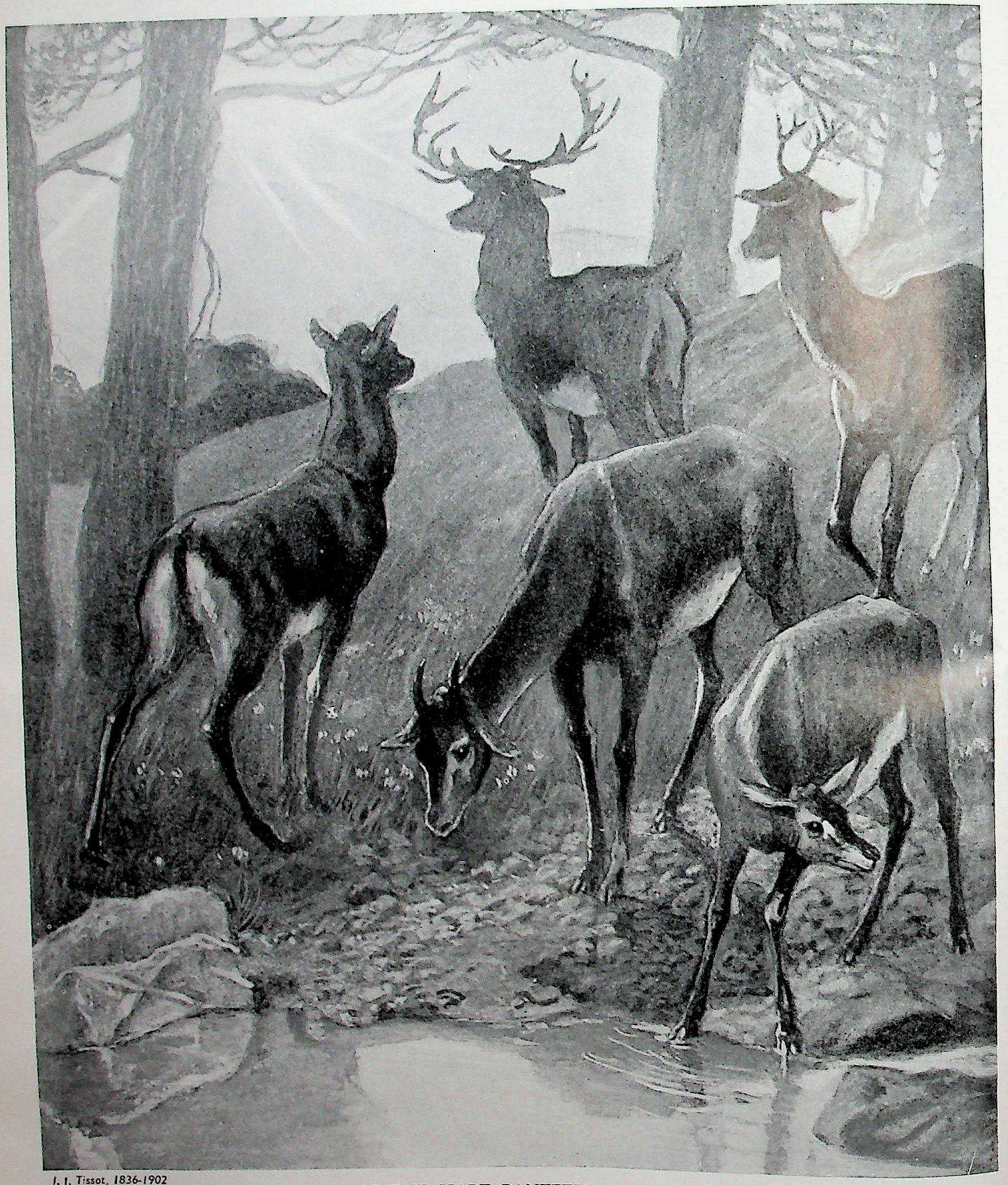

J. J. Tissot, 1836-1902

"As the hart panteth after the water brooks"

The Psalmist in exile, longing for the privilege of worship in the sanctuary at Zion, compares his heart's desire for the "living waters" of the services there with the thirst of the deer in desert places for the mountain streams. "When shall I come and appear before God?" he asks, and laments his banishment from the "holy hill" of Mount Moriah (Psalms xlii, xliii). Tissot's Biblical illustration of deer by a brook in Palestine was drawn from life during the years he spent in the Holy Land. The words hart and hind occurring in the Scriptures may signify either the red deer or the fallow deer.

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D. G. Rossetti, 1828-1882

"MY BELOVED IS MINE, AND I AM HIS"

Framed by the heads of dark-haired attendant maidens is the face of the Bride of the Canticles as it was poetically imagined by Dante Gabriel Rossetti. His picture The Beloved, now in the Tate Gallery, Millbank, marks the peak of his technical achievement in oil painting. The colour scheme is jewel-like in its brilliance of greens, reds and gold; the fairness of the bride is enhanced by the negro boy, bedecked with an exquisitely painted collar of rubies, who holds roses before her. "Who is she that looketh forth as the morning, Fair as the moon, clear as the sun, And as terrible as an army with banners? Return, return, O Shulamite . . . . . that we may look upon thee."

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"THOU SHALT HAVE GOATS' MILK ENOUGH FOR THY FOOD"

Naturally an independent animal, the goat, highly-valued for hair and milk (Proverbs xxvii, 27), is often tamed to docile amiability by Beduin families. This brother and sister spend most of their spare time with their pet. For six months in the year they inhabit the desert in the south of Palestine, but the tribe moves in summer to more fertile regions where grazing may be found for their flocks and herds on uncultivated land. Goats are unpopular with the resident farmers. Ranging the hillsides, these animals eat the new growth of trees, a growth which might one day remedy the evil of past deforestation due to indigence and the destruction of war.

Photo, Mondiale

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and bringing up the total to one hundred and fifty. Soon the Maccabean struggle was upon them. For a few years devout people could not worship at the Temple. The use of the psalms during that time enhanced their value. Soon after the revolt and the recommencement of the services at the newly cleansed temple the text of the psalms was fixed. By the middle of the 2nd century B.C. this finally revised Psalter in its now unequal sections had been given the status of a sacred book—the first book in what was to be the third division of the Canon of the Old Testament, the Writings, a division which was not to be officially completed until two hundred and fifty years or so later.

Psalms Intended for Non-Temple Worship

FROM relatively early times there must have been in worship other interest than the sacrificial—the satisfaction and inspiration that might come through the offering of sacrifices in the prescribed manner on the appointed altar. Not to go any farther back, the reformation of religion in Israel which took place during the latter half of the 7th century B.C. deprived the local sanctuaries of sacrificial status, and sought to confine sacrificial worship to the central sanctuary in Jerusalem. Even if it had not been made before, which is very unlikely, this of itself would compel a beginning to be made in approach to God other than by the customary sacrificial means. The old sites for worship that had been hallowed for so long by custom would not be altogether abandoned. Local religious assembling of themselves would take place, and the restriction imposed by the new legislation depriving them of the ordinary services of a priest would necessitate the rise or the further development ere long of a type of worship such as had to be satisfied with the memory of sacrifices that had been formerly offered there, or with the imagination filled with the sacrificial ministrations which were at the time in operation at the central sanctuary near by or far away, as the case might be.

The catastrophe to Samaria before this time and to Jerusalem afterwards would necessitate similar changes and a similar need for readjustment to meet new conditions. To this there is to be added the experience of exiles both from the northern and from the southern part of the land. There is the case also of people left behind on their native heath, when at last the only sacrificial sanctuary in the land was in ruins. The same conditions would present themselves when, later, pilgrimages to the new shrine became customary. All these and other such like circumstances dictate the idea that for generations before the Exile and afterwards—even after the re-erection of the Temple in Zion—the gathering together without the offering of sacrifices must have been very usual. Hence it is not at all surprising that in the earliest psalter now discernible within the present Psalter there should be some psalms such as were never intended to be used as liturgies or parts of liturgies at the Temple during the offering of sacrifices there. Right through the Psalter there are to be found psalms of a meditative or didactic type, whose purpose was from the first use other than at the public sacrifices or the private offerings at the central shrine. When this element in the Psalter is appreciated as it should be, then it is seen that these early psalter rolls and the Psalter as a whole cannot be understood aright, unless it be fully recognized that from the very beginning of their collection they sought to serve not only a temple, but also a non-temple type of worship, both public and private.

The development of the non-sacrificial type of worship was bound to continue. There could be no going back on the idea of one central sanctuary at which sacrifices were to be offered. From the time of the Exile assemblies of Jewish folk for worship had gone on increasing in Babylonia, Egypt and elsewhere. Ultimately as these assemblies became more organized they emerged as synagogues—places of prayer and for instruction in religion, also social and judicial centres of the people who had come to know themselves to be a people apart. The idea of synagogue-making was encouraged. A few Jewish families would suffice to establish a synagogue.

There was never thought to be any antagonism between the synagogue and the Temple. So little was this the case that within the precincts of the second temple there was a synagogue, and temple singers and others who had taken part in the sacrificial services of the Temple resorted to this synagogue to take part in the worship there, which was conceived to be a completion of the worship of the Temple and a necessary corollary of it. The teaching duties of the priest have been too frequently overlooked, and in fulfilment of them psalms of an acrostic type, of which there are notable examples in the Psalter, would be particularly useful. But that apart, the very architecture of the normal synagogue, the internal arrangement of it, the times of the services which were so often those of the temple services, and the very angle at which it was often built—all this and much more were designed to lead the mind of worshipper to the central shrine in the Holy City, and, when that was no more, to the Temple not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, of which the Temple to the devout was the outward and visible sign.

Some psalms were more suited to the one than to the other. There may have been some that from the first were on occasions equally suitable in either place. At any rate temple hymns could be made suitable for synagogue worship by very slight modification, especially for use by persons who knew the sacrificial services and far away as they might now be from the Temple could think of them as they worshipped in their synagogue. This should be borne in mind, lest in view of what has been said about the sacrificial origin of certain psalms—indeed of a great many psalms—any attempt should be made to fit every psalm of the Psalter into a sacrificial scheme. That there are such psalms—plenty of them—is true, but it is just as true that there are many whose place from the first was more naturally to be found in the non-sacrificial assemblies such as a great variety of circumstances throughout the centuries in as great a variety of places had forced upon the devout in Israel.

Hymns for Use in Home and Synagogue

OFTEN the services of the synagogue were designed to be in correlation to those of the Temple. So when a course of priests went from a neighbourhood to serve at the Temple for their appointed week twice a year, the laity of the district were represented at the Temple by delegates from among themselves whose duty it was to be at the services there during that week. At their home synagogue there were also held during that same week special assemblies for worship each day. Besides, the private use and singing and even composition of psalms was not unusual. Psalms were sung in the home at the passover meal. Psalms are ascribed to individuals in private situations in life. In fact, psalm singing or recitation was the bond of union between worship at the Temple, and worship in the synagogue and the home.

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Further, the completion of the Psalter at one hundred and fifty psalms was probably due to synagogue worship. That this number was deliberately fixed upon is made clear by the fact that while the Septuagint—the Greek version which for some centuries was in use among the Jews—breaks a psalm of the Hebrew Psalter into two psalms, care is taken in the end to put two psalms together to make one psalm and so retain, ignoring the apocryphal psalm, the one hundred and fifty. For those who were accustomed to resort to the synagogue on the Sabbath day, there was a cycle of readings from the Torah or Law which extended over three years. A second lesson was taken from the Prophets, but here the selection was for a while left to the reader who might give either a translation or a paraphrase of the portion of the sacred text that he had been pleased to read as supplementary to the lesson from the Torah for the day. For two Sundays during the great Feast of the year the cycle of lessons from the Law was suspended and other specially appropriate lessons were substituted. Hence the cycle of Law lessons would appear to have been exactly one hundred and fifty. The closing of the Psalter with that very number of psalms, if it did not directly suggest that there should be a similar cycle of psalms for synagogue use, did so indirectly, and the idea would seem to have been in the last editor's mind. In that case it did very pointedly suggest that the Psalter as finally revised should be looked upon as a sacred book to be used in worship much as the Law books were being used. It may indeed have been part of the propaganda to get the Psalter received into the Canon of sacred writings, even if that meant, as it actually did, the opening of a third list, the two existing lists being already regarded as officially closed.

The people whom the final editor represented were not antagonistic to Temple worship. Much rather they wanted to make every synagogue more and more a virtual chapel of their central cathedral. The Psalter—with its psalms that had continued to be used by those who had chosen to remain in residence outside of Palestine, and with its psalms that had been revised and edited and some of them composed since—was very cleverly designed to bring every synagogue, near and far, in spirit inside the courts of the Temple.

The Psalter's Part in Religious Continuity

NOTHING could have demonstrated the close relation and interdependence of synagogue and Temple worship and especially the success of this effort through the Psalter at further unification of the spirit of their worship than the fact that, when the final catastrophe came, and once and for all sacrificial worship ceased at Jerusalem, the synagogue carried over the religious tradition with little or no disturbance of its development. The psalms continued in its order of service very much as they had been in the services of the Temple. Indeed, the psalms in the sacrificial worship had so come to dominate the conception that was held of the sacrifices, that when the outward and visible sign perforce disappeared, the inward and invisible reality persisted to the glory of the ineffable Name. Actually it was the unity of worship resultant upon psalm singing and reading that made that magnificent result possible. Through the psalms the sacrifices to the devout had become a sacrament—an outward and visible sign of the reality of communion with God who is spirit. The Psalter was not only the hymn book of the Temple—it was also the hymn book of the synagogue and the home. It was a book of devotion for all three. As such it reconciled in the experience of the ordinary worshipper the priestly and the prophetic elements in the religion. In the use of the Psalter the priest moved toward the prophet, and the prophet moved toward the priest, and in their fellowship of prayer and praise they together were brought nearer to the only true and living Jehovah—to the glory of His holy name taking their people with them.

God and the After-life in the Psalms

THE difficulty of setting forth the teaching of the Psalter is just the difficulty of giving in a few sentences or paragraphs the teaching of any great hymn book. A hymn must tend to unite worshippers. It must avoid disrupting them. It is therefore most to the point to endeavour to envisage the direction in which the company of people, to whom the final editor of the Psalter belonged, wished to take those who in temple and synagogue and home were to make use of this revised and now officially acknowledged sacred book of devotion.

The Psalter allowed the worshipper to think, if he would, that Jehovah was supreme over all—not only men, but also gods. It is not at all unlikely that there were some worshippers who never got beyond thinking of Jehovah in that way. It did not give them a shock to come across passages in the Psalter that assumed the existence of other gods than Jehovah. They would not experience difficulty in singing them. For others of their fellow worshippers these and other such elements in the Psalter would be just time-honoured phrases such as they would not think it necessary to cut out altogether. There can be little doubt, however, that what was intended to be inculcated was faith in Jehovah as the only true God.

This involved an appreciation of Jehovah as the living God. The idea of a living God was a god who did something—more precisely, a god who could do the impossible. God showed Himself to be living by what He did in nature, and in history—and also in the human soul. In each case, too, the action of God was conceived to be direct action. Laws of nature, and laws of history, and also laws of personal development did not interest them. All nature and history and the human soul were conceived to be miraculous, and what happened therein was due to the acts of God. The worshippers looked back upon experience of these acts of God. They looked forward in hope of them.

What they themselves could do was not very much at its best in comparison with this divine activity. It had, however, relation to the idea that the living God on whose direct action in nature and in history, and in the human soul they relied, was not either an indifferent or an impulsive being. God's own way of living was a manifestation of righteousness to them, and they were expected to see that a god who so lived required righteousness of them. As they sang and prayed with the Psalter in their hands, they were encouraged to think that the righteousness required of them went much deeper than the outward appearance of a man's life. It should of course reveal itself in a man's conduct toward his fellows, but to this all-seeing God it was most to be seen in the condition of a man's heart.

The ceremonies encouraged by the Psalter were such as were tokens of love or reverence to God, and also such as at the same time were parts of a protective policy in regard to the people round about them. They served to keep the individual safely within the compact whole of

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"PELICAN OF THE WILDERNESS." The Hebrew poet desolately comparing himself in his "prayer of the afflicted" (Psalm cii, 6) to a pelican, probably had in mind the natural liking of this bird for uncultivated spaces near water and its unsociable habit of sitting apart for hours after its meal of fish. Pelicans are active in defence of their nestlings and solicitous for their welfare. The above photograph was obtained by first constructing a "hide" for the camera towards which the young birds were driven; the parent pelicans, though suspicious and uneasy, soon followed to guard their squawking offspring.

Photo, Alfred M. Bailey

the community. This community's real mission, too, was to declare the one true and living God, whose direct action in His good providence had kept them a people apart, and whose direct action in every crisis would continue to keep them so.

The corollary of this idea of a holy God, they were taught to think, was a holy people, and the corollary of the idea of a holy people was a holy land. The Temple was designed to be the nerve centre of such a land. That religion-filled land was to be the really illumined patch on the map of the world. That religion-filled land was destined to be a light among the nations. It would have relations for good with lands beyond its borders, and it might even be allowed that a measure of their inhabitants should come within it. The Psalter was designed to keep alive the hope of a holy people in a holy land around a holy temple, and possibly under a holy leader.

Some difference in the details of this outlook had, however, to be allowed for. There were conservatives and liberals among the people to be served by the Psalter. This conservativism and liberalism are to be observed most in respect to two matters. One was in regard to this very idea of a holy land. The division here was substantially that between people who thought that political independence was necessary to the securing of such freedom and purity in worship as they desired, and those who did not mind being under Gentile rulers, if the conditions necessary to worship and pure life as they conceived these to be were forthcoming. This accounts for the indefiniteness of the Messianic doctrine usually sustained throughout the Psalter. The Psalter allows each member of the congregation using it to take his own line here. If anything, the bias is just a little on the side of encouraging the necessity of political independence. The "back to David" idea persists, though the "back to Moses" idea keeps it in some restraint. If one may so put it, the Mosaic idea of what should be leavens the Davidic idea for good.

The other difference of outlook which is allowed for in the Psalter is in respect to what happens after death. For the most part the idea of a life after death, in which the human soul can know God, and God can know the human soul, is absent. Very many worshippers could not have got beyond the notion that the life of the soul with God was rounded off with man's three-score years and ten. The worshipper was God's happy guest here and now in this the only land of the living that there was and that there was going to be. Over against this, the users of the Psalter were brought in front of the idea that God could not let the human soul go, and the human soul on his part might well feel that he could not bear to think that death would end his valued communion with God.

The Psalter here allows the worshipper, if he will, to peep through into the Beyond in hope that there may be something there for him after all. The final editor of the Psalter was probably of that class in Judaism, who would encourage this. But he could not go farther without defeating his purpose—the union of all devout classes in the community in the worship of Jehovah alone, and in service of Him, to the great improvement of their relationships to one another.

Probably the class whom the final editor of the Psalter represents was never quite satisfied with his moderation in these two respects. That dissatisfaction may have occasioned the rise of a small, independent psalter a few generations later. About the middle of the 1st century B.C. the Psalms of Solomon appeared—the unofficial psalter of those who professed to take the wiser view on the points at issue. Therein the reader will find that the doctrine of the coming of a promised Messiah to establish and rule a people of God in a holy land, and the doctrine of a full life for the human soul in a real Hereafter in which there would come to each rewards and punishments as deserved by what had been done here, are clearly taught. These were at the time sectarian views in Israel, and the Psalter was not on the side of sectarianism in Judaism.

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Poetic Wisdom of Proverbs

PHILOSOPHY is represented in Hebrew Literature by the writings of the "wise man." These scholarly teachers of manners and morals were not, however, concerned with metaphysical arguments. The fear of the Lord is the beginning and end of wisdom, which is manifested in virtuous living and prudent conduct of affairs. Common-sense is a strong characteristic of many of the maxims in Proverbs. But the teachings range from practical advice on homely subjects to such high poetical discourse as the contents of the eighth chapter, where personified wisdom is described in connexion with the work of God from the beginning of all things—and to the fine passage in praise of wisdom.

MANY authors are mentioned in the book—Solomon, Agur, Hezekiah's Men, the Wise Men and King Lemuel. As in Psalms materials have been collected from various periods and, according to Hebrew custom, the whole compilation receives honour by being associated with Solomon's name, permanent symbol of the wise man. The varied contents are unified by being poetical in form. The basis is the unit proverb, a distich or couplet in echoing (synonymous), in completing (synthetical), or in contrasting (antithetical) parallelism. An example of the first is: "How long wilt thou sleep, O sluggard? When wilt thou arise out of thy sleep?" (vi, 9); of the second: "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom: And the knowledge of the holy is understanding" (ix, 10); third: "Hatred stirreth up strifes: But love covereth all sins" (x, 12).

THE aptness of the similes makes the beauty of many of the sayings: "He that hath no rule over his own spirit is like a city that is broken down, and without walls" (xxv, 28). "As in water face answereth to face, So the heart of man to man" (xxvii, 19). The verse in Proverbs is gnomic in style—that is, it sets forth maxims and short pithy discourses. Sometimes an idea is amplified from one couplet into a group to make a charming little poem, such as the Four Small Things, or a didactic one such as the Sluggard, quoted below from the Revised Version. The book ends with the well-known description, an acrostic in the Hebrew, of the virtuous woman, which has been called "the A B C of the perfect wife."

IN PRAISE OF WISDOM
iii, 13—26

HAPPY is the man that findeth wisdom,
And the man that getteth understanding.
For the merchandise of it is better than the merchandise of silver,
And the gain thereof than fine gold.
She is more precious than rubies:
And all the things thou canst desire are not to be compared unto her.
Length of days is in her right hand;
And in her left hand riches and honour.
Her ways are ways of pleasantness,
And all her paths are peace.
She is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her; [her.
And happy is every one that retaineth
The Lord by wisdom hath founded the earth;
By understanding hath he established the heavens. [up,
By his knowledge the depths are broken
And the clouds drop down the dew.
My son, let not them depart from thine eyes:
Keep sound wisdom and discretion:
So shall they be life unto thy soul,
And grace to thy neck.
Then shalt thou walk in thy way safely,
And thy foot shall not stumble.
When thou liest down, thou shalt not be afraid. [shall be sweet.
Yea, thou shalt lie down, and thy sleep
Be not afraid of sudden fear,
Neither of the desolation of the wicked, when it cometh.
For the Lord shall be thy confidence,
And shall keep thy foot from being taken.

THE SLUGGARD
R.V. vi, 6—11; xxiv, 30—34

GO to the ant, thou sluggard;
Consider her ways, and be wise:
Which having no chief,
Overseer, or ruler,
Provideth her meat in the summer,
And gathereth her food in the harvest.
How long wilt thou sleep, O sluggard!
When wilt thou arise out of thy sleep?
Yet a little sleep, a little slumber,
A little folding of the hands to sleep:
So shall thy poverty come as a robber,
And thy want as an armed man.
I went by the field of the slothful,
And by the vineyard of the man void of understanding; [thorns.
And, lo, it was all grown over with
The face thereof was covered with nettles, [down.
And the stone wall thereof was broken
Then I beheld, and considered well:
I saw, and received instruction.
Yet a little sleep, a little slumber,
A little folding of the hands to sleep:
So shall thy poverty come as a robber,
And thy want as an armed man.

CONTRASTS
xi, 1, 3, 22; xv, 1, 13, 17

A FALSE balance is abomination to the Lord,
But a just weight is his delight.

The integrity of the upright shall guide them: [shall destroy them.
But the perverseness of transgressors

As a jewel of gold in a swine's snout,
So is a fair woman which is without discretion.

A soft answer turneth away wrath:
But grievous words stir up anger.

A merry heart maketh a cheerful countenance: [broken.
But by sorrow of the heart the spirit is

Better is a dinner of herbs where love is,
Than a stalled ox and hatred therewith.

FOUR SMALL THINGS
xxx, 24—28

THERE be four things which are little upon the earth,
But they are exceeding wise;
The ants are a people not strong,
Yet they prepare their meat in the summer,
The conies are but a feeble folk,
Yet make they their houses in the rocks;
The locusts have no king,
Yet go they forth all of them by bands;
The spider taketh hold with her hands,
And is in kings' palaces.

THE GOOD WIFE
xxxi, 10—16, 19—22, 24—29

WHO can find a virtuous woman?
For her price is far above rubies.
The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her,
So that he shall have no need of spoil.
She will do him good and not evil
All the days of her life.
She seeketh wool, and flax,
And worketh willingly with her hands.
She is like the merchants' ships;
She bringeth her food from afar.
She riseth also while it is yet night,
And giveth meat to her household,
And a portion to her maidens.
She considereth a field, and buyeth it:
With the fruit of her hands she planteth a vineyard.

She layeth her hands to the spindle,
And her hands hold the distaff.
She stretcheth out her hand to the poor;
Yea, she reacheth forth her hands to the needy.
She is not afraid of the snow for her household: [scarlet.
For all her household are clothed with
She maketh herself coverings of tapestry;
Her clothing is silk and purple.
She maketh fine linen, and selleth it;
And delivereth girdles unto the merchants.

Strength and honour are her clothing;
And she shall rejoice in time to come.
She openeth her mouth with wisdom;
And in her tongue is the law of kindness.
She looketh well to the ways of her household,
And eateth not the bread of idleness.
Her children arise up, and call her blessed;
Her husband also, and he praiseth her.
Many daughters have done virtuously,
But thou excellest them all.

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Proverbs

The Book and Its Story

Wit and Wisdom Garnered from the Hebrew Sages

by REV. PREB. W. O. E. OESTERLEY, M.A., D.D., D. Litt.

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IN the Book of Proverbs there are incorporated various collections of wise sayings on religious, moral, and social subjects. Altogether, it is possible to discern ten collections which have here been gathered in a single book, some of them being very much longer than others; indeed, in the case of the shorter ones they are probably excerpts only from existing collections; in one case, at any rate, this can be definitely proved, as we shall see. Here and there the attempt is made to group subjects together; but, generally speaking, the material is presented without co-ordination of subject-matter, with the result that there is a certain amount of repetition. It is not to be denied, therefore, that in reading chapter after chapter there is inevitably a certain feeling of boredom. But the fact is that this book, apart from some special sections, is not adapted for continuous reading, like the other books of the Bible. While one can take almost any individual verse and find in it food for edifying thought, to read many verses consecutively is apt to overload the mind. We may compare small things with great and say that to take in too much of any good thing at a time may have untoward effects; as a modern sage wrote once: "'Tis a fatal disadvantage to be cockered and to eat too much cake!" The mind must not be surfeited any more than the body. Generally speaking, then, it will be wise to take only a few verses of this book at a time, and to digest them mentally.

The contents of the collections may be summarized thus: The first six verses are introductory; they make it clear that it is for the spiritual and moral benefit of young men that all which follows has been compiled, in order that they should "receive the instruction of wisdom, justice, and judgment, and equity."

'Counsel is Mine, and Sound Wisdom'

THE first collection is comprised in i, 7—ix, 18; its outstanding characteristic is the way in which Wisdom is personified. She is spoken of as going out into the streets of the city to warn men of the consequences if they ignore the precepts she offers them, and to assure them of the benefits they will gain for themselves if guided by her teaching (i, 20-33; ii, 1-22; iii, 15-18; viii, 1-12). Elsewhere Wisdom is represented as a wealthy hostess who dispatches messengers inviting all and sundry to the banquet she has prepared in her beautiful mansion (ix, 1-6). But the special importance of this personification of Wisdom is seen in the description of her as the companion of the Almighty, Who created her before the beginning of the world; during the work of Creation, it is said that she was with God as His "delight"; she is also described as a "master workman," thus implying that she was God's instrument when He created all things (viii, 22-36; *see* also iii, 19, 20). The whole picture is remarkable; but it will, of course, be realized that it is Oriental imagery, expressing the thought that in the Almighty all wisdom is centred; we recall the psalmist's words in reference to the works of Creation: "In wisdom hast thou made them all" (Psalm civ, 24). At the same time, this conception of Wisdom was destined in later days to become the background of a doctrine of profound importance; to this further reference will be made when the teaching of the book is dealt with.

The rest of this collection consists of a great number of wise sayings of a practical nature, such as: obedience to parents; warnings against consorting with bad people; exhortations to be kindly in behaviour to others, to cultivate truthfulness, humility, and self-control; to avoid quarrelsomeness, envy, bad language, impurity, sloth; besides many other matters too numerous to give in detail.

'The Foolishness of Fools'

IN the second collection (x, 1—xxii, 16) there are sayings of a similar character, and even more numerous; many are more or less the same as in the preceding collection, which shows that the two collections are of different authorship, for one writer would hardly repeat himself in this way. Notable about this collection is the, generally speaking, shorter form of the sayings; they are, for the most part, self-contained, consisting of two sentences, sometimes of only one; whereas in the former collection the tendency is towards a more extended form. A notable characteristic of this collection is the way in which various types of "fools" are pilloried; this is very interesting, sometimes even amusing; those old sages had a sense of wit, and ridicule is often more effective than denunciation. This subject will demand some attention in considering the teaching of the book.

The third collection is a very short one (xxii, 17—xxiii, 14), but it is of quite extraordinary interest on account of its origin; this will be dealt with in the next section. In content it has not much to offer which is not found in the other collections; the sayings are nearly all quite short, and deal with such subjects as kindness to the poor, avoid the company of bad-tempered people, be diligent in business, do not over-eat yourself, keep from dishonest gain, do not trouble about fools, do not remove a widow's land-mark, smack naughty boys.

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The fourth collection is again a short one (xxiii, 15—xxiv, 22), while the fifth (xxiv, 23-34) can hardly be called a collection; but a point of interest, applying to both, lies in their outward form; for, whereas in the rest of the book the proverbs almost always consist of two lines, in these two collections they are four-lined. To explain why these are regarded as two collections—an opinion not shared by all authorities—is not called for here; it is a matter of minor importance. In point of content neither of these two collections offers anything that calls for special mention.

The sixth collection is longer (xxv-xxix); both in form and content there is much in common between this and the second collection (x, 1—xxii, 16); again and again it is seen that, sometimes single lines, sometimes couplets, are identical, or nearly so, in the two collections; what has already been said about the second collection applies here, and need not be repeated. What should, however, be emphasized is that in the latter part of this collection (Chapters xxviii, xxix) the Law is extolled, and the religious element becomes much more prominent. This does not necessarily imply difference of authorship; but it shows that in later times, when reverence for the Law increased more and more, some scribe who copied out these chapters felt impelled to emphasize the importance of the Law, and with it the insistence on religious observances.

The remaining four collections, or rather, excerpts from four different collections, are very short: xxx, 1-14; xxx, 15-33; xxxi, 1-9; xxxi, 10-31. It may well be asked why these fragments should be thought to be independent pieces; detailed reasons would be out of place here; it will suffice to say that the great differences in content and spirit mark them as being of different origin; but even more convincing is the fact that they stand in separated and independent positions in the Greek Version of the Hebrew, and this translation was made from a Hebrew text many centuries older than the present form of that text. With the exception of the last of these four collections the contents are much on the lines of the rest of the book. But the last is unique in the Hebrew Wisdom literature; its content is indicated in the opening words: "A virtuous woman who can find? For her worth is above rubies." The question does not imply that a virtuous woman is rare, it is a rhetorical way of expressing admiration; the whole section is a panegyric on woman which reflects all honour on the writer.

The Sources of the Sayings

BEFORE we come to consider the interesting question of the origins of the Book of Proverbs, there are two preliminary matters about which a few words must be said, for they are not unconnected with the main subject. We have been dealing with the collections embodied in our book, but one thing regarding them we did not touch upon because it comes more appropriately in this section, and that is, the titles which stand at the head of nearly all of them. The first collection has the title: "The proverbs of Solomon, the son of David, King of Israel" (i, 1); this cannot apply to the whole book because of the presence of the other titles; nevertheless, the Christian Church, following herein the Jewish Church, held for many centuries the belief that the whole Book of Proverbs was written by Solomon; we shall deal with this subject presently.

One point in the title of this first collection calls for a word of comment: the description of Solomon as the King of Israel would be so unnecessary for Jews that the conclusion is forced upon us that this collection was intended to be for Gentiles as well as for Jews; the point is of greater significance than appears at first sight. As will be pointed out later, Wisdom Literature was not confined to the Jews; it was a world-wide literature; all the greater civilizations of the past cultivated it; and it can be proved that there was interchange of thought among the Wisdom teachers of different countries. This is, then, incidentally illustrated by the indication in our title that the collection of proverbs at the head of which it stands was intended to benefit non-Jews as well as Jews.

The title of the second collection is: "The Proverbs of Solomon" (x, 1); as we shall see, this collection cannot have come from Solomon, and there can be little doubt that its title was originally simply "Proverbs"; but some scribe who copied out this collection when it still stood as an independent one, took it into his head to count the number of proverbs it contained, and he found that there were 375; now, all the letters of the Hebrew alphabet have a numerical value, and the letters of the name "Solomon," when added up, make exactly 375; so this scribe, being of an ingenious turn of mind, felt that he might appropriately indicate the number of proverbs contained in the collection in its title, with the result that Solomon became the author!

The third collection has the title: "Sayings of the Wise"; but the Hebrew scribe, not realizing that this was a separate collection, put the title into the text, thus: "Incline thine ear, and hear the words of the wise, and apply thine heart unto my knowledge" (xxii, 17 R.V.); what he ought to have written was: "and hear *my* words," to correspond with *my* knowledge; that this is the fact is proved by the Greek Version, which has the title separate from the text, and reads "my words" in the text.

THERE is no title to the fourth collection; but the little fifth collection has the title: "These also belong to the Wise Men" (xxiv, 23).

In the title to the sixth collection we have again a literary curiosity; it runs: "These also are proverbs of Solomon, which the men of Hezekiah, king of Judah, copied out" (xxv, 1 R.V.); in this collection there are 137 proverbs, and the numerical value of the letters composing the name "Hezekiah" is 136; probably the extra proverb was added by mistake later. This close correspondence between the numerical value of the name of Hezekiah and the number of proverbs in the collection can hardly be fortuitous, especially in view of what is the case in the second collection. But there was a special reason why Hezekiah's name should have been placed in this title; to this we shall refer again.

The title that has been bestowed on the seventh collection presents a great difficulty, for (as might be shown by the use of Hebrew type) it is quite evident that the Hebrew text is corrupt; as it stands, it runs:

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"The words of Agur, the son of Yakeh; the oracle"; both names are quite unknown, and the contents of the collection are very far from being an oracle. In the Greek Version the title is: "Be in awe of my words, my son; and receiving them, repent"; the interesting thing is that when this is put into Hebrew it represents a text very similar to that of the present Hebrew text so far as the letters are concerned; it is, therefore, highly probable that the Greek form represents the original title, the Hebrew having gone wrong through the careless copying of a scribe. The eighth collection has the title: "The words of king Lemuel; the oracle which his mother taught him" (xxxi, 1 R.V.); to discuss this title would involve too much space, and it is not of sufficient importance. It contains, however, one point of interest in that it indicates that the collection was not of Jewish origin; to this we shall return. The last two collections have no titles.

So much, then, for the titles of these various collections; and it will have been realized that they have a distinct bearing on the question of the origins of the Book of Proverbs.

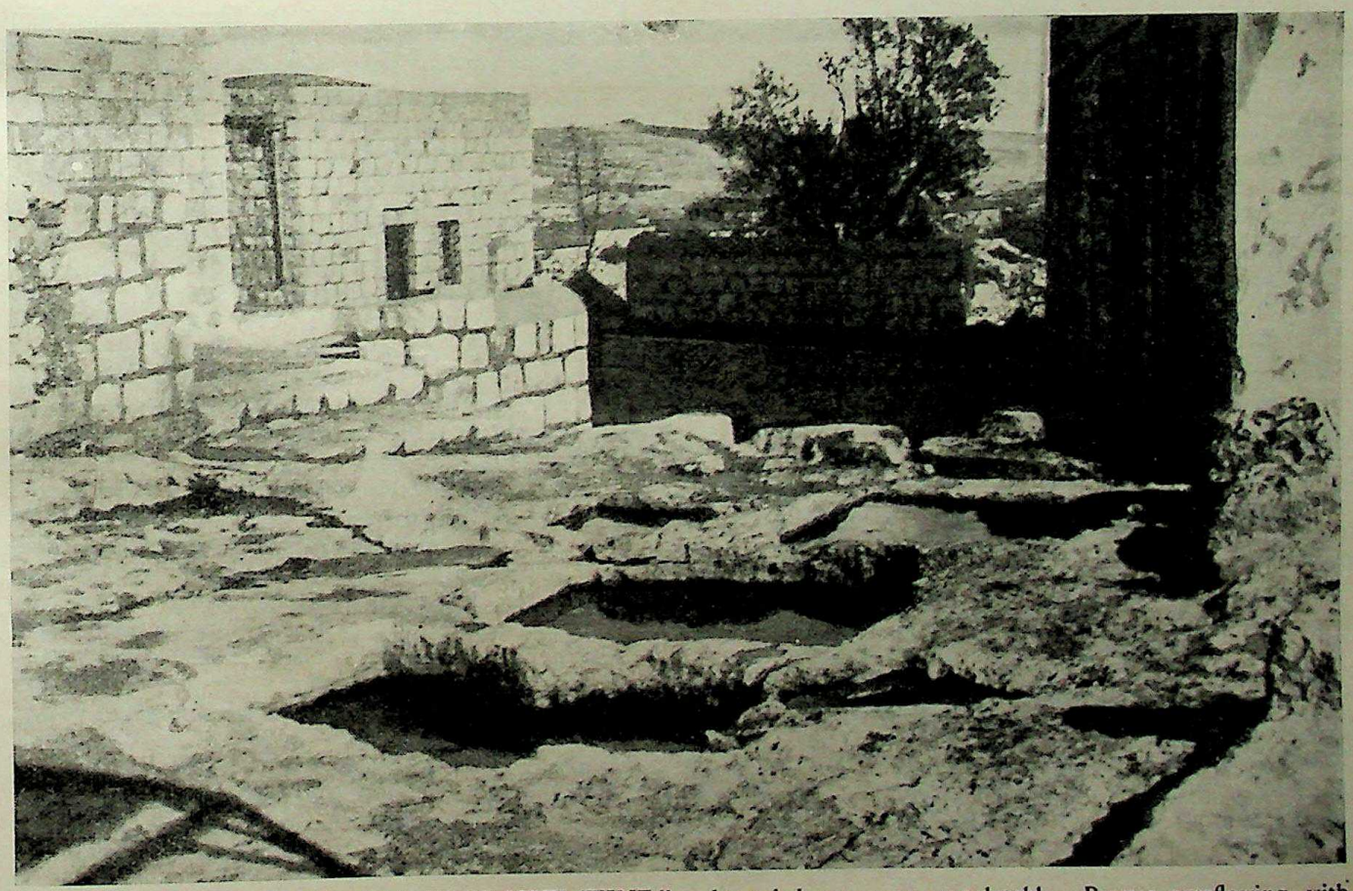
The other preliminary matter mentioned at the beginning of this section, is also, though indirectly, connected with origins; it is that of the dates of the different collections.

In face of the preconceived belief, handed down by tradition, that the entire Book of Proverbs was written by Solomon, *i.e.*, nearly a thousand years before the beginning of the Christian era, this subject of dates assumes a somewhat controversial character. It is, therefore, well to state at the outset that no modern scholar would dream of maintaining that this book originated with Solomon. Some of the reasons for this unanimous conviction involve a discussion on technicalities which would be out of place here; others, which appeal to the non-expert, will be dealt with presently. But while this applies to the collections as a whole, it may well be that some of the sayings contained in them, perhaps in a simpler form, go back to the time of Solomon, and were uttered by him.

Gleaning the Aphorisms of Five Centuries

WE do not propose to bore our readers with detailed arguments in support of the dates of the collections; it will suffice if we merely give the dates, which cannot, in any case, be more than approximate. The earliest, at any rate in its original form, is the third collection (xxii, 17—xxiii, 14); this was taken from an Egyptian Wisdom book, and adapted to Israelite readers; we shall refer to it again; it was written about the middle of the 8th century B.C., possibly earlier. The collections two to six belong to about 700 B.C., and the first, together with the seventh to the ninth may be dated about 300 B.C., while the tenth is probably a century later. Some differences of opinion certainly exist among scholars; but upon the whole it may be claimed that the dates given would be accepted by the majority.

We come now to deal more particularly with the origins of the Book of Proverbs; and it will be noted that we say *origins*, in the plural. For the origins are to be sought, in the first place, among the Israelites themselves, and in the second place, in non-Israelite sources.



"PRESSES SHALL BURST OUT WITH NEW WINE." While the abuse of strong drink is uncompromisingly censured in the Book of Proverbs, Wisdom mingling grape juice with water (ix, 2, 5) invites the people to drink freely. Plain cistern-stored water, on which most of the inhabitants of Palestine depended, was very unpalatable. Presses overflowing with wine were a sign of prosperity, and according to the Wise Man's traditional outlook, the reward of the righteous (iii, 10). In many parts of the country are to be found remains of such presses, consisting of troughs with connecting channel.

Photo, Newtonian Illustrated Press

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"HOW LONG WILT THOU SLEEP, O SLUGGARD?" Overcome with drowsiness in the noonday heat, this Arab youth, disregarding the uncomfortable nature of street steps as a resting-place, flopped down for a nap. For a while at this somnolent hour in the native, north-east quarter of inner Jerusalem he may remain undisturbed. The Hebrew sage would have found his sloth a fitting subject for rebuke: "Yet a little slumber, A little folding of the hands to sleep: so shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth, and thy want as an armed man" (Proverbs vi, 10, 11).

Photo, Nachum Gidal

Long before the subject of wisdom had assumed a literary form among the Israelites it was current in simple oral proverbial sayings; that is common to all peoples when a certain stage of culture has been attained. Short, pithy sayings become popular when they express something which the experience of life shows to be true; and, being employed when appropriate occasions arise, their frequent utterance makes them generally familiar, and therefore common property.

THERE are quite a number of such pithy sayings in various books of the Old Testament; a few of these are worth quoting, and it is interesting to note that sometimes the truth conveyed finds its equivalent in a modern English proverb, or, if not an exact equivalent, something approximating to it. Thus, in I. Samuel x, 12, we are told of the origin of the proverb: "Is Saul also among the prophets?" This proverb expresses surprise at Saul associating with a type of prophet who was looked down upon; we might almost express it by the ancient proverb now in common use: "They that touch pitch will be defiled." In I. Samuel xxiv, 13, what is called a "proverb of the ancients" runs: "Out of the wicked cometh forth wickedness" (R.V.); it sounds self-evident, but even the obvious may, in certain circumstances, be effectively uttered. One of the prophets put it in another way: "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots?" (Jeremiah xiii, 23).

A very wise proverb occurs in I. Kings xx, 11, which in the Hebrew is expressed in four words: "Let not him that girdeth on his armour boast himself as he that putteth it off"; or, as we might say, "Don't count your chickens before they are hatched!" Another proverb of wide application occurs, according to the amended Hebrew text, in Amos vi, 12: "Do they plough the sea with oxen?" Useless labour is sometimes expressed nowadays by the phrase, "ploughing the sands." Another prophet uttered the current proverb: "They sow the wind and they shall reap the whirlwind" (Hosea viii, 7 R.V.). In Ezekiel xviii, 2, another "ancient proverb" is quoted: "The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge." And there are many others which could be quoted.

Two things are to be noted about all the sayings of this kind: they are purely ethical; there is not necessarily anything of a religious nature about them; of religious proverbs we shall speak presently. And the other thing is their brevity; this comes out more clearly when they are read in the original language. Here, then, is to be discerned the first of the origins of the Book of Proverbs.

FOR many centuries wise sayings were thus current among the Israelites in an oral form; composed on the basis of everyday experiences, and uttered on manifold occasions, they became widely known, and were quoted by all and sundry, just as we use proverbial sayings at the present day in appropriate circumstances. Doubtless they were adapted in various ways and applied on all kinds of occasions. By degrees, therefore, a large body of sayings, curt, pithy and variously applicable, came into existence. Those incidentally mentioned in the Old Testament, it is safe to say, represent but a fraction of the large number which must have been current. That we have here one of the foundations upon which the Book of Proverbs was ultimately built stands to reason; but it can be illustrated in an interesting way. As already pointed out, the chief characteristic, so far as form is concerned, of the earliest type of proverb is its brevity; it always consists of a single sentence. Now in the Book of Proverbs, as we now have it, there are three forms which proverbial sayings take. By far the commonest is that which consists of two parallel lines, and these are of different types. We have, for example, what is called antithetic parallelism, which occurs the most frequently: "A soft answer turneth away wrath, But a grievous word stirreth up anger" (xv, 1 R.V.), two thoughts being placed in opposition; or else there is synthetic parallelism, as in xvi, 18: "Pride goeth before destruction, And an haughty spirit before a fall," the second line reiterating the thought of the first; then we have also continuous parallelism, where the second line continues the thought of the first: "A servant that dealeth wisely shall have rule over a son that causeth shame, And shall have part in the inheritance among the brethren" (xvii, 2 R.V.).

Slightly more developed is the extended form which runs on beyond a single verse, such as in xxiv, 13, 14:

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"My son, eat thou honey, for it is good; And the honeycomb, which is sweet to thy taste; So shalt thou know wisdom to be unto thy soul; If thou hast found it, then shall there be a reward" (R.V.). It is this last type which leads on to the most developed form of proverbial sayings; that, namely, which takes the form of what may be called a miniature essay, wherein the original thought is discursively dealt with; the most notable of these in our book occurs in viii, 22-31; it is too long to quote, and we shall be referring to it again. But there is a fourth form, and, in the present connexion, it is the most important as illustrating one of the sources of origin of our book.

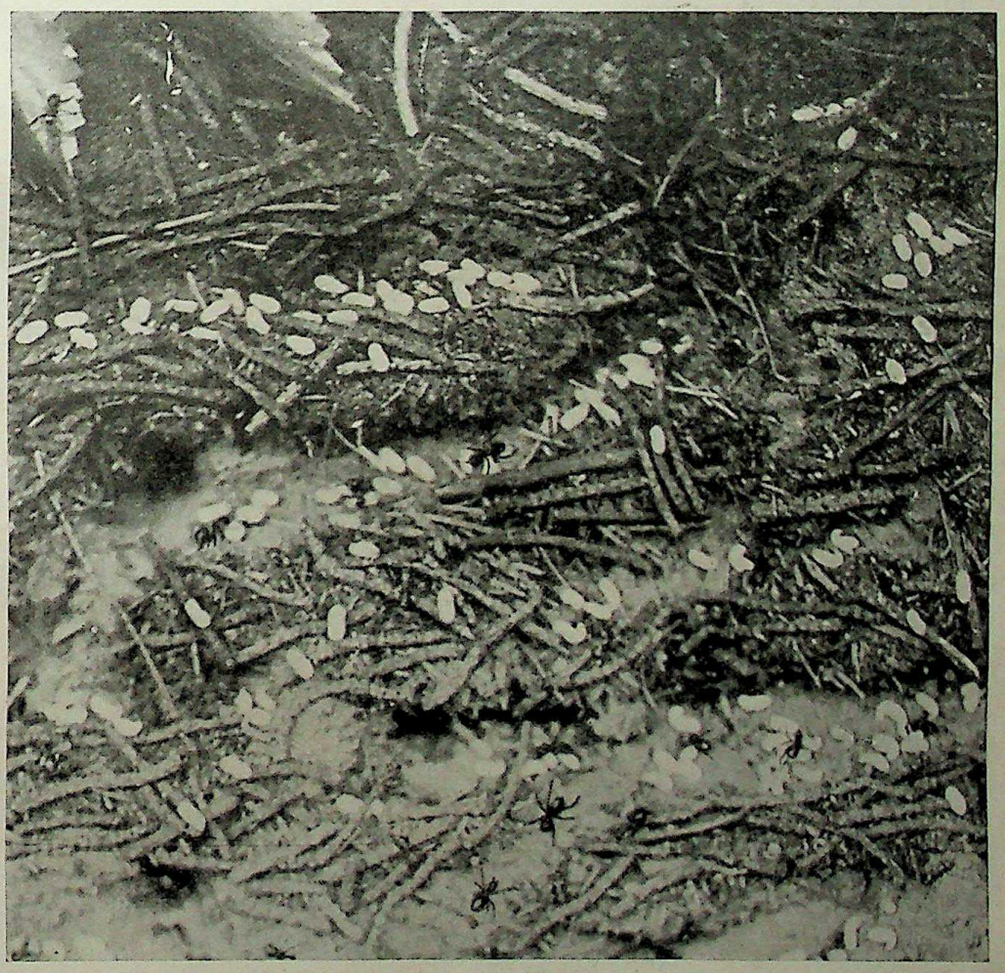
It was said just now that the most primitive form of proverb was a simple, short, and self-contained sentence; indeed, that is self-evident. Now, in the Book of Proverbs some of these earliest proverbs have been preserved; their one-line form differs in this respect from everything else found in the book. There are not many of them, but sufficient to illustrate the matter under consideration; and an interesting point about them is that a line has been added to them by some sage in order to construct a couplet, and thus bring the form into agreement with the normal, developed form of proverb; but the added line is quite inappropriate, showing that originally the proverb was a single sentence. A few illustrations will make the matter clear. In xiii, 14, (R.V.) there is the excellent proverb: "The teaching of the wise is a fountain of life"; this is a self-contained sentence, simple and straightforward; but to it the unnecessary line has been added: "To depart from the snares of death"; the two lines, moreover, present two different figures. It is evident, therefore, that the first line was an independent proverb of the simple type. Again, in xiii, 12, we have the well-known proverb: "Hope deferred maketh the heart sick"; another simple, self-contained proverb; but a comment is added in order to make it a couplet: "But when the desire cometh, it is a tree of life," which is simply another form of xiii, 19: "The desire accomplished is sweet to the soul," and is quite uncalled-for.

An interesting illustration occurs in xiv, 4; the first line is a genuine ancient and popular proverb. One word in the Hebrew has been miswritten: it should run: "Where no oxen are there is no corn"; that is a pregnant way of saying: "No oxen, no ploughing; no ploughing, no sowing; no sowing, no corn"; it is a pointed way of expressing cause and effect, and requires no further words; but somewhat ineptly the words are added: "But much increase is by the strength of the ox." One more illustration from several which could be given: in xviii, 11, there is a single-line ancient proverb: "A rich man's wealth is his strong city" (R.V.); or, as we say, Wealth is power. That again stands self-contained; but quite inappropriately a sage has added: "And as an high wall is his imagination."

Repetition Tells of the Compiler's Work

ANOTHER thing which likewise shows that older current sayings have been incorporated in the Book of Proverbs are the repetitions of proverbs, not necessarily quite identical in form, but sufficiently similar to show that the same proverb has been employed. Thus, in xii, 11, and xxviii, 19, we have the single-line proverb: "He that tilleth his land shall have plenty of bread" (R.V.); this simple, self-evident saying is obviously ancient. Very similar, but not quite identical, is the repeated proverb, the simplicity of which vouches for its antiquity, which occurs in xix, 24, and xxvi, 15: "The sluggard burieth his hand in the dish, It wearieth him to bring it to his mouth again"; the second line reads like an explanatory comment on the first; but, in any case, we have here the same proverb repeated, which points to its familiarity. There are other instances of such repetitions, but these will suffice for our purpose.

What has been said, then, all points to the fact that old, current proverbs were utilized by the writers whose



"THE ANTS ARE A PEOPLE NOT STRONG." In the short poem on four small things that "are exceeding wise," the ants are extolled because "they prepare their meat in the summer (Proverbs xxx, 25), thus typifying the industrious thrift which lays up store against a rainy day. They are an example to the sluggard, for they work without compulsion from "guide, overseer, or ruler." The Hebrew sage has been proved correct; harvest granaries find a place in the ant city. The photograph shows the nest of a community after the top had been carefully removed and the system of galleries revealed.

Photo, S. N. Sedgwick

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"IT IS NAUGHT, IT IS NAUGHT, SAITH THE BUYER." The highly-practical wisdom of the Hebrew sages finds expression in pithy comments on daily life. Keenly observant, they deal with topics which have a widely-human, almost universal, interest. Business affairs are touched on as shrewdly as domestic relationships; idlers, drunkards, thieves, the improvident and the quarrelsome are adversely criticized in both connexions. A single proverb may describe an episode. Thus "It is naught, it is naught, saith the buyer; but when he hath gone his way, he boasteth," tells the tale of most successful purchases in Oriental marts. A bargaining scene in the bazaar or "souk" at Beersheba is depicted above.

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collections have been incorporated in the Book of Proverbs, and that, therefore, one of the origins of this book is to be sought in the body of popular proverbs current both among the more thoughtful, as well as among the ordinary folk, which had existed for centuries previously.

Now, it will readily be understood that, given the existence of a scattered mass of proverbial sayings, a time will come when, with the rise of literary activity, a certain type of thoughtful men will be interested in these evidences of popular wisdom, and begin to collect them and write them down. And what more natural than that the thought expressed in a popular proverb should suggest further thought in the minds of the collectors, and thus induce them to compose proverbs of their own? That this is what actually happened we have ample proof.

The making of such collections, at first of modest content, would thus be the second stage in the process. And here we have some evidence to guide us. Incidental reference was made above to the tradition that Solomon was the author of the Book of Proverbs; quite out of the question as this is for various reasons, there is, on the other hand, some indication that Solomon was one of the early collectors just mentioned, and that he, too, composed some proverbs on his own account. What is said about this in the Old Testament belongs, it is true, to later times, and the somewhat exaggerated output of proverbs attributed to Solomon is, therefore, natural enough. This is what is said of him: "And he spake three thousand proverbs; and his songs were a thousand and five. And he spake of trees, from the cedar that is in Lebanon even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall; he spake also of beasts, and of fowl, and of creeping things, and of fishes. And there came of all peoples to hear the wisdom of Solomon, from all kings of the earth, which had heard of his wisdom" (I. Kings iv, 32-34 R.V.). Then, again, it is told of the visit of the queen of Sheba, who came to prove him with "hard questions," and was overwhelmed by his wisdom and wealth (I. Kings x, 1-9). While all these statements are not to be taken *au pied de la lettre*, the tradition of Solomon's wisdom cannot have been founded on nothing; traditions among the Israelites were always based on some modicum of fact. This tradition, therefore, points to the fact that collections of proverbs existed as early as the time of Solomon, and that he had something to do with them.

ANOTHER piece of evidence is contained in the title given to our sixth collection, where it is said that the men of King Hezekiah copied out Solomon's proverbs. This is about two and a half centuries later than the time of Solomon; but here again the tradition of Hezekiah's interest in the collecting of proverbs is based on fact; in II. Kings xix, 3 he is credited with uttering the proverb: "The children are come to the birth, and there is not strength to bring forth." If he composed proverbs himself he was likely to have been interested in the collecting of them, as is implied in the title of the collection mentioned.

Again, the writers of proverbs were known as the Wise Men *par excellence*, the technical term being *Chakamim*,

"A MERRY HEART." To all appearances this smiling Arab merchant has the merry heart that "maketh a cheerful countenance" (Proverbs xv, 13). The Hebrew sage would commend the man who was joyful after a good day's business if he had legitimately made the best of bargains as a buyer and profits as a seller. Many of the materially sane teachings in Proverbs are to the effect that wisdom should be sought to ensure prosperity rather than for its own sake: "Happy is the man that findeth wisdom; Length of days is in her right hand; And in her left hand riches and honour" (Proverbs iii, 13, 16).

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and they were identified with the Writers, or Scribes, known as the *Sopherim*; this points to their having been the writers, and therefore also the collectors, of proverbs. They are mentioned in Isaiah xxix, 14, where it is said that, owing to the evil state of the country and people, the wisdom of the *Chakamim* shall perish; as a punishment for the sins of the people, that is, there will be no more Wise Men. But the significant thing from the present point of view is that this order of Wise Men was a well-recognized one by the middle of the 8th century B.C. In somewhat later times the prophet Jeremiah mentions them alongside of the priests and the prophets, showing the important position they occupied; he says: "The law shall not perish from the priest, nor counsel from the wise, nor the word from the prophet" (Jeremiah xviii, 18). The mention of the Wisdom Scribes as a recognized order of teachers, like priests and prophets, proves that in Jeremiah's day, the latter part of the 7th century B.C., they had long been in existence. That they made their collections of proverbs and taught them goes without saying, for this was their calling.

Thus, so far as the Israelites themselves were concerned, the origin of the Book of Proverbs is to be sought in the threefold process: oral sayings, the gradual collection of them, and the putting of these collections into literary form. In our book we see the final step, namely, the gathering together of various collections. So that while in its present form it belongs to about 300 B.C., with certain additions inserted still later, in origin it goes back many centuries earlier.

But we have dealt, so far, with only one of the origins of the book; we must now refer to another. Mention has already been made of the fact that proverbs in oral form are found among all peoples of antiquity when a certain stage of culture has been attained. When there is intercourse among nations certain influences make themselves felt; and that this was the case in the particular domain with which we are concerned may be taken for granted. But we have many definite proofs not only that in its literary form the wisdom of the Israelites was part of a world literature, but also that in its earliest forms it partook of what may be termed an international character. Familiarity with extra-Israelite wisdom, *i.e.*, proverbial sayings and the like, is indicated in II. Samuel xx, 18, where it is said: "they were wont to speak in old time, saying, they shall surely ask counsel at Abel"; asking counsel means to seek wisdom, which in old time was often expressed in proverbial form; Abel, called also Abel-beth-Maachah (*e.g.*, I Kings xv, 20), was in Syria. Again, in I. Kings iv, 30, 31, it is said that "Solomon's wisdom excelled the wisdom of all the children of the east country, and all the wisdom of Egypt. For he was wiser than all men; than Ethan the Ezrahite, and Heman, and Chalcol, and Darda, the sons of Mahol." The children of the east refer to Beduin Arabs, and the sons of Mahol were Edomites; the tradition of the wisdom of the Edomites is also referred to in Jeremiah xlix, 7 and Obadiah 8. Here we have, then, definite indications of the Israelites being familiar with the wisdom of Egypt, Arabia, Syria, and Edom, in quite early times. So that before wisdom had assumed a literary form, contact between the Israelites and foreign nations had made them familiar with the wisdom of other peoples. When, however, wisdom came to be written down in books, such as the collections in the Book of Proverbs, the familiarity of the Israelites with the wisdom of other countries is seen to be astounding.

Proverbs Drawn from Foreign Sources

AND here it is that we come face to face with another of the origins of our book. It is only within comparatively recent years that documents containing the wisdom literature of Egypt and Babylonia have come to light, but when these are compared with the Book of Proverbs it is found that literally dozens of its proverbs come from non-Israelite books; indeed, the third collection mentioned above (xxii, 17—xxiii, 14) is taken bodily from an Egyptian wisdom book called "The Teaching of Amen-em-ope," and a great many isolated proverbs are borrowed from a Babylonian wisdom book called "The Proverbs of Achikar"; and these are not the only books from which quotations are made in the collections in our book. It would take many pages were we to illustrate fully what has been said; we must, therefore, leave this interesting discovery of foreign sources.

So much, then, for the origins of the Book of Proverbs.

A Manual of 'Sanctified Common Sense'

WHILE we are, for practical purposes, making a distinction between the ethical and religious teaching in our book (the latter will be dealt with in a separate section), it must be strongly insisted upon that the religious element, although not always apparent, underlies all its teaching. It is perfectly true that, speaking generally, the main object that the writers of our book had in view was to teach men how to live happy and contented lives as long as they were on this earth; for this reason they deal very largely with the relationship between man and man, between parents and children, husband and wife, friend and foe, rich and poor, high and low; they teach what is right behaviour in every phase and occupation of life; how to accept adverse fortune, and the fitting attitude of him who enjoys wealth; to practise self-control in all things, to cultivate consideration for others, and so on—in a word, how to live to the best advantage, to do right because it brings its own reward, to avoid wrongdoing because it entails disadvantages. Yet, too much stress cannot be laid upon the fact, sometimes insufficiently recognized in reading what appears to be predominantly of a secular character, that underlying this utilitarian view of life there is a religious basis. It is again and again insisted on that wisdom, sense, the faculty of doing the right thing, is the gift of God; that well-being as the result of right living, and misfortune as the result of wrongdoing, are not merely a process of cause and effect, but a matter of divine intervention in the affairs of men; it is pointed out that wisdom and godliness are really the same thing, and that the origin and essence and highest form of wisdom is the fear of the Lord. The inextricable union between ethics and religion which these writers teach is of the essence of what we may rightly call sanctified common-sense. Goodness, in whatever guise it may appear, has always the same origin—God. This it has been necessary to say, lest, in much of what follows, it should seem that the writers of the collections of proverbs with which we are dealing were nothing more than ethical teachers.

Let us begin by observing a significant thing regarding those to whom these writers addressed themselves; it is

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"HER CLOTHING IS SILK AND PURPLE"

Rich and colourful is the garb of a well-to-do woman of Bethlehem. Like the pattern of domestic virtue described in Proverbs (xxxi, 10-31) "she is not afraid of the snow for her household" or for herself, making coverings and clothing of tapestry, wool and silk with the work of her hands. The brilliant embroidery on the upper part of the dress is a special feature; so, too, is the white headdress, a coif reminiscent of the Crusaders' era in Palestine. Her decorative appearance is usually enhanced by necklaces of beads and coins. Modern Bethlehem, with its Christian population, is one of the most prosperous towns in the Holy Land. Most of the women have scope for good housewifery; comfortable means, well-built and well-planned homes are the rule.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

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"A RIGHTEOUS MAN REGARDETH THE LIFE OF HIS BEAST"

Humanity to animals is one of the subjects most sympathetically treated in the Book of Proverbs. Each day shepherds, cowherds and camel drivers take their beasts to the overflow of a spring, shallow waters of a river, or to a trough by a well where they can safely drink. This picture shows such a trough, conveniently raised on blocks of limestone. The Beduin has removed his abba or cloak while he fills his heavy pitcher by means of a goat-skin bucket at the adjacent desert well, and pours the water into the trough for his camels. During the summer this is an essential task in arid regions, as water can be found only in the deep wells and valley springs.

Photo H. J. Shepstone

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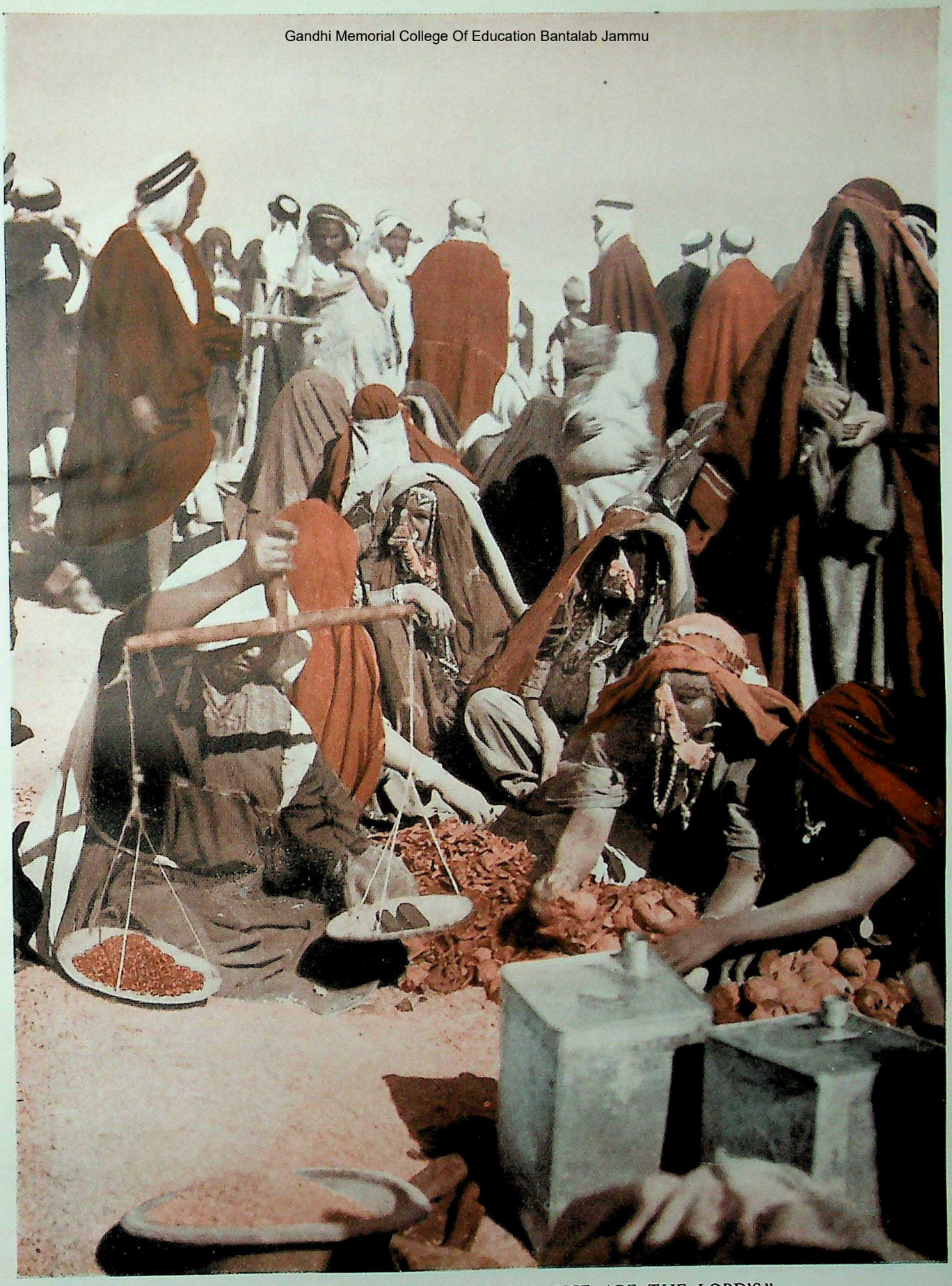

"A JUST WEIGHT AND BALANCE ARE THE LORD'S"

Bound by the age-old customs of the Orient are the dealings in the Palestinian market-places of today. A collection of couplets from the Book of Proverbs would provide a short manual on the prudent and moral conduct of exchange and barter. The Arab women pictured sell fruit and vegetables in Beersheba, southernmost town of the Holy Land and trading place of the Beduin. The buyer on the right watches the good measure of lentils which is being weighed in the balance by means of graduated bars. These women wear much jewelry, including a peculiar ornament decorated with metal spheres or coins. Clipped to the headdress, it partially covers the face and then branches to hang down over each shoulder.

Photo American Colony in jerusalem

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"I LOOKED THROUGH MY CASEMENT"

From the windows which overhang David Street in Jerusalem a lively crowd in varied costumes may be watched. On the uneasy cobbles come and go rabbis, tourists, peasants, pilgrims, soldiers, Beduin and pedlars. Scanty awnings under which the idle rest, add colour to the view. A street vendor has early set out his stock of flat loaves; another arrives with his portable stall for fruit. The native element in the motley crowd is apparently the incarnation of passivity surviving the centuries. Through an observation-hole in the lattice of his window in Jerusalem the wise man (Proverbs vii, 6) must often have looked out on street scenes essentially the same.

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that the greatest attention is concentrated on different types of "fools." The Hebrew language has a number of words to describe the varieties of this type of humanity. It is evident that, according to those ancient Hebrew sages with their intimate knowledge of men, these types constituted the majority of mankind; that they were not mistaken in their estimate has been the opinion of many a wise man since their day. Emerson may not have been far wrong in saying: "Nature makes fifty poor melons for one that is good, and shakes down a tree full of gnarled, wormy, unripe crabs, before you can find a dozen dessert apples; and she scatters nations of naked Indians, and nations of clothed Christians, with two or three good heads among them. Nature works very hard, and only hits the white once in a million throws."

Nevertheless, to their honour be it said, those Hebrew teachers of old realized the great potentialities for good in all the different types of "fool" to whom their words referred; therefore they despaired of none—the simpleton, the stupid, the silly, the thoughtless, the credulous, the chatterbox, the churl, the humbug, and all the rest of them; people whose folly is not malicious, though often mischievous. There are other types who are also dealt with, wicked "fools" of different kinds, but none is irreclaimable; it only wants the art of knowing how to touch the right spot, and the Hebrew sages cultivated that art in their yearning to be of service to their fellows.

If we may quote him again, that modern sage, Emerson, says in his inimitable way: "Nature is a rag merchant, who works up every shred and ort and end into new creations, like a good chemist, whom I found the other day in his laboratory, converting his old shirts into pure white sugar!" That was the kind of metamorphosis which those good old Hebrew sages sought to bring about in the somewhat unpromising material composed of the "fools" of humanity.

But these wisdom writers were far from confining their teaching to people of this kind. Their teaching was for all men, and, it may be added, for all time. Here we have, to give but a few illustrations, the need of self-control in various directions. One of their telling sayings on this subject runs: "He that hath no rule over his spirit is like a city broken through without a wall" (xxv, 28); he is the victim, that is to say, of any enemy who cares to take possession, for there is no protection. A very apt simile, as a moment's thought will show, of the man without self-control.

'A Man Wise in His Own Conceit'

TO turn to another side of human weakness, humiliating, though salutary: the wisdom writers were fully alive to the fact that the teaching of unpalatable truths is always acceptable to men so long as they think them applicable to anyone but themselves. For the most part, people are blind to their own faults, while those of others are obvious enough. But this blindness is due to one or other of two things, or, more probably, a mingling of both. Concerning each the wisdom writers in our book clothe their teaching in inspiring contempt in order that the sense of shame may be aroused. The first is self-esteem, and the second is self-deception. When a man is always ready to see the faults of others while discerning nothing wrong with himself, he is undoubtedly the victim of self-deception; but that very self-deception is the fruit of self-esteem; so it is taught: "Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit? there is more hope for a fool than of him" (xxvi, 12); he deceives himself by thinking that he is wiser than a fool, and it is his self-esteem that makes him think so!

Or, again: it is hardly necessary to point out the difference between egotism and selfishness. The rich man who will give a big subscription on the understanding that his name will appear prominently in the public Press is certainly not selfish; but he is an egotist. On the other hand, the man who grudges every gift and keeps everything for himself and is indifferent to what others think of him, is a selfish man; but he is not an egotist, otherwise he would care about what people thought of him.

So when the sage teaches: "Better is he that is lightly esteemed, and hath a servant, than he that honoureth himself, and lacketh bread" (xii, 9 R.V.), he is referring to the egotist, whatever else may be implied; but when he teaches: "there is that scattereth, and increaseth yet more; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth only to want" (xi, 24 R.V.), he is thinking, in the second line, of the selfish man. In the former case he contrasts the egotist with the humble-minded man; in the latter he contrasts the selfish man with one who is generous.

The conclusions which the sage draws do not, it is true, always hold good; for the egotist does not necessarily lack bread, nor does the selfish man by any means always become poor; but this is not our present concern; the point is that the sage presents here two types of men in the world; men whose thoughts and acts are centred on themselves; and he teaches that egotism and selfishness are foolish, and therefore opposed to wisdom.

'Plead the Cause of the Poor and Needy'

OF the large range of topics included in the teaching of our book it is impossible to speak, for that would require a volume; one or two others may, however, receive some little attention.

Noteworthy is the solicitude for the welfare of the poor. Doubtless this is largely due to the influence of earlier prophetic teaching; but the sages developed their own thought and teaching on the subject, and the principles laid down have guided the Jews ever since.

Primarily a social and ethical principle, almsgiving came in the teaching of prophets and sages to be a religious duty. We are concerned here with the teaching only of the latter. One of them said: "He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the Lord, and his good deed will he pay him again" (xix, 17 R.V.); this makes the support of the poor not merely an act of social kindness, but something well-pleasing in the sight of God, and therefore of a religious nature. The cynic may object that inasmuch as the giver receives as much again, there is little merit in the act. Indeed, that a danger lurked here cannot be denied, and it came in later times to ominous fruition; for almsgiving was regarded as a means of acquiring merit, and therefore justification, in the sight of God; but that was certainly not the case with these early sages; to them an act of kindness was a duty to man and God, without ulterior motive; if reward accrued, that was another matter. This is borne out by the emphasis laid not only on the need of giving tangible help, but also on the duty of a sympathetic attitude towards the poor; thus, it is said, for example: "Whoso mocketh the poor reproacheth his Maker; and he that is glad at calamity shall not be unpunished" (xvii, 5 R.V.).

Then, to touch upon another subject, often dealt with by the Hebrew sages: Honesty and fair dealing. We have a disreputable maxim in common use which runs:

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"Honesty is the best policy." Doubtless, cupidity in some form, or the hope of advantage, originally prompted the utterance of this immoral precept. It is interesting to observe what the sages had to say about this; it touches, naturally enough, on the exercise of honesty between traders and their customers. They inculcate honesty partly by sound precepts, and partly by holding up to shame the dishonest methods often adopted. Bargaining in the East, as is well known, was, and still is, brought to a high art. An example of the dishonest buyer is given in xx, 14 (we give a literal rendering of the Hebrew): "'Bad, bad,' saith the buyer, but, going his way, he brags" (*i.e.*, of the good bargain he has made).

"THE CROWN OF OLD MEN." An Arab counts the number of his descendants by the males; so this Beduin proudly exhibits his grandson. "Children's children are the crown of old men," wrote the sage (Proverbs xvii, 6); but the children do not include the daughters, who are merely a source of future wealth. Wives are proposed and bartered for, and, among all classes, rich and poor, marriages are arranged by the older generation in the Biblical lands.

Photo, Keystone

Depreciating the goods is an old trick; sometimes the seller's conscience, or whatever does duty for that, makes him keep his mouth shut; or else, the buyer chuckles, while the seller, nevertheless, puts his tongue in his cheek! A modern instance, though doubtless as old as the hills, is told of how a buyer offered a miserable sum for an article: "It is yours for nothing," said the seller; this terrible sarcasm so upset the buyer that for shame's sake he offered a higher price; but he came off second best. This kind of thing was, of course, familiar enough to the ancient Hebrew sages with their wide knowledge of human nature from all sides; they, therefore, sought earnestly to inculcate a higher ethical standard. In xxiii, 4, 5, for example, it is said (the Hebrew is slightly amended): "Toil not to become rich, and cease from thy dishonest gain. For wealth maketh itself wings, like an eagle that flieth to the skies." The reference is to wealth gained by dishonest means. The sages say nothing against wealth as such, when honestly acquired, and rightly used. At the same time, knowledge of the world had shown them how often money slipped through people's fingers in an extraordinary way. One of them said: "Wealth gotten hastily shall be diminished, but he that gathereth by degrees shall have increase." It is implied here that the "get rich quickly" method involves dishonest action; the probability is that in nine cases out of ten the sage was right.

'Righteousness Exalteth a Nation'

FINALLY a few words may be offered as to what is taught in our book regarding public life. The study of the history of the Israelites of all periods shows abundantly that in the matter of public welfare, in its broadest sense, just as in modern times, economic, social, and political factors are intermingled. What is characteristic of the teachers whose words are preserved in the Book of Proverbs is that they always deal with the subject of public welfare from the point of view of *ethics*. There is no department of life in which they are not interested; and though, in general, their main concern is with individuals, they were in no wise oblivious of the community as such.

It cannot be too strongly emphasized that while the ancient sages were far from belittling the importance of material prosperity, they insist on the greater importance of moral rectitude if the public welfare is to prosper. The lesser advantage, they maintain, will follow from the greater. In other words, though by public welfare they mean the material prosperity of the people, this is entirely subordinate, in their eyes, to a high ethical standard in the conduct of public affairs. Public welfare, if it is to be welfare in the true sense, and if it is to be enduring, must consist of something more than plenty of food and drink, and money, and amusement, for all.

It is not a truism, but a saying of profound, greatly to be honoured truth, when one of the sages says: "Righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people" (xiv, 34). To many this may sound utopian, ideal; to whom the reply is that without ideals the human race would perish. Elsewhere the sages insist on the great responsibility of him upon whom the public welfare may often to a large extent depend, for the force of example of those in high places is very compelling; one of them says: "If a ruler hearkeneth to falsehood, all his servants are wicked" (xxix, 12 R.V.), while another (he is not among the writers of the Book of Proverbs, but greatly influenced by them), remarks even more pointedly: "As the ruler of a people, so are his ministers,

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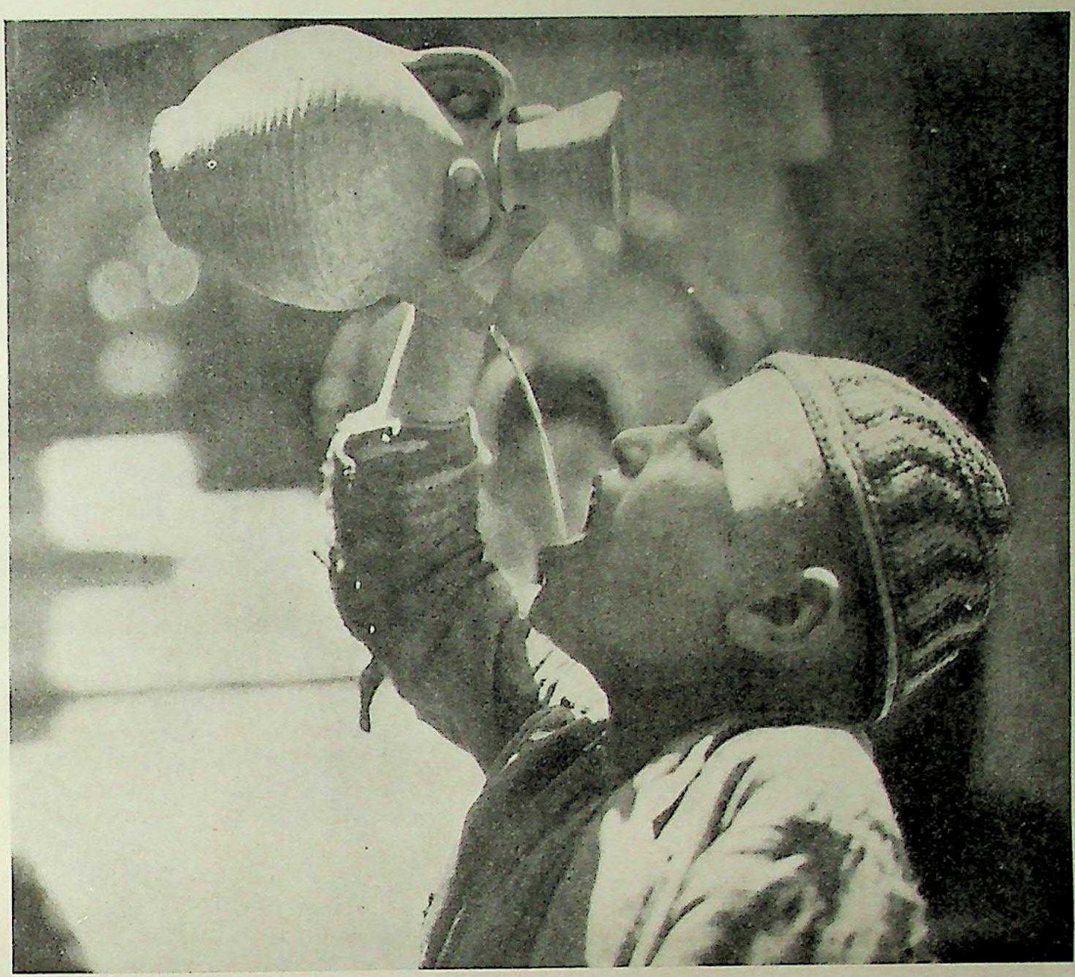
and as the head of a city, so are the inhabitants thereof" (Ecclesiasticus x, 2). Those times were different from ours; but the principle holds good. Whether king, president, minister, or mayor, the personal element tells profoundly in public affairs as elsewhere. The sages wisely lay stress on the personal element, whether in state affairs or in private life, for ultimately it is always the individual who is the originator of an idea, good or bad, and the power which sets in motion the process of its realization.

This is not to say that the greatest genius in statecraft may not profit by the advice of others; and the sages, with their usual sense of proportion, are strong on the point; one of them says: "Where there is no counsel, purposes are disappointed, but in the multitude of counsellors they are established" (xv, 22 R.V.). Much more could be said on this, but space forbids.



"AS COLD WATERS TO A THIRSTY SOUL" Compared by the sage with "good news from a far country" (Proverbs xxv, 25), a draught of water from a spring fed by the mountain snows is a delicious drink to the city resident in semi-tropical Palestine. Out of a water-hawker's fresh supply the Arab boy has had his earthenware bottle, the Hebrew "baqbûq," filled. Well-designed for family use, this vessel is held some inches away from the mouth so that successive people can drink from it without touching the spout with their lips.

Photo, Mondiale

We have sought to give some idea of the variety of teaching in our book; but it will be understood that not more than a few drops from the ocean, as it were, have been offered. They have, so far, been confined to ethical precepts on practical life. We must, in conclusion, say something about the more definitely religious teaching of the Book of Proverbs.

God in the Sages' Teaching

FIRST and foremost attention must be drawn to the conception of God as it is presented here. Belief in one God is nowhere stated in so many words for the simple reason that this truth is taken for granted; in spite of the polytheism of all surrounding nations, with whom the Israelites were in frequent contact, this cardinal doctrine required no insisting upon by the sages, for, owing to the teaching of the prophets, it had become ingrained in the religious thought of the people. But concerning the divine personality there is much that is taught. That God is the All-Creator, axiomatic as this, too, was, is often both implied and stated; He is the disposer of all things; His purpose stands, whatever man may do; His all-seeing eye perceives the doings of men, and their hearts are open before Him: "The eyes of the Lord are in every place, keeping watch upon the evil and the good" (xv, 3 R.V.). Of His ethical character the sages speak again and again: the perfect and upright man is His delight; justice and righteousness are more acceptable to Him than sacrifice; on the other hand, everything that offends against righteousness is abhorrent to Him. Further illustrative quotations are unnecessary; on every page words expressing a realization of the divine perfection occur.

Very beautiful are the frequent thoughts uttered regarding the divine solicitude for men; this may be summed up thus: it is God Who takes care of men, Who is their shield of defence against harm, Who hears their prayer, Who rewards righteous dealing, Whose blessings bring prosperity, Whose very name is a strong tower of refuge. Therefore men are bidden to honour Him, to wait on Him, to put their trust in Him, and to commit all their works unto Him. What especially strikes one about the sages' teaching about God is their apprehension of His unceasing spiritual presence among men; they strive so earnestly to bring home to them His intimate relationship to them; the realization of His nearness, to which they bear witness, is the most inspiring element in the whole book.

But with the fullest recognition of God's action among men the book teaches also the absolute freedom of man's will. This subject figures very prominently, and is of importance in considering the religious value of the book. And here it must be remarked that if isolated sayings are taken and dealt with apart from the religious atmosphere which underlies and permeates the utterances of the

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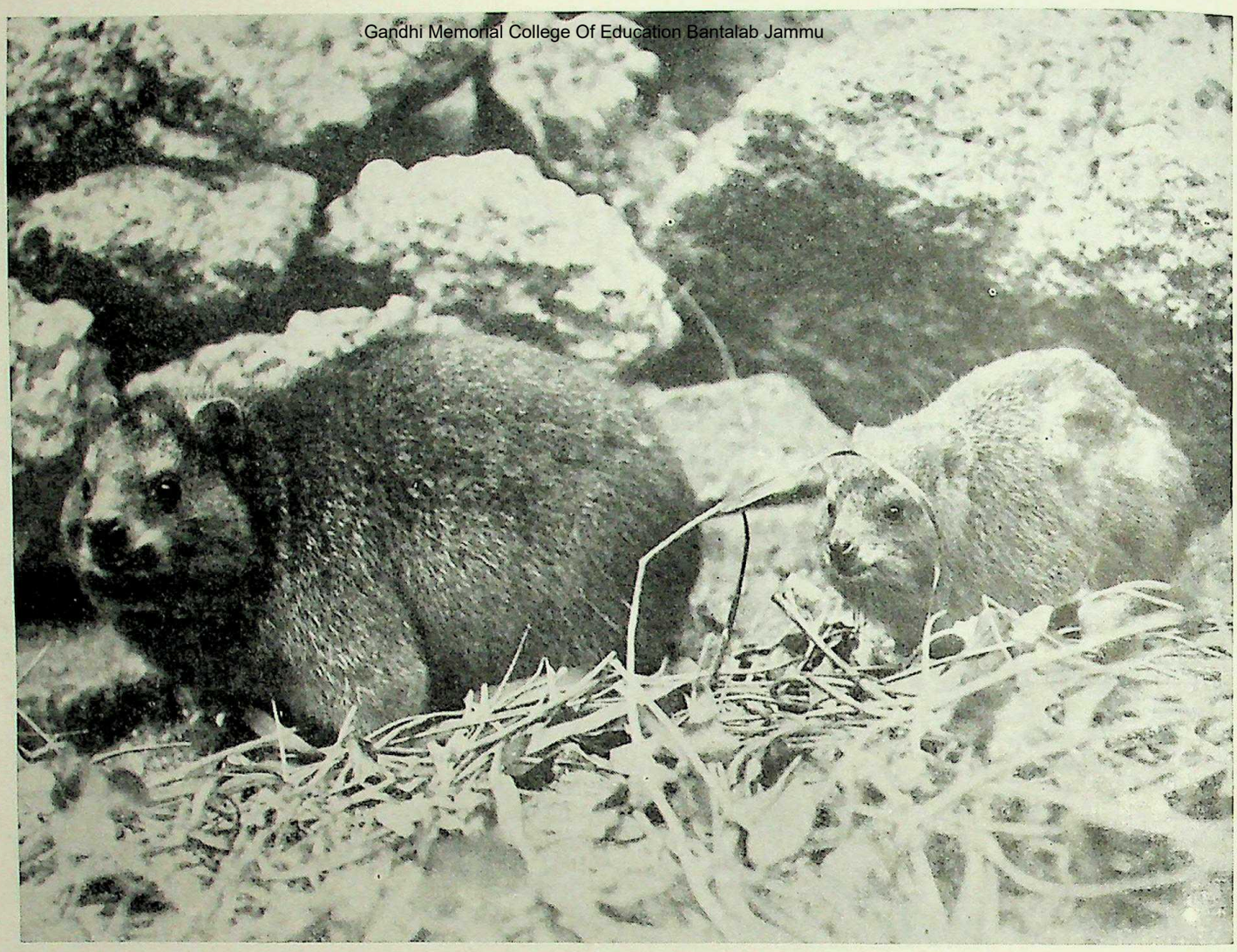

"CONIES ARE BUT A FEEBLE FOLK." That interesting little animal, the hyrax, figures as the coney in the poem on four small wise things (Proverbs xxx, 26). Formerly thought to be a rodent but now known to be a distant relative of the rhinoceros, the hyrax, common in Africa, is still found in the Kidron Valley and other parts of Palestine. Its flesh is considered a delicacy by the Arabs. But "conies" are not easily caught. They are wise enough to make "their houses in the rocks" of inaccessible gorges, come out to feed at early morning and evening, and shrilly warn their fellows if alarmed.

Photo, W. S. Berridge

writers, it might well appear that the emphasis laid on human free-will were not adequately balanced by a sufficient recognition of divine grace, but from what has just been said about the doctrine of God, it will be realized that this would be an unjust estimate. The cultivation of such virtues as truth, love, self-control, modesty, moderation, the sense of proportion, industry, courage, and others; on the other hand, the practice of such vices as pride, bad temper, covetousness, bearing false witness, slothfulness, drunkenness, lying, taking revenge, slander, etc., are all mentioned as things in which man takes the initiative of his own free will. The matter is succinctly summed up in the words: "The preparations of the heart belong to man" (xvi, 1); the heart, according to the ancient belief, was the seat of the understanding and will; the words, and what they imply, recall forcibly what was said by our Lord: "For out of the heart come forth evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, railings" (Matthew xv, 19 R.V.). And this verse from our book, just quoted, adds: "But the answer of the tongue is from the LORD," which means that the final outcome of the heart's promptings, uttered by the tongue, is of divine over-ruling. We say: "Man proposes, God disposes"; but this verse cannot be understood quite in that sense, as numbers of other passages, insisting on the ultimate action of human free-will, show; what the verse presents is a balanced statement on human free-will and divine grace. Again and again the sages teach, both by implication and by direct utterance, that God guides men to good actions, and keeps them from evil, if called upon, thus showing a belief in divine grace both as the incentive to well-doing and as a preventive in wrongdoing. If the stress seems often to be laid mainly on human free-will, that is simply because the sages, with their knowledge of the world, saw that the tendency of men was to go their own way in despite of the will of God; but they do not on that account belittle divine grace. It is impossible to read what is said in our book about God's relationship to men without seeing that the sages implicitly assumed a Godward intention among the motives which should impel men to right-doing, or which should restrain them when tempted to evil action; in other words, the influence of divine grace—*e.g.*, "Every way of a man is right in his own eyes, but the LORD weigheth the hearts" (xxi, 2 R.V.). The teaching of our book on this subject is of high importance; the tendency of later Judaism was to over-emphasize human free-will; but the teaching of Christianity held the true balance, thus supporting that of the Book of Proverbs.

In the teaching on retribution and reward, again, it often appears that a purely rationalistic view predominates, as has already been pointed out; to do good because of the advantages gained, to avoid evil because of the disadvantages entailed; so that it appears that in each case there is merely an appeal to self-interest, without thought of any higher motive. It is not to be denied that this teaching receives great emphasis. But it would be a mistake to ignore another side to this teaching, which is

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of a definitely religious character. The fact that it receives less mention is simply because it *underlies* all the teaching of the sages. They teach that right, or wrong, action, with its respective consequences, is not merely a question of cause and effect, but one of *divine* retribution or reward. It will suffice to illustrate this by a few quotations. Thus, in x, 3 it is said: "The LORD will not suffer the soul of the righteous to famish, but he thrusteth away the desire of the wicked" (R.V.); by "soul" here is meant, as often, "person"; and the reference is to material food. The statement, therefore, means that the sustenance of life is God's gift to the righteous ("Give us this day our daily bread"), but that the wicked suffer want by the will of God. That in practical life this does not always hold good is true enough; but it is well to recognize Who is the giver of all good gifts. In xvi, 7 we read: "When a man's ways please the Lord, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him"; the evil-disposed, that is to say, are turned to kindliness towards him whose ways are right. Here we have definitely the conviction of the divine intervention in the affairs of men; the reward of a good man. One other illustration: "The reward of humility and the fear of the LORD, is riches, honour, and life" (xxii, 4 R.V.). Life's experience must often have shown that this is not always the case; but the general principle is true that God rewards the God-fearing. The reward need not necessarily be material benefits; to the truly godly there are better things than these.

'Sheol and Abaddon are before the Lord'

ONE thing about the teaching on reward and retribution is very noticeable: both always occur in this life; there is never any reference to recompense or punishment hereafter. This leads us to say a few words on the subject of immortality, as taught in our book. The sages held the normal belief of almost all the Old Testament writings: death is the end of all things, alike for the good and the bad; all go down to Sheol, the great abode deep down under the earth, where the shades of men congregate without memory, thought, utterance, or emotion; darkness and dust is on all around, the shades flit about in aimless wandering. Once only is there to be discerned the faint glimmering of something different; this occurs in xv, 11 (R.V.): "Sheol and Abaddon are before the LORD, how much more then the hearts of the children of men."

The expression Abaddon means "destruction," and is used as a synonym of Sheol. Now it must be remembered that according to the normal belief regarding the Hereafter as taught in the Old Testament, with the exception of about half a dozen of the latest passages, God's relations with man cease with death. Despairingly one of the psalmists asks the questions, knowing that the answer to each is "No": "Wilt thou show wonders to the dead? Shall the shades arise and praise thee? Shall thy loving-kindness be declared in the grave? Or thy faithfulness in Abaddon? Shall thy wonders be known in the dark? And thy righteousness in the land of forgetfulness?" (Psalm lxxxviii, 10-12); while another says in deepest sorrow: "I am cast off among the dead, like the slain that lie in the grave, whom thou rememberest no more, and they are cut off from thy hand" (verse 5).

As long as God was conceived of as being wholly unconcerned about Sheol and its dwellers it could not be a subject of much interest to Israel's religious thinkers. But when once a more fully developed conception of God arose it followed of necessity that belief in His solicitude for the departed resulted. Now, the very fact that in the passage from our book, just quoted, the thought of Sheol is brought into connexion with God, denotes the beginning, though for the present nothing more than the beginning, of something more than that of the Hereafter being outside of His cognizance: "Sheol and Abaddon are before the Lord."

Finally, we come to something which is of far more significance than appears at first sight; this is the teaching about Wisdom contained in our book. We begin by observing that Chokmah ("Wisdom"), in its original meaning was thought of as the faculty of being able to distinguish between what was advantageous to a man and what was harmful to him; it came to include, besides such things as the work of the craftsman, the care of flocks, the art of the physician, virtues of every kind, and everything that could be described as good sense: industry, self-control, forethought, courtesy, etc.; so that while it did not have the sense of pure knowledge, it included everything that was best in human nature.

But with the sages, as we have pointed out, it meant something more than mere worldly wisdom and ethics, excellent as these are; for as they taught again and again that "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom," that is, both its starting-point and its highest form, it had a religious content; it came from God: "For the LORD giveth wisdom; out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding" (ii, 6). These last words contain the idea of the divine utterance of wisdom, and, as the divine wisdom was shown forth, above all, in the Creation —"the Lord by wisdom founded the earth" (iii, 19)—it was by the word of God that all things were created, as the psalmist said: "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made," "He spake and it was done" (Psalm xxxiii, 6, 9).

We have thus in the Book of Proverbs the beginnings of the identification of wisdom with the word of the Lord; and this belief is echoed by other Wisdom writers: "By the word of God are his works . . . the mighty works of his wisdom hath he ordered" (Ecclesiasticus xlii, 15, 21); and again, in the Wisdom of Solomon ix, 1, 2: "O God of our fathers, and Lord of mercy, who hast made all things by thy word, and by thy wisdom didst form man."

Parallel with this there is another line of thought. In viii, 22-31 of the Book of Proverbs we have a clear picture of the personification of Wisdom who was with God "from everlasting, from the beginning," and when all the works of the Creation were brought into being by Him, clearly implying that Wisdom was used by God in creating His works, as the psalmist, again, says: "In wisdom hast thou made them all" (Psalm civ, 24).

Anticipation of the Logos Doctrine

BUT, as we have seen, Wisdom was identified with the word of God, and therefore we can understand how the Word came to be personified. The steps in the process we are unable to follow; but we know its ultimate development as seen in the New Testament: "The Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that hath been made" (John i, 1-3 R.V.). That our Lord, the Word of God, identified Himself with Wisdom is seen from Matthew xi, 19 (R.V.), where after a reference to Himself as the Son of Man, He says: "And Wisdom is justified by her works."

It will thus be seen how in the Book of Proverbs there are the faint adumbrations of what fuller revelation has shown to have been the foreshadowing of living truth ("He left not himself without witness." Acts xiv, 17).

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Reflections of Ecclesiastes

A MASTERPIECE in the literature of pessimistic wisdom, the Book of Ecclesiastes resembles Job in being mainly the work of one man and not, like Proverbs, a compilation. Though, with the Song of Solomon, it owes its inclusion in the canon to the attribution of its authorship to the wise king, scholars have established that there is much in the original Hebrew which is characteristic of a comparatively late period. This might be earlier, but is probably not later, than 200 B.C. According to custom, the writer, Koheleth—a word translated in the Greek Ecclesiastes and in the Authorized Version the Preacher—was taking the name of Solomon, as it were, as a hall-mark of wisdom. The Hebrew word Koheleth possibly means rather the master of an assembly (*see* xii, 11), or a sage at the head of a group of students, than a preacher.

LITERARY unity is given to the book by its theme "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity." In common with other Hebrew "wise men," the writer's outlook is utilitarian and his wisdom practical. His moods of weariness are varied, so are the literary forms he employs, but he is always an artist in phraseology. The book has been termed "A Collection of Leaves from the Sage's Notebook." The first two chapters are mainly autobiographical; in the assumed character of King Solomon, Ecclesiastes reviews a royal life. The rest of the book consists of aphorisms—the unit proverb is its basis—short poems and essays built upon these, and the well-known advice to youth with attendant description of the decay of old age.

THIS passage, in the last chapter, is allegorical in form. The prosaic tale of facts is beautified by sustained symbolism; figurative language is vividly woven out of familiar images. Thus "the keepers of the house" are the arms, "the strong men" the legs, "the grinders" the teeth, "the windows" the eyes, and "the daughters of musick" the voice. The allegory as rendered in the Authorized Version is one of the most magnificent pieces of rhythmic prose in the English language. The whole book is perhaps the sheerest piece of fine writing—fine writing as distinct from poetical beauty and spiritual import—in the Bible, polished in style, vivid in expression, appropriate in imagery.

ALL IS VANITY
i, 2—11

VANITY of vanities, saith the Preacher, vanity of vanities; all is vanity. What profit hath a man of all his labour which he taketh under the sun? One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh: but the earth abideth for ever.

The sun also ariseth, and the sun goeth down, and hasteth to his place where he arose. The wind goeth toward the south, and turneth about unto the north; it whirleth about continually, and the wind returneth again according to his circuits.

All the rivers run into the sea; yet the sea is not full; unto the place from whence the rivers come, thither they return again. All things are full of labour; man cannot utter it: the eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing.

The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the sun. Is there any thing whereof it may be said, See, this is new? it hath been already of old time, which was before us. There is no remembrance of former things; neither shall there be any remembrance of things that are to come with those that shall come after.

OF GREAT POSSESSIONS
ii, 2—11

I SAID of laughter, It is mad: and of mirth, What doeth it? I sought in mine heart to give myself unto wine, yet acquainting mine heart with wisdom; and to lay hold on folly, till I might see what was that good for the sons of men, which they should do under the heaven all the days of their life.

I made me great works; I builded me houses; I planted me vineyards; I made me gardens and orchards, and I planted trees in them of all kind of fruits; I made me pools of water, to water therewith the wood that bringeth forth trees: I got me servants and maidens, and had servants born in my house; also I had great possessions of great and small cattle above all that were in Jerusalem before me: I gathered me also silver and gold, and the peculiar treasure of kings and of the provinces: I gat me men singers and women singers, and the delights of the sons of men, as musical instruments, and that of all sorts.

So I was great, and increased more than all that were before me in Jerusalem: also my wisdom remained with me. And whatsoever mine eyes desired I kept not from them, I withheld not my heart from any joy; for my heart rejoiced in all my labour: and this was my portion of all my labour. Then I looked on all the works that my hands had wrought, and on the labour that I had laboured to do: and, behold, all was vanity and vexation of spirit, and there was no profit under the sun.

IN DUE TIME
iii, 1—8

TO every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven:

A time to be born, and a time to die;
A time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted;
A time to kill, and a time to heal;
A time to break down, and a time to build up;
A time to weep, and a time to laugh;
A time to mourn, and a time to dance;
A time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together;
A time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing;
A time to get, and a time to lose;
A time to keep, and a time to cast away;
A time to rend, and a time to sew;
A time to keep silence, and a time to speak;
A time to love, and a time to hate;
A time of war, and a time of peace.

ALLEGORY
xii, 1—8

REMEMBER now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them; while the sun, or the light, or the moon, or the stars, be not darkened, nor the clouds return after the rain: in the day when the keepers of the house shall tremble, and the strong men shall bow themselves, and the grinders cease because they are few, and those that look out of the windows be darkened, and the doors shall be shut in the streets, when the sound of the grinding is low, and he shall rise up at the voice of the bird, and all the daughters of musick shall be brought low; also when they shall be afraid of that which is high, and fears shall be in the way, and the almond tree shall flourish, and the grasshopper shall be a burden, and desire shall fail: because man goeth to his long home, and the mourners go about the streets: or ever the silver cord be loosed, or the golden bowl be broken, or the pitcher be broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern.

Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.

Vanity of vanities, saith the preacher; all is vanity.

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Ecclesiastes

I

The Book in Outline

'Vanity of Vanities, saith the Preacher, All is Vanity'

by REV. F. E. ENGLAND, M.A., B.D., Ph.D.

Minister of Bexhill Presbyterian Church.

"VANITY of vanities, all is vanity." That is the central theme of these reflections of Koheleth—a name which may mean the Sage, or Man of Wisdom. Choosing as his setting the life and times of King Solomon, he describes his pursuit of that which would provide the deepest satisfaction. In one department after another he discovers only vanity and a striving after the wind. It is not until he reaches the end that his more positive message shines out as the sunshine after the clouds.

His first reflection is upon the kaleidoscopic changefulness of all except the solid earth. One generation succeeds another, and the earth abides for ever. The sun rises and goes down; the wind blows this way and that; the rivers run into the sea, yet it is not full. All things are full of weariness; the eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear with hearing. There is no new thing under the sun, for the future will follow the course of the past. That which men call new has already existed, and the passing generations shall not be remembered.

He next searches for the desired satisfaction in the realms of knowledge, luxury, wisdom and toil. I applied myself, he says, to the laborious pursuit of knowledge; I observed its products and behold I found it all vanity. The crooked cannot be made straight, neither can the deficient be made good. I found that the effort to amass knowledge was a striving after wind, for in wisdom is much grief, and he that increases knowledge increases sorrow.

Then I made luxury my pursuit and found this also to be vanity, for laughter is mad and mirth is hollow. I gave myself, with reasonable moderation, to wine and merry-making. I surrounded myself with houses, vineyards, gardens and parks. I planted all kinds of trees, and laid out pools. I got men-servants and maidens, herds and flocks, silver, gold, rare treasures, as well as singers and many concubines. I was greater than any that went before me and my wisdom remained with me. I indulged the desires of my eyes and my heart. Then I looked upon it all, and found that it was all vanity and a striving after wind.

'Vanity and Vexation of Spirit'

PONDERING wisdom, madness and folly, I saw that wisdom is superior to folly as light is better than darkness. The wise man sees where he is going while the fool walks in darkness. Yet the same destiny awaits them all, for both will die and be forgotten. I hated life with all its futile labour, for though a man labour with wisdom, knowledge and skill, yet who knows but that he who succeeds to it will be a fool? A man may eat and drink and enjoy the fruits of his labour for it is God's will that he should do so, and God gives wisdom, knowledge and joy to the man that pleases Him, while He condemns the sinner to labour for the pious man. But this also is vanity and a striving after wind.

The man of wisdom now states his conviction that there is a time and place for everything and that it is fitting that men should enjoy God's gifts while time lasts.

'To Every Thing a Season

THERE is a time for everything under heaven, a time to be born and a time to die; a time to sow and a time to reap; a time to kill and a time to heal; a time to destroy and a time to rebuild; a time to weep and a time to laugh; a time to mourn and a time to dance; a time to cast away and a time to gather; a time to embrace and a time to refrain; a time to seek and a time to lose; a time to keep and a time to cast away; a time to rend and a time to sew; a time to keep silence and a time to speak; a time to love and a time to hate; a time for war and a time for peace. God has made everything beautiful in His time and has set the world in man's heart, and yet man cannot comprehend God's work. There is nothing better for man than to rejoice and do good so long as he lives, to eat, drink, and rejoice in his labour as the gift of God, for what God does is unchangeable, and He will judge all according to His own purpose. Yet men are as beasts, since what befalls beasts befalls men likewise. One dies and so does the other; all are mortal, and in this respect man has no pre-eminence. All are of the dust and all turn to dust again, and who knows whether the spirit of man or beast goes upward or downward?

The foregoing philosophy is further reinforced by meditations on the vanity of oppression, envy, solitude and old age.

When I saw the tears of the oppressed, I felt that it were better to be dead than alive; and better still not to have been born to see the evils of men. Envy also is vain, for better is a handful with quietness than two handfuls with labour and striving after wind Solitude likewise is vanity for the solitary man has no incentive to labour. Two are better than one because they have good reward for their labour. If one falls the other will lift him up, but there is no one to lift up the solitary person. Further, how can one be warm alone? or how shall the isolated man defend himself? But a threefold cord is not quickly broken.

Better is a poor and wise youth than an old and foolish king who no longer knows how to receive

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admonition. Out of prison a king came to reign, born poor in his own kingdom. I beheld all the people that they were with his young successor. There was no end of all the people over whom he ruled; yet they also that come after shall not rejoice in him, surely this also is vanity and vexation of spirit.

SOMEWHAT abruptly the Sage now turns preacher, and admonishes his readers to set the fear of God before their eyes in worship and in the fulfilment of vows:

"Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God, for to draw nigh to hear is better than to give the sacrifice of fools; for they know not that they do evil. Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter anything before God; for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth; therefore let thy words be few. For a dream cometh with a multitude of business; and a fool's voice with a multitude of words. When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it, for he hath no pleasure in fools; pay what thou vowest. It is better not to vow than to vow and not pay. Suffer not thy mouth to cause thy flesh to sin, neither say thou before the angel that it was an error. Wherefore should God be angry at thy voice, and destroy the work of thine hands? For in the multitude of dreams and many words there are vanities; but fear thou God" (v, 1-7).

Next follow some acute reflections on oppression, profit and abundance. They assume a condition typical of many Oriental states where corrupt government leads to oppression and injustice. Marvel not at the oppression of the poor and the violent perversion of judgement and justice in the state, for there are many ranks of officials. The profit of the earth is for all, and the king is served by the field. He that loves silver will never be satisfied with silver, nor shall he that loves abundance be satisfied with increase. This also is vanity. As goods increase, consumers increase, and what advantage is it to the owner except that he beholds them with his eyes? The sleep of a labouring man is sweet, whether he eat little or much, but the rich man's abundance will not allow him to sleep. This grievous evil I have seen, namely, riches kept by their owner to his hurt. Those riches perish by evil adventure, and if he has a son, nothing is left for him. Naked as he came forth from his mother's womb, naked shall he go again and take with him nothing for his labour. What profit is it to him that labours for the wind? All his days he eats in darkness; he is sore vexed and has sickness with wrath.

So, again, it seems good for a man to eat, drink and enjoy his labour all the days of his life, for this is the gift of God.

Continuing the same general theme, the Preacher describes the disappointment that follows disillusionment: I have observed this evil, and it is grievous, that a man to whom God grants riches, wealth and honour so that he lacks nothing that his soul desires, loses the power to enjoy it, and a stranger consumes it. This is vanity.

Let a man have a hundred children and live a hundred years; if his soul be not filled with good and if he come to a dishonourable grave, he is less fortunate than a stillborn child, for the latter comes in vanity, goes in darkness and his name is lost in darkness. He has neither seen nor known the sun, and he is more fortunate than the other. For though a man live twice a thousand years and yet enjoy no good, do not all go to one place? All man's labour is for his maintenance; but if he have no appetite the wise man is no better off than the fool or than the poor man whose appetite is good. Attainment is better than vague desire; this also is vanity and a striving after wind.

Whoever has existed has a name and is known as a man. He cannot contend with one mightier than himself. And seeing that there are many things that increase vanity, what advantage is there to a man? Who knows what is good for him in a life which he spends as a shadow? And who can tell what shall be after him?

IN general accord with his philosophy of life, the writer now proceeds to offer a number of reflections on a wide variety of subjects. A good name is better than precious ointment, and the day of death is better

ECCLESIASTES: A SYNOPSIS

Vanity of Vanities

	Chapters
The Preacher and His Theme ...	i, 1-11
The Vanity of Knowledge, Luxury, Wisdom and Toil	i, 12—ii, 26
A Time and Place for Everything ...	iii, 1-22
The Vanity of Oppression, Envy, Solitude and Age	iv, 1-16
Vanity in Worship	v, 1-7
Reflections on Oppression, Profit and Abundance	v, 8-20
The Vanity of Abundance without Appetite, and of Desire without Fulfilment	vi, 1-12

The Preacher's Reflections

Mourning and Merriment	vii, 1-6
Extortion and Patience	vii, 7-8
Anger and Wisdom	vii, 9-12
Prosperity and Adversity	vii, 13-14
Moderation in Righteousness ...	vii, 15-24
Wisdom and Women	vii, 25-29; viii, 1
The King's Commands	viii, 2-5
Time and Judgement	viii, 6-9

Wisdom and Folly

The Righteous and the Unrighteous	viii, 10—ix, 12
The Parable of the Poor Wise Man	ix, 13-18
Sundry Reflections and Exhortations	x, 1—xi, 8
Call to Youth and the Poem of Old Age	xi, 9—xii, 7

The Whole Duty of Man

Final Statement	xii, 8-14

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"CRACKLING OF THORNS UNDER THE POT." In the southern desert of Palestine a favourite food is red lentil soup, boiled and long simmered in an iron pot over a fire of brambles and twigs gathered from the thorny shrubs which grow on the hillsides. The fuel is laid on a hearth of rough stone (Ecclesiastes vii, 6). Simple Beduin cookery chiefly consists of broth-making with vegetables and wild edible plants. Even on the comparatively rare occasions when meat is available it is stewed to shreds; otherwise, as it must be cooked immediately after killing, it would be too tough to eat.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

than the day of one's birth. Better go into the house of mourning than into the house of feasting, for sorrow is better than laughter. The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning, but the heart of fools is in the house of mirth. Better to hear the rebuke of the wise than the laughter of the fool. For as the crackling of thorns under a pot, so is the laughter of the fool. This also is vanity.

Extortion makes the wise man foolish, and a gift destroys the understanding. The end of a thing is better than the beginning, and patience is greater than pride.

Put away hastiness and anger, for anger lurks in the heart of fools. Say not, "Why were the former days better than these?" for this is foolish.

Wisdom, with an inheritance, is good and profitable for mortals. It is a security as money is a security, but the excellence of knowledge is that wisdom preserves the life of its possessor.

Who can make straight what God has made crooked? Therefore in the day of prosperity rejoice, and in the day of adversity consider, for God set the one over against the other.

This have I seen in the days of my vanity, that a righteous man may perish in his rightousness while a wicked man may prolong his life in his evil-doing. Be not righteous over much, neither make yourself over wise, for why destroy yourself? Be not too wicked, neither be foolish, for why die before your time?

Wisdom is a greater protection for the wise man than ten rulers in a city, for there is not a righteous man on earth who does good and sins not.

Listen not to everything that is said lest you hear your servant curse you, for you know you likewise have cursed others.

This have I proved: I said, "I will be wise"; but who can discover that which is far off and exceedingly deep? I set myself to search out the reason of things and to know the wickedness of folly and foolishness which is madness, and I find a thing more bitter than death, namely, the woman who is a snare, whose heart is as nets and her hands as bands. They who please God shall escape, but the sinner shall be taken by her.

Putting one thing beside another to find out the truth, which, however, I still seek, I find it hard to discover one wise man among a thousand, but among women any at all who are wise. This only have I found, that God made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions.

A man's wisdom makes his face to shine and changes the sternness of his face.

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Keep the king's commandment because of the oath of God. Leave him not hastily and persist not in an evil thing. For the king does what he pleases and no one may question his power. He who keeps his commandment shall know no evil.

A wise man discerns time and judgement, for to every purpose there is time and judgement. Hence man's misery, for just as no man can hold the wind in his fist, neither can he delay nor anticipate the day of his death. And as there is no escaping active service for the soldier engaged in a campaign, so neither will evil give a man any liberty if once he has yielded himself to its power.

The writer now reverts to the theme of the seeming injustice of the respective lots of the wicked and the righteous, concluding, as before, with a practical counsel to enjoy life while it lasts. I saw the wicked buried, and I saw the righteous go from the holy place and become forgotten in the city. This also is vanity.

Because sentence on evil is not executed speedily, the hearts of men are emboldened to do evil. But though a sinner do evil a hundred times and prolong his days, yet I know it shall be well with them that fear God and not with the wicked, whose days are as a shadow. There is this vanity, that the same happens to the righteous as to the wicked. So again it seems good to eat, drink, and be merry, for it is the gift of God.

The works of God are inscrutable, but the righteous and the wise together with their works are in the hand of God. All things happen alike to all; one event befalls alike the righteous and the wicked, the clean and the unclean, him that sacrifices and him that sacrifices not, the pious and the sinner, the profane and him that fears an oath. Yet the heart of men is full of evil and madness while they live and after that they die. While they live they hope, and a living dog is better than a dead lion. For the living know that they must die, while the dead have neither memory nor reward; their love, hatred and envy is perished and they have no more part in earthly concerns.

'Whatsoever Thy Hand Findeth to Do'

GO your way, eat your bread with joy and drink your wine with a merry heart, for God knows all. Let your garments be always white and put oil on your head. Live joyfully with the woman you love all the days of your vanity, and whatsoever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might, for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave to which you go.

I saw that in this world the race is not to the swift nor the battle to the strong, neither is bread to the wise, nor riches to men of understanding, nor favour to men of skill; but time and chance happens to them all. For as fishes are taken in a net, and birds in a snare, so the sons of men are caught in the snare of destiny.

The following parable may or may not be based upon an actual occurrence, but its import is in full accord with the writer's general attitude: "There was a little city with few men in it, and there came against it a great king who besieged it and built great bulwarks against it. Now there was in it a poor man who by his wisdom delivered the city; yet no man remembered that same poor man. Then said I, Though this poor man's wisdom is despised and his voice is not heard, yet is wisdom better than strength. The words of wise men spoken in quiet, are heard more than the cry of him that rules among fools. Wisdom is better than weapons of war; but one sinner destroys much good."

The Words of a Wise Man

BEFORE passing to his final summing-up, the Man of Wisdom offers further reflections and exhortations on a variety of themes.

Deadly flies cause the ointment to putrefy; so a little folly outweighs a reputation for wisdom and honour.

A wise man's heart is at his right hand; a fool's is at his left. When a fool walks, his understanding fails him and he declares to everyone that he is a fool. If the anger of the ruler rises up against you, do not leap from your place; for meekness allays aggressiveness.

I have seen this evil, that folly is set in great dignity, and the rich sit in low place. I have seen servants on horses and princes walking as servants.

He who digs a pit shall fall into it, and he who breaks through a fence shall be bitten by a serpent. He who removes stones shall be hurt by them, and he who cleaves wood is endangered thereby.

If the iron be blunt and one does not whet the edge, he must exert more force, though skill will help to direct it.

If the serpent bite before it be charmed there is no advantage in the charmer.

The words of a wise man are gracious, but the lips of a fool will swallow up himself. His words begin in foolishness and end in mischievous madness. A fool is full of meaningless words and his labour is futile. "Woe to thee, O land, when thy king is a servant and thy princes eat in the morning. Blessed art thou, O land, when thy king is nobly born and thy princes eat at the right time, for strength and not for gluttony" (x, 16, 17).

By much slothfulness the roof sinks in, and through idleness the house leaks.

A feast is made for laughter, and wine makes merriment, but money answers all things.

Curse not the king, no, not even in your thought; and curse not the rich even in your bedchamber; for a bird of the air shall carry the voice, and declare the whole matter.

Cast your bread upon the waters, for you shall find it after many days. Give a portion to seven, even eight, for you know not what evil shall be on the earth.

If the clouds are full of rain, they empty themselves upon the earth; and if a tree fall toward the south or the north, in the place where it falls there shall it be.

He who observes the wind shall not sow, and he who regards the clouds will not reap.

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As you know not what is the way of the wind, nor how the bones grow in the mother's womb, even so you know not the work of God who does all things.

In the morning sow your seed, in the evening withhold not your hand, for you know not which shall prosper, this or that, or whether both alike shall be good.

Truly the light is sweet, and it is pleasant for the eyes to behold the sun. And if a man live many years let him rejoice in them all, but let him remember the days of darkness for they shall be many. All that comes is vanity.

THE closing section of the book expresses the writer's positive philosophy of life. He puts it in the form of a moving appeal to youth to rejoice in its opportunities while remembering its duty to God, for the "days of darkness" all too quickly come. The poetical description of Man's enfeeblement is one of the choicest passages in the literature of the world. As in all fine art, the symbolism is not to be pressed too far, but the careful reader will appreciate the allusions to the trembling keepers of the house (the limbs); the grinders (teeth); those that look out of the windows (eyes); the street doors (ears); the almond tree (white hair); and, most impressive of all, the golden bowl (the lamp of life) suspended by silver cords.

Rejoice, young man, in your youth; be cheerful of heart, walk in the ways of your heart and in the sight of your eyes. But know this, that for all these things God will call you to judgement. Therefore remove sorrow from your heart and evil from your flesh; for youth and the prime of life are vanity.

"THE MOURNERS GO ABOUT THE STREETS." From the Damascus Gate of Jerusalem comes this Arab funeral procession. About the bier are the hired mourners bearing palm branches, Moslem emblems of grief. Many relatives and friends follow in the train, and loud are the lamentations "because man goeth to his long home. Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was; and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it" (Ecclesiastes xii, 5, 7). On the road to the Moslem cemetery, situated outside the north-east end of the city, more people join the procession out of respect to the memory of the deceased.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

Remember also thy Creator in the days of thy youth, or ever the evil days come, and the years draw nigh when thou shalt say I have no pleasure in them; or ever the sun, and the light, and the moon, and the stars be darkened, and the clouds return after the rain; in the day when the keepers of the house shall tremble and the strong men shall bow themselves, and the grinders cease because they are few, and those that look out of the windows be darkened, and the doors shall be shut in the street; when the sound of the grinding is low, and one shall rise up at the voice of a bird, and all the daughters of music shall be brought low; yea, they shall be afraid of that which is high, and fears shall be in the way; and the almond tree shall flourish, and the grasshopper shall be a burden, and desire shall fail, because man goeth to his long home, and the mourners go about the streets; or ever the silver cord be loosed, or the golden bowl be broken, or the pitcher be broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern; and the dust shall return to the earth as it was, and the spirit return unto God who gave it.

VANITY of vanities, saith the preacher, all is vanity.

Being wise, the preacher still taught the people knowledge, seeking out and setting in order many proverbs, acceptable and true words. The words of the wise are as goads, and as nails well-fastened are the words of the masters of assemblies which are given from one shepherd. Furthermore, my son, be admonished: of making many books there is no end, and much study is a weariness of the flesh.

Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is the whole duty of Man. For God will bring every work into judgement, with every secret thing, whether it be good or evil.

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Ecclesiastes

II

The Story of the Book

The Preacher and His Creed of Pessimistic Wisdom

by REV. D. RUSSELL SCOTT, M.A., Ph.D.

Professor of Biblical Languages, etc., at Scottish Congregational College, Edinburgh. Author of "Pessimism and Love: A Study in Ecclesiastes and The Song of Songs," etc.

UNDER the "Origins" of the Book called Ecclesiastes we put the questions, Who wrote this book? What were its sources? When was the book composed? When and how did it become Holy Scripture, with an assured place in the sacred canon of the Old Testament? These questions are of interest in view of the character of the book, which, it has been said, is "without a model in the Old Testament."

Who wrote the book? It opens, in the Hebrew, "The words of Koheleth, the son of David, king in Jerusalem." The name Koheleth, used seven times in the book (i, 1, 2, 12; vii, 27; xii, 8, 9, 10), is difficult, perhaps impossible, to interpret with certainty. It has been translated in the Greek Bible "Ecclesiastes," hence the title "the Book of Ecclesiastes." This word in Greek means "one who sits or speaks in an assembly"—hence in English "the Preacher." The Greek interpretation may possibly be correct—that is all that can be said for it, and also for such later interpretations as "The Debater," "The Convener of an Assembly," "The Great Orator" (R.V. margin), "Collector of Sayings," "An ideal assembly of Persons," "Wisdom." Not one of these interpretations is certain; each is at the best only more or less likely. Renan, the French *littérateur*, thought the name was a cryptogram which was, however, beyond his power to solve. The suggestion has been made that the name Koheleth was due originally to a corruption in the Hebrew text of Chapter i, 2, but even if the sure interpretation of the name Koheleth were discovered, that would probably help little towards a knowledge of the author or of his work. It would still be little more than what it is at present—a *nom de plume*.

Assuming the Mantle of Royalty

BUT the *nom de plume* was not, however, of King Solomon's choosing. The view that he was the author of this book was held both by Jewish and Christian interpreters till the period of critical investigation. And even today that view is still maintained in some circles. The chief reason usually given is that the author identifies himself with Solomon and speaks in the first person (i, 1, 12), and if he were not Solomon then the author would be guilty of deliberately deceiving his readers. But this in no wise follows. Just as the author of Job uses the literary vehicle of a debate between different persons to state his problem, so Koheleth (or Ecclesiastes) uses the person of Solomon—the perfection of royal magnificence and of wisdom—to set forth in the form of autobiography some of his own reflections. And for his purpose—to show forth the vanity of all things in life, even of life under its most favourable conditions, he could not have made a better choice—for who was ever more favourably placed to make of life a complete and magnificent satisfaction than Solomon, the son of David?

Solomon was, then, but a literary guise, which soon in the book wears itself very thin; indeed, after Chapter ii, Solomon seems to be no more taken into account. Deception is out of the question. And if ever Koheleth learnt in his lifetime—which is unlikely—that some of his readers really believed he was Solomon the great king, we can imagine him with a wry smile repeating one of his own proverbs: "When the fool walketh by the way, his understanding faileth him and he says to everyone that he is a fool."

The Case against Solomon's Authorship

THE evidence against the Solomonic authorship is completely convincing; and to repeat it here would be unnecessary, were it not for the fact that the tradition has been strong and to some extent still prevails. There are words in the book which it is impossible to think of Solomon ever writing. For instance, at what period in his life could Solomon have written the words "I Koheleth *was* king over Israel in Jerusalem" (i, 12)? He became king at his accession and remained king till his death. Solomon might write before his accession, "I shall be king," and after it, "I am king," but never, till he was dead, "I was king." Then the author speaks of oppression and social injustice in his day which, if Solomon had wanted, he could easily have removed. It is no king who writes of these oppressions, but a subject who is suffering from them and is full of sympathy for his fellow subjects. Such words as "Keep the king's command and that in regard of the oath of God. Be not hasty to go out of his presence; persist not in an evil thing; for he doeth whatsoever pleaseth him. Because the king's word hath power, and who may say unto him, What doest thou?" (viii, 2-4 R.V.). "Curse not the king, no, not in thy thought; and curse not the rich in thy bedchamber, for a bird of the air shall carry the voice, and that which hath wings shall tell the matter" (x, 20)—such words as these could scarcely have come from Solomon.

The popular view that in this book Solomon in his old age is expressing his penitence for the indulgence and idolatry of his youth and prime has no support in the book, which utters not a single note of penitence from beginning to end. In a word, the contents of the book give no justification at all that Solomon was the author.

If further evidence against the view be required, there is the language in which the book was written. This language is not the Hebrew of Solomon's day and belongs to a very much later time. It has affinities with the late parts of the Old Testament—Ezra, Nehemiah, Chronicles and Esther, and even with the Mishna (c. A.D. 200). This test of language is regarded by all competent scholars as decisive, and on the point the words of Delitzsch which have often been cited may again be quoted here: "If the Book of Koheleth be of old Solomonic origin, then there is no history of the Hebrew language." The vocabulary, style and idiom of Koheleth simply did not exist in Solomon's day, nor for more than a century or two after his death. The rise of the Solomonic tradition was due to the fact that, when the book appeared, critical investigation had not arisen and did not arise till centuries

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SOLOMON'S POOL WHENCE WATER IS BROUGHT TO JERUSALEM

Between Bethlehem and Hebron are the three reservoirs known as King Solomon's Pools, the largest of which is pictured above. It is quite likely that the Preacher referred to these when, in his assumed character of Solomon, he reviewed his great works which included reservoirs to irrigate woods and gardens (Ecclesiastes ii, 6). The pools are very ancient and were in use in Roman and Saracenic times. Once more, as of old, the water is brought from them to eke out Jerusalem's supply. The photograph was taken before the pool had been repaired and waterworks erected. Pumps installed were originally employed at Kantara during the World War to pump Nile water across the Suez Canal; a pipe line extended to carry water for the British troops advancing to Palestine through the desert.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

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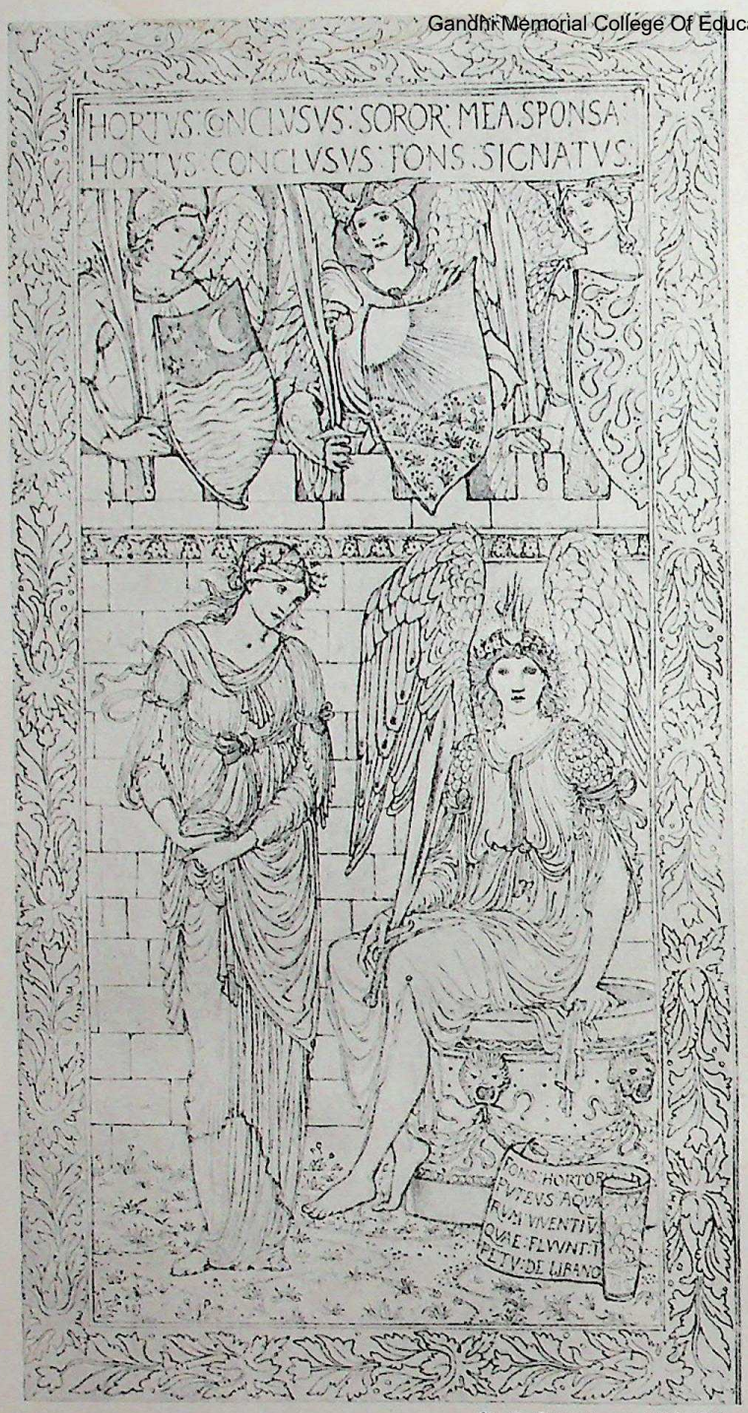
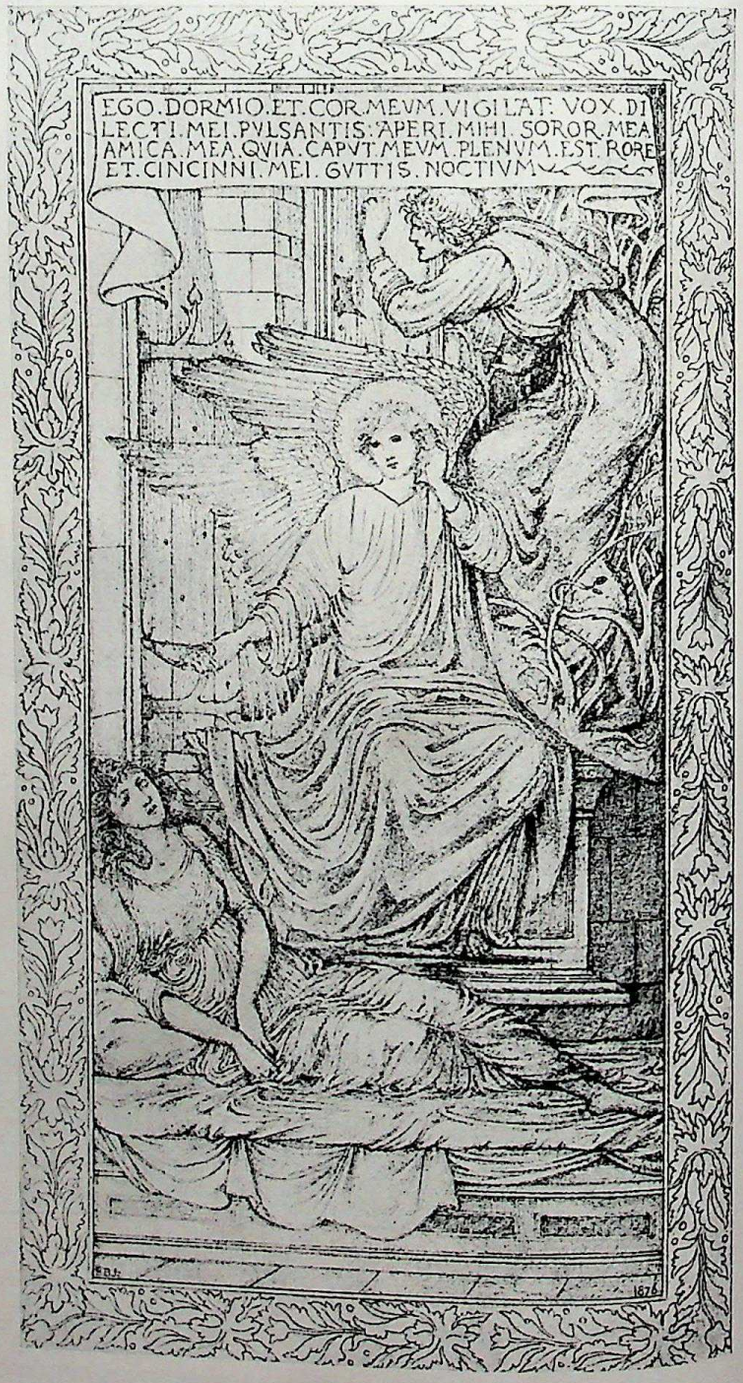


Sir E. Burne-Jones, 1833-1898

"A GARDEN INCLOSED, A FOUNTAIN SEALED"

In the beautiful Song of Songs, gem of ancient Hebrew lyrical poetry, the lover compares the maiden to a walled garden of sweet spices, and to a sealed "well of living waters" (Song of Solomon iv, 12-15), ecstatic similes drawn from nature and pastoral life in Lebanon. The poem was a source of inspiration to Sir Edward Burne-Jones. To illustrate it he made a series of delicate pencil drawings, full of decorative but expressive details, and two of these are here reproduced—A Garden Inclosed (left) and The Dream.



"I SLEEP, BUT MY HEART WAKETH"

The Shulamite relating a terrible dream which haunts her (Song of Solomon v, 2-8) tells the "daughters of Jerusalem" how she heard her lover's voice and sought him in vain throughout the night: "I called him, but he gave me no answer. The watchmen that went about the city found me. They smote me, they wounded me; the keepers of the wall took away my veil from me." Her hearers, their interest aroused by her anxiety, question her about her beloved and then offer to seek him with her.

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G. Lawrence Bulleid

"FOR UNTO US A CHILD IS BORN, UNTO US A SON IS GIVEN"

This idealized portrayal, by G. Lawrence Bulleid, of a young Jewish mother with her cradled baby outside a stable entrance where restless doves perch and flutter, evokes thoughts of the beautiful passage in the Book of Isaiah foretelling the birth of the Messiah (ix, 6, 7). To the writer of the first thirty-nine chapters of this Book the hope of earthly salvation through the Just One belonged to a time near at hand, bringing deliverance not only to Israel but also to the whole world. Diligently seeking to strengthen and comfort his people in the day of tribulation, he received his lovely vision of the coming of the Prince of Peace.

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A CAMEL TURNS "THE WHEEL AT THE CISTERN"

Some of Beersheba's wells and water-pits or "cisterns" still exist. They played a prominent part in the history of Abraham and Hagar, Ishmael and Isaac, and gave importance to this ancient place situated on the edge of the desert. Pictured above is the largest well. Its old curb of stones, grooved by the ropes of countless buckets, has been replaced by a solidly-constructed well-mouth, with a type of water-lift which has been in use thousands of years. The camel harnessed to a connecting shaft moves round the horizontal wheel working the vertical one that draws up the buckets. End of water in the Orient signifies the end of life. Vivid, therefore, is Koheleth's image for sudden death (Ecclesiastes xii, 6): "the wheel broken at the cistern."

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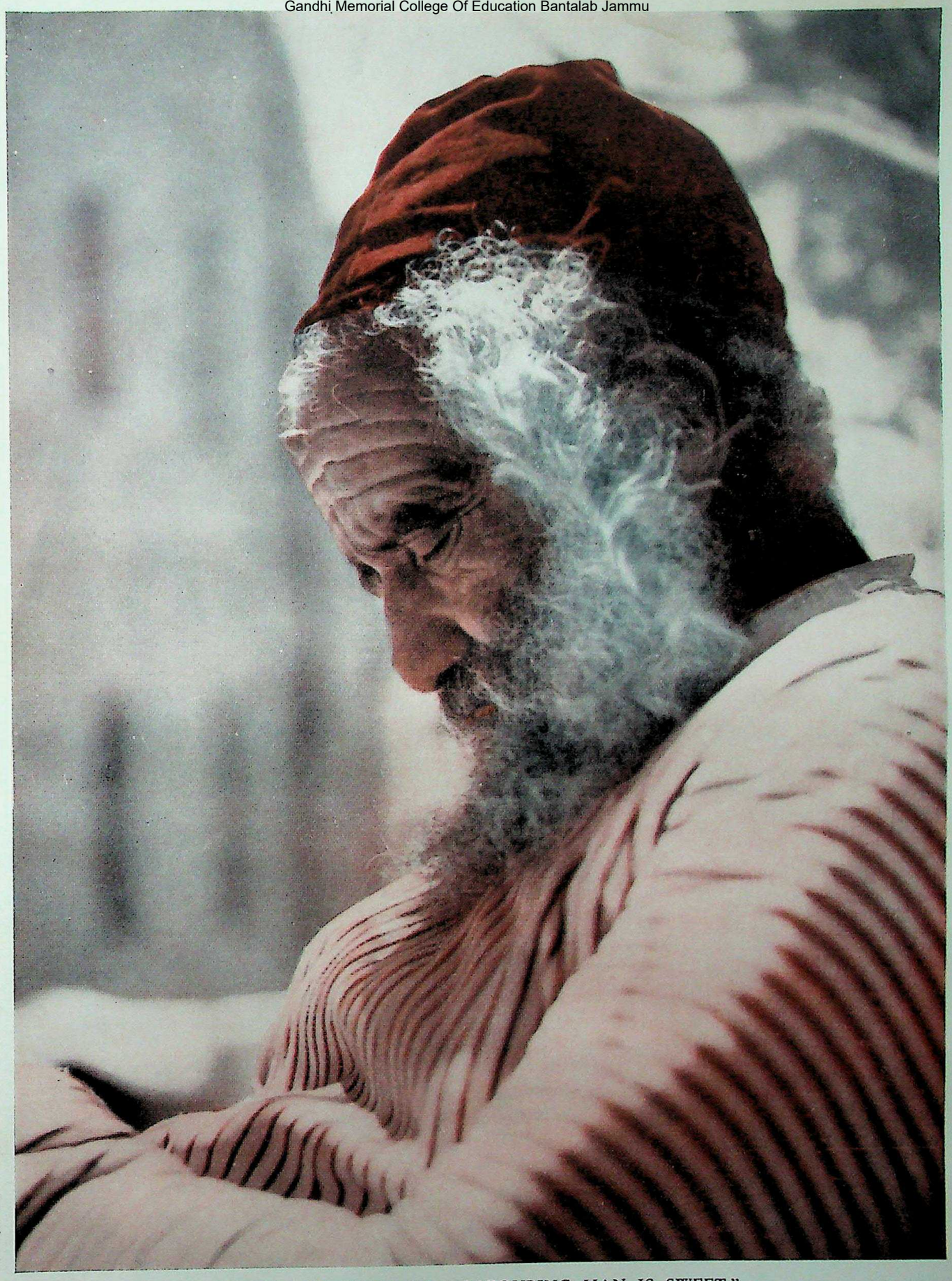

"THE SLEEP OF A LABOURING MAN IS SWEET"

Dozing in front of his premises, this hoary and wrinkled Jewish small-trader appears at peace with his world. Though early each morning "he shall rise up at the voice of the bird," he is able to rest at night and to enjoy a brief nap under the shade of a tree "whether he eat little or much" of his frugal fare. According to the Preacher, he may well be an object of envy to the wealthy man whose rich living and worldly cares "will not suffer him to sleep" (Ecclesiastes v, 12). During his life this venerable elder has gladly seen in Palestine an influx of his own race, an influx which began in the latter half of the 19th century.

Photo, Nachum Gidal

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John Martin, 1789-1854

"SIT IN THE DUST, O VIRGIN DAUGHTER OF BABYLON"

The Fall of Babylon is among the chief paintings of John Martin, gifted illustrator of the Bible. Owing much of its ancient importance to its position near the confluence of the Mesopotamian rivers, the Tigris and Euphrates, this marvellous city was situated on the banks of the latter. The painter has imagined the bridge—built in the reign of Nebuchadnezzar's father with "piers of burnt brick for the crossing of the Euphrates"—from which a gateway led to the "tower of Babel" (E-temenanki) depicted here with the eight stages mentioned by the Greek historian Herodotus in the 5th century B.C. By that time the glory of the city was in decay. It had fallen to Cyrus of Persia, appointed "to subdue nations before him" (Isaiah xlv, 1), in 538 B.C., and had ceased to be an urban centre of empire.

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"HEAR THE WORD OF THE LORD"

Isaiah's ministry coincided with the decline and fall of the Northern Kingdom of Israel, while the land of Judah was harassed and partially devastated by invasion. In the Temple this greatest of the Old Testament prophets had the sublime vision of his call when his lips were touched by the Divine flame purifying his speech and heart (Isaiah vi, 1-8). In Jerusalem he continued to live throughout the long term of his public career of prophecy and statesmanship.

J. James Tissot has depicted Isaiah advanced in years when he had risen to be the authoritative influence in Judah on religious doctrine and political action. Though a remnant of his people was to be saved, judgement and calamity to come was the main theme of Isaiah's, prophecy which culminated in the interview with King Hezekiah(Isaiah xxxix, 6) : " Behold, the days come, that all that is in thine house, and that which thy fathers have laid up in store until this day, shall be carried to Babylon : nothing shall be left, saith the Lord."

J. James Tissot, 1836-1902

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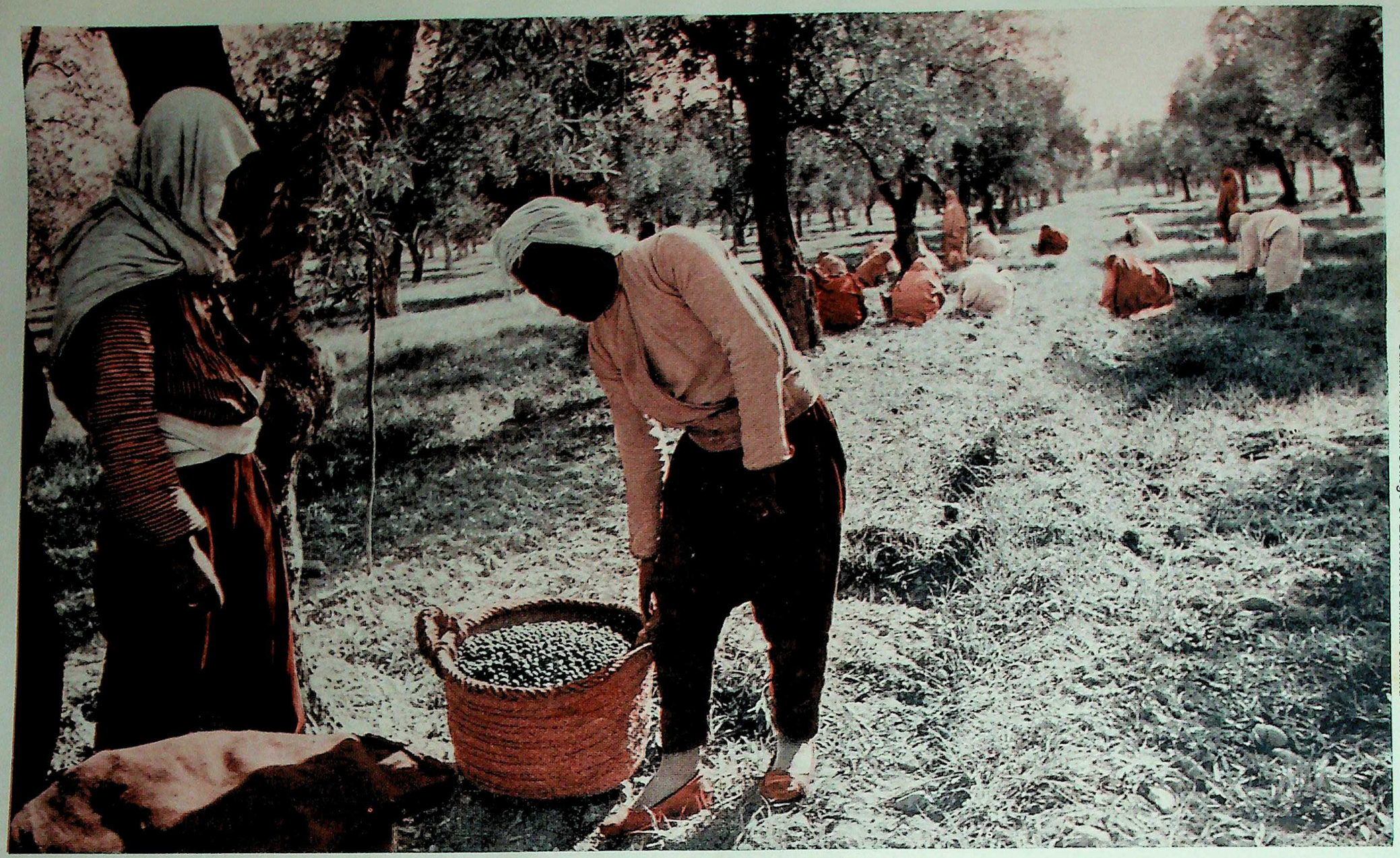

"AS THE SHAKING OF AN OLIVE TREE"

Olives and olive oil are staple foods in Palestine. The ingathering of the berries is the latest and most important harvest of the year. It occurs in October and November, and the day when it is to begin is settled beforehand in the villages. The olives in the scene pictured have been shaken and beaten off the branches and are being gathered into flexible rope baskets. Some will be kept for pickling in brine, but the bulk will be taken in sacks to the local olive-press where the oil is extracted. The owner of the press usually receives about 10 per cent of this as payment. Though the peasants still shake down the olives as they did in Isaiah's time (Isaiah xvii, 6; xxiv, 13), in some districts they are trained to pick from ladders, to avoid breakage of branches.

Photo, "Daily Mirror"

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afterwards (Luther was one of the first, if not the first, to challenge the tradition), and to the view that the name of Solomon gave authority to the book; its continuance is due to much the same reasons with the added one of a false view of inspiration.

We do not know who Koheleth or Ecclesiastes was, not even what the name Koheleth means. In a word, we do not know who wrote this book. These are negative results, but they are harmless. Indeed, it might be pleaded that these negative results have a positive value. The book, as the confessions of Solomon, would make a sorry spectacle of the great king and would add nothing to his glory. And it may not be a bad thing that a wise Providence and sound and reverent learning present this book to us today as really anonymous, the book of an unknown Jew uttering the serious reflections and difficulties of himself and of his people at a time when life and the world were going hard with them

But even though we do not know who wrote this book, we have some evidence of the kind of man he was and of the methods of composition which he used. In Chapter xii, 9, 10, we read, "And further, in that Koheleth was wise, he still taught the people knowledge; yea, he pondered and he tested and sought out and set in order, many proverbs. Koheleth searched to find pleasing words, that which was written in righteousness, even words of truth." By some scholars these words are credited not to Koheleth himself but to some later writer. The reasons given for this view—that the words are in the third person, while elsewhere in the book the author uses the first; that it is scarcely the kind of testimonial the author would have written of himself; that here the author represents himself as one of "the sages" of Israel, while in other parts he assumes the character of a king, and that the words do not fully describe the work of the author as we know it—are, however, not conclusive. True, the substance of the book evidently ends at xii, 8, with the oft-repeated refrain, "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity," but there seems no definite reason or reasons why the author should not have added this note of commendation of himself. Indeed, if there is one thing which this book teaches its critics, it is to refrain from saying too definitely what Koheleth could write or what he could not. In any case, we may take the words as a true, if incomplete, account of the author's work and methods. He belonged to the school of the Wise Men of Israel—though he differed in some respects from his predecessors—and as a "wise man" he gathered wisdom, homely aphoristic philosophy, practical truths, with great care and thoroughness—wisdom that would save himself, his friends and his disciples from the pitfalls of stupidity and that would lead to a good and fairly satisfying life. To this end, it seems, he mixed widely with men, read much and may have travelled far.

Sources of the Book's Teaching

THIS account of Koheleth's method leads us to the consideration of his sources. Where did he get his stuff—his homely proverbs, his gloomy philosophy, his sceptical questionings, and his well regulated epicureanism? Attempts have been made with more or less success to show that Koheleth was a debtor to Egyptian, Babylonian and Greek writers. Similarities in thought and even in expression no doubt can be found between Koheleth and the Egyptian "Song of the Harper" and "The Dialogue of the Misanthrope with His soul," and between him and what is known as the Babylonian Gilgamesh Epic, and between his thought and that of Buddhism. But the similarities may well be due to the fact that human nature is much the same all the world over and through long stretches of time; it has the same problems, the same sorrows and joys, and expresses its feelings and thoughts about them very much in the same ways. Further, it is very doubtful if these recondite researches into possible foreign sources lead us to a true understanding of Koheleth and his message. If they incline us to the belief that Koheleth was little more than a borrower from other people they distort our view of the striking individuality of the author and his work.

Supposed Traces of Greek Philosophy

MORE may perhaps be said on behalf of Greek influence. Many readers confess to feeling a Greek atmosphere in the book, which may be just a would-be academic way of describing the air of reflection manifested in the book. Some scholars have tried to maintain the direct influence upon Koheleth of the Greek Stoic and Epicurean philosophies. The Stoic doctrine of "Cycles," according to which history offers no sign of progress but only moves in recurring cycles, is supposed to be reflected in Chapter i, 1-12 where the sun rises and sets ever the same, where the wind blows only to blow again, where the rivers flow and flow to the sea, but the sea remains the same—a passage that describes the endless and profitless sameness of things in Nature, but says nothing about recurrent cycles. The doctrine of "living according to Nature" of the same school has been supposed to be set forth in Chapter iii, 1-8, which begins:

> To every thing there is a season,
> And a time to every purpose under the heaven:
> A time to be born, and a time to die;

a section which, unfortunately for this view, has nothing to do with the duty of conformity or with the duty of being born or of dying at the right time, but is stating a doctrine of Providence, namely the fixedness of all events. Not a doctrine of Conformity but of Determinism is here stated. And Koheleth did not need to go to the Stoics, directly or indirectly, to find a doctrine of Determinism. He could find it quite near home, say, at his father's board or in the Jewish blood of his veins.

The traces of Epicureanism are vague and not specifically Greek. Indeed, the epicureanism which is only a desire for pleasure and to gather the rosebuds while we may, springs up on any human soil, and Koheleth did not need to seek far to find it, for its roots were in his own heart and in every man's.

Professor Ranston, in his book "Ecclesiastes and the Greek Wisdom Literature," has set forth the theory that Koheleth is indebted to certain early Greek writers, especially to the "gnomic poet," Theognis of Megara (c. 520 B.C.); and his theory has received a certain approval from some scholars. He cites similarities between Koheleth and Theognis in diction, order and thought. It is not easy to pronounce definitely upon this theory. Some of the similarities are certainly striking, especially when it is a case of similarity (or approximation to similarity) in the *order* of the thought or of the arrangement of disconnected maxims. The question arises in one's mind, however, may not Theognis have borrowed—not from Koheleth, but from the East and, directly or indirectly, from Palestine itself? And what a man borrows of philosophy or parable, he leaves behind on the soil where he found it for later seekers to find. May not Koheleth and Theognis have drunk at the same well (or wells)? Of course, not at the same time; indeed, at a

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sufficiently long interval for the wells to overflow time and again, and sometimes into one another.

The hesitation which the present writer has in accepting straightway any of these foreign sources to which Koheleth is supposed to have gone, is due to a growing impression of the distinctively Jewish character of the thought in this book; its roots are in the Old Testament itself, especially in its Wisdom Literature and in its doctrine of God and the Judgement. Koheleth was so profoundly Jewish that, if he can be said to borrow at all, his borrowings were moulded to the form of his Jewish individuality. And it was by being so true to his native Judaism that he was driven in face of some of the hard mysterious facts of life to his gloomy conclusions about the world, its work, and its humanity, and the ways of God with men. Indeed, the very nature of Judaism, its fatalism, its theory of rewards and punishments, and its wisdom, prepared the way for, if it did not make inevitable, a book like our Ecclesiastes.

There are theories affecting the composition of the book which may here be briefly mentioned. One is that in the book we have "Two Voices" (like Tennyson's poem "The Two Voices"), one voice affirming, the other denying, and thus representing a mental debate in the mind of the author. Another theory which goes much farther holds that there are four principal writers—a Pessimist, an Epicurean, a Sophist or Sage, and an Orthodox Pietist, and an even greater number of annotators. A third most ingenious theory is that the book owes its present form to an accident to the sheets of the Codex—an accident which disarranged the book and left the task of rearrangement to later hands.

None of these theories has found general acceptance. The answer to the first theory is simply—This book is no dialogue. In dialogue we are supposed to know where A's words end and those of B begin. To the second theory, with its modifications, is opposed the fact that the more carefully the book is studied, the more one is impressed with the unity of thought that embraces contradictions pervading the whole book. The third theory has found little acceptance, and one serious objection which, if valid, would be decisive, is that at the time Ecclesiastes was written, the codex form would not be used, but the roll form; that is, there were no sheets to be dislocated and rearranged.

Substantial Oneness of the Book

INTERPOLATIONS there may be. Most scholars are doubtful about "Remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth," on the ground that it disturbs the connexion. The authenticity of the epilogue (xii, 9-14) has been doubted in whole or in part, though sometimes not at all. Passages that refer to the Judgement, like iii, 17 and xi, 9, are doubted. The growing tendency of criticism seems, however, to regard the interpolations as few, so few that we can say that the Book of Ecclesiastes is a substantial unity, and any interpolations that there may be on the part of scribes, affect neither the thought of the book and its presentation nor our judgement of the author. He may have borrowed; his work may have been touched up or added to here and there by people concerned for his orthodoxy, but the more we ponder the pages the more we are convinced that we have a writer keenly reflective, capable of seeing that there are two sides to all the conditions of life, to wealth and to poverty, to wisdom and to folly, but all the time fundamentally true to himself and to the rock from which he was hewn. And in being true to himself and that rock we shall find later that he has truth for us in these present days.

It is not necessary to muster here all the evidences for the fixing of the date, if only for the reason that they do not fix it definitely. The two chief views are (1) that it belongs to the Persian period (538–332 B.C.) and, more probably, to the later part of this period; and (2) that it belongs to the later Greek period. The language favours the latter view. Some time in the Greek period before the Maccabean revolt seems the most likely—about 200 B.C.

There are also two views as to the place of writing. Alexandria has been suggested, but on the whole Palestine seems much more likely. When Ecclesiastes was received into the Hebrew canon is still disputed. In the 2nd century A.D. there were still discussions about the right of Ecclesiastes to be regarded as Scripture.

Koheleth: the Man and His Message

IT was the scepticism that the book contains that caused this hesitation, but we may be glad that a sceptical turn of mind did not keep the book of Koheleth out of the canon as we are that an imperfect faith does not keep a man out of the kingdom of God.

> Vanity of vanities saith Koheleth,
> Vanity of vanities; all is vanity.
> What profit has a man of all his labour
> Wherein he laboureth under the sun? (i, 2, 3).

These words declare the fundamental view of Koheleth on life and on the world. There is no profit, nothing of real abiding value for mankind. To this gloomy view Koheleth has come by observation of the world of Nature, of the fortunes of his neighbours and of his own. Observe the world of Nature, he seems to say, and you will find vanity in the everlasting sameness.

Nature presents a picture of simply endless repetition that gives no profit to Nature, for however much the torrents flow, the sea remains the same. Nature creates a sense of weariness. If anything should appear that seems new, on inquiry it will be found to be but a repetition of something that has been.

The same is true of human experience. What profit has a man of all his labour wherein he laboureth under the sun, or of his pleasure, or of his search for knowledge, of the whole round of his aesthetic and intellectual life? The answer is, None; for all is vanity.

Koheleth gives an account of two experiments to find something of real satisfying value. The first experiment is described in Chapter i, 12-18. He tried to find a real value in the search for wisdom, but he found that this led nowhere—"in much wisdom is much grief"—and the wise man suffers and perishes just like the fool. The experiment in its method and result was profitless, only confirming the conclusion that all is vanity and a pursuit after wind.

The second experiment is the search for pleasure, joy, and happiness. "I said in mine heart, Come now, I will try thee with delights and do thou try pleasure." He carried out this experiment on the grand scale, disporting himself like a king, even as Solomon in all his glory. In this adventure, however, he did not play the fool; he kept his head; he remained wise. But he states it as his sincere and considered judgement that it was all vanity.

The result is surprising, for in the description of this venture we see life on what most of us would consider its finest terms, on the terms of culture, good taste, and

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common sense, with abundance of wealth to support them. Most men, if they had what Koheleth had for this experiment, would have been content, considered themselves fortunate, and asked little more of life. And so would Koheleth have been content, if he could have held his thought within barriers, or not thought at all—only enjoyed.

His conclusion that all is vanity did not rest, however, only on these two experiments. He looked out on society; it was rotten; his world was out of joint. Justice and fairness were flouted. Fools were honoured; the wise were neglected. There was nothing to give a sense of security; the arm of force ruled and was cruel. Evil was everywhere. Vanity of vanities, the whole is vanity.

Nor was experience the only factor that led Koheleth to this gloomy view of life. As a Jew he had inherited a creed, which, simply stated, was: There is a God who has fixed everything, good and evil, pleasant and unpleasant, in its time (iii, 1-9). The straight and the crooked were fixed by God (vii, 13; i, 15). A further article in this creed was that God is God and Man is Man, and there is a great difference between them—a difference so great that man cannot comprehend the ways of God. True, God has made everything beautiful in its time, but He has set ignorance (or the world) in Man's heart, so that Man cannot find out the work that God hath done from the beginning to the end (iii, 11). If we link this paralysing creed to Koheleth's bitter experience of life we can understand how he came to his conclusion, All is vanity.

"THE ALMOND TREE SHALL FLOURISH." Flowering profusely in January before the appearance of the leaves, the beautiful almond tree presents a hoary appearance. Its pale blossom supplied the poetical image for whitened hair in Koheleth's allegory of approaching age (Ecclesiastes xii, 5). Increasingly cultivated in Palestine to supply a good market, almond trees abound in the hill-country and fine orchards have been planted at Ramleh. In addition to the fruit as an article of diet, the yield of almond oil is valuable for cosmetics.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

The amazing fact is that Koheleth held on to his belief in God. He never slid over into atheism or into the idea that the world and life are but the result of blind chance, as he might easily have done, perhaps logically ought to have done. In spite of the fact that the race is not to the swift nor the battle to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise nor yet favour to men of skill, but time and chance happeneth to them all. For man also knoweth not his time: as the fishes that are taken in an evil net, and as birds that are caught in the snare, even so are the sons of men snared in an evil time, when it falleth suddenly upon them (ix, 11, 12)—in spite of all he still believed in God. "Fear God," he says more than once. Even though there is much that is crooked and profitless in the world, even though the number of fools and their folly are very great, and though the wicked prosper and increase, God did make Man upright, though Man has found out many evil devices (vii, 29). Yes; still fear God and keep His commandments, even though all is vanity and pursuit after wind. His creed was unable to transform his world; his God was omnipotent, simply resistless, but to God and creed alike he remained faithful.

All is vanity; the crooked cannot be made straight, but still Koheleth had to live. And to help him he discovered two stars amidst the gloom; two genuine goods in an otherwise hopeless world. The one was Joy, and the other Wisdom. The joy that comes out of the simple things of life, eating and drinking, happy wedlock, the work into which a man can put his heart the light of the day and the sleep of the night, that is Man's portion which a man should seize at every opportunity. Time and again Koheleth refers to this joy. He presses it home to youth, and has himself so firmly laid hold of it that at the close of his book he can set old age and its infirmities in an allegory which, even if it cannot be classed as fine lyric poetry, contains words like "man goeth to his long home," "or ever the silver cord be loosed, or the golden bowl broken, or the pitcher be broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern," which have so touched the imagination that they are often quoted even by those who do not know whence they come. To Koheleth this Joy is the gift of God, which shows that for him it has nothing to do with sensuality; and he also says: "For man shall not remember the days of his life; because God answereth him in the joy of his heart" (v, 19), which means that it is in the simple joys of life Man meets God, feels in them His favour and knows that in them God is kindly responding to the joy of his heart. The simple pleasures of life are the sign and seal of God's favour. In that view Koheleth is true to the old Hebrew tradition.

The second bright spot is Wisdom. This wisdom teaches a man how to bear himself before God—quietly

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and reverently (v, 1-7). On a lower scale it teaches a man how to behave before his betters—discreetly, without hotheadedness (viii, 2, 3). Wisdom, too, is the prudence that keeps a man out of plots, for "a man who diggeth a pit may fall into it." It teaches that a little skill and wise preparation are better than force. Wisdom knows that money is a defence and answereth all things, but knows also that those who love money will not be satisfied with money, and that those that increase their substance find that those who eat it increase (v, 10, 11). Wisdom is a good in itself, as good as an inheritance, and it lengthens life. It makes a man moderate, saves him from the falsehood of extremes. It keeps him from brooding over the good old days (vii, 10), from listening to idle gossip (vii, 21, 22), and from over-anxiety about the success of adventures (xi, 1, 6), counsels a wide distribution of one's goods, not a putting of all one's eggs into one basket (xi, 2). It is true, wisdom has its limitations; it cannot comprehend all the work of God (vii, 23, 24), it can sometimes be destroyed by a little folly; and the wise man dieth like the fool. None the less, wisdom excelleth folly as far as light excelleth darkness (ii, 13). It is a guide in living and will save a man a heap of trouble. Therefore get wisdom.

And Koheleth counts himself among the wise. He loved life, for, after all, to be a living dog is really to be preferred to being a dead lion (ix, 4); it was only in a very gloomy mood that he said it would be better for a man never to be born (iv, 3). He remained keen and interested in life to the end.

Joy and wisdom were his. These were the two stars in his dark firmament. They flickered at times; at times they even shone brightly, but they did not disperse the gloom. As at the beginning, all is vanity, so at the end all is vanity. Surely with these two stars Koheleth might have been satisfied and found that life is very good and the world also, even as God beheld it at its creation.

But no! all is vanity. Wisdom is vanity; joy is vanity. For over them both, as over all things, Death rises stark. These stars have their times and then go out. For Koheleth, death ends all. There is neither joy nor wisdom in Sheol, whither the wise man and the fool, the happy and the wretched go; whither too go the righteous and the sinners alike (Chapter iii, 18-21 *et passim*). The dust returns to the earth as it was and the spirit to God who gave it (xii, 7), which means, according to Hebrew psychology, that the principle of life returns to its source, and Man as Man ceases to be.

Koheleth would, we may well believe, have accepted the truth of immortality if he had been able. But he remained a sceptic, if not a denier; and with the belief that death ends all, he was true to himself and false to no man when he said, "All is vanity, the whole is vanity." For increase the joy of life tenfold, its loves and friendships, its work and play, its beauties in Nature and in art, all its culture and noble civilization. Increase, too, wisdom that knows the past and can discern the future, that can wrest the hidden secrets out of Nature to bring them into the service of men. Yet if death is still there, ending all, Koheleth is right. All is vanity. The gloom is only deepened and the tragedy of life heightened.

And so through this sceptic and pessimist we are brought to the necessity of this word. "Christ brought life and immortality to light." Without that word, if we think as keenly as Koheleth, we shall say with Koheleth, "All is vanity." With that word, the sun breaks.

"EAT THY BREAD WITH JOY." Taking light refreshment from a common dish, these shepherds rest with their flocks in the pastures near Baalbek. Their contentment would have pleased Koheleth. Pessimistically reviewing material wealth and sophisticated pleasures, he found vanity and vexation in all. He reached the conclusion that happiness is obtainable only by those who toil without irk. "Every man should enjoy the good of all his labour, it is the gift of God" (iii, 13). His moderate advice was that people should not work for profit or hoard savings, but rejoice in mild achievement and leisure hours.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

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The Song of Songs

FOR centuries the Old Testament Book known variously as the Song of Songs, the Song of Solomon, or Canticles, has been regarded as a supremely beautiful example of Hebrew poetry. Indeed, some have gone further and, with Herder, have spoken of "Solomon's Songs of Love, the Oldest and Sweetest of the East." For this reason, not selected extracts but the whole of the Book as it is translated in the Revised Version is reprinted below.

But while readers of every land and generation are united in their praise, there exists a variety of interpretations of the Book's composition and real meaning.

In earlier days it was widely held that the Book was an allegory of Jehovah's relations to His Chosen People or of Christ's love for His Church, but there have always been those who have argued that it is a collection of love lyrics or have claimed to have detected in its pages some traces of dramatic form or content.

Though one out of several possible methods of treatment is adopted here, nothing in the nature of generally-recognized authoritativeness or finality is claimed for it. Nevertheless its adoption, and the printing of the Book in poetic form, may help to give this little portion of Holy Scripture an added interest and value.

KING AND MAIDEN

LADIES OF THE COURT

Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth:
For thy love is better than wine.
Thine ointments have a goodly fragrance;
Thy name is as ointment poured forth;
Therefore do the virgins love thee.

Draw me; we will run after thee:

THE SHULAMMITE

The king hath brought me into his chambers:

LADIES OF THE COURT

We will be glad and rejoice in thee.
We will make mention of thy love more than of wine:
Rightly do they love thee.

THE SHULAMMITE

I am black but comely,
O ye daughters of Jerusalem,
As the tents of Kedar,
As the curtains of Solomon.
Look not upon me, because I am swarthy,
Because the sun hath scorched me.
My mother's sons were incensed against me,
They made me the keeper of the vineyards;
But mine own vineyard have I not kept.

Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth,
Where thou feedest thy flock, where thou makest it to rest at noon:
For why should I be as one that is veiled
Beside the flocks of thy companions?

KING SOLOMON

If thou know not, O thou fairest among women,
Go thy way forth by the footsteps of the flock,
And feed thy kids beside the shepherds' tents.
I have compared thee, O my love,
To a steed in Pharaoh's chariots.
Thy cheeks are comely with plaits of hair,
Thy neck with strings of jewels.
We will make thee plaits of gold
With studs of silver

THE SHULAMMITE

While the king sat at his table,
My spikenard sent forth its fragrance.
My beloved is unto me as a bundle of myrrh,
That lieth betwixt my breasts.
My beloved is unto me as a cluster of henna-flowers
In the vineyards of En-gedi.

KING SOLOMON

Behold, thou art fair, my love; behold thou art fair;
Thine eyes are as doves.

THE SHULAMMITE

Behold, thou art fair, my beloved, yea, pleasant:
Also our couch is green.
The beams of our house are cedars,
And our rafters are firs.
I am a rose of Sharon,
A lily of the valleys.

KING SOLOMON

As a lily among thorns,
So is my love among the daughters.

THE SHULAMMITE

As the apple tree among the trees of the wood,
So is my beloved among the sons.
I sat down under his shadow with great delight,
And his fruit was sweet to my taste.
He brought me to the banqueting house,
And his banner over me was love.
Stay ye me with raisins, comfort me with apples:
For I am sick of love.
His left hand is under my head,
And his right hand doth embrace me.
I adjure you, O daughters of Jerusalem,
By the roes, and by the hinds of the field,
That ye stir not up, nor awaken love,
Until it please.

THE MAIDEN'S SOLILOQUY

THE SHULAMMITE

The voice of my beloved! behold, he cometh,
Leaping upon the mountains, skipping upon the hills.
My beloved is like a roe or a young hart:
Behold, he standeth behind our wall,
He looketh in at the windows,
He sheweth himself through the lattice.
My beloved spake, and said unto me,
Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away.
For, lo, the winter is past,
The rain is over and gone;
The flowers appear on the earth;
The time of the singing of birds is come,
And the voice of the turtle is heard in our land;
The fig tree ripeneth her green figs,
And the vines are in blossom,
They give forth their fragrance.
Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away.

O my dove, thou art in the clefts of the rock, in the covert of the steep place,
Let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice;
For sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely.

LADIES OF THE COURT

Take us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vineyards;
For our vineyards are in blossom.

THE SHULAMMITE

My beloved is mine, and I am his:
He feedeth his flock among the lilies.
Until the day be cool, and the shadows flee away,
Turn, my beloved, and be thou like a roe or a young hart
Upon the mountains of Bether.

By night on my bed I sought him whom my soul loveth:
I sought him, but I found him not.
I said, I will rise now, and go about the city,
In the streets and in the broad ways,
I will seek him whom my soul loveth:
I sought him, but I found him not.

The watchmen that go about the city found me:
To whom I said, Saw ye him whom my soul loveth?
It was but a little that I passed from them,
When I found him whom my soul loveth:
I held him, and would not let him go,
Until I had brought him into my mother's house,

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And into the chamber of her that conceived me.
I adjure you, O daughters of Jerusalem,
By the roes, and by the hinds of the field,
That ye stir not up, nor awaken love,
Until it please.

THE ROYAL WEDDING

LADIES OF THE COURT

Who is this that cometh up out of the wilderness like pillars of smoke,
Perfumed with myrrh and frankincense,
With all powders of the merchant ?
Behold, it is the litter of Solomon :
Threescore mighty men are about it,
Of the mighty men of Israel.

They all handle the sword, and are expert in war :
Every man hath his sword upon his thigh,
Because of fear in the night.
King Solomon made himself a palanquin
Of the wood of Lebanon.
He made the pillars thereof of silver,
The bottom thereof of gold, the seat of it of purple,
The midst thereof being paved with love,
From the daughters of Jerusalem.
Go forth, O ye daughters of Zion, and behold king Solomon,
With the crown wherewith his mother hath crowned him in the day of his espousals,
And in the day of the gladness of his heart.

KING SOLOMON

Behold, thou art fair, my love ; behold, thou art fair ;
Thine eyes are as doves behind thy veil :
Thy hair is as a flock of goats,
That lie along the side of mount Gilead.
Thy teeth are like a flock of ewes that are newly shorn,
Which are come up from the washing ;
Whereof every one hath twins,
And none is bereaved among them.

Thy lips are like a thread of scarlet,
And thy mouth is comely :
Thy temples are like a piece of a pomegranate
Behind thy veil.

Thy neck is like the tower of David builded for an armoury,
Whereon there hang a thousand bucklers,
All the shields of the mighty men.
Thy two breasts are like two fawns that are twins of a roe,
Which feed among the lilies.

Until the day be cool, and the shadows flee away,
I will get me to the mountain of myrrh,
And to the hill of frankincense.
Thou art all fair, my love ;
And there is no spot in thee.

Come with me from Lebanon, my bride,
With me from Lebanon :
Look from the top of Amana,
From the top of Senir and Hermon,
From the lions' dens,
From the mountains of the leopards.
Thou hast ravished my heart, my sister, my bride ;
Thou hast ravished my heart with one of thine eyes,
With one chain of thy neck.

How fair is thy love, my sister, my bride !
How much better is thy love than wine !
And the smell of thine ointments than all manner of spices !
Thy lips, O my bride, drop as the honeycomb :
Honey and milk are under thy tongue ;
And the smell of thy garments is like the smell of Lebanon.
A garden shut up is my sister, my bride ;
A spring shut up, a fountain sealed.

Thy shoots are an orchard of pomegranates, with precious fruits ;
Henna with spikenard plants,
Spikenard and saffron,
Calamus and cinnamon, with all trees of frankincense ; [spices.
Myrrh and aloes, with all the chief
Thou art a fountain of gardens,
A well of living waters,
And flowing streams from Lebanon.

THE SHULAMMITE

Awake, O north wind ; and come, thou south ;
Blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out.
Let my beloved come into his garden,
And eat his precious fruits.

KING SOLOMON

I am come into my garden, my sister, my bride :
I have gathered my myrrh with my spice ;
I have eaten my honeycomb with my honey ;
I have drunk my wine with my milk.
Eat, O friends ;
Drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved.

LOVE LOST AND FOUND

THE SHULAMMITE

I was asleep, but my heart waked :
It is the voice of my beloved that knocketh, saying,
Open to me, my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled :
For my head is filled with dew,
My locks with the drops of the night.
I have put off my coat ; how shall I put it on ?
I have washed my feet ; how shall I defile them ?
My beloved put in his hand by the hole of the door,
And my heart was moved for him.

I rose up to open to my beloved ;
And my hands dropped with myrrh,
And my fingers with liquid myrrh,
Upon the handles of the bolt.
I opened to my beloved ;
But my beloved had withdrawn himself, and was gone.
My soul had failed me when he spake :
I sought him, but I could not find him ;
I called him, but he gave me no answer.

The watchmen that go about the city found me,
They smote me, they wounded me ;
The keepers of the walls took away my mantle from me.
I adjure you, O daughters of Jerusalem, if ye find my beloved,
That ye tell him, that I am sick of love.

LADIES OF THE COURT

What is thy beloved more than another beloved,
O thou fairest among women ?
What is thy beloved more than another beloved,
That thou dost so adjure us ?

THE SHULAMMITE

My beloved is white and ruddy,
The chiefest among ten thousand.
His head is as the most fine gold,
His locks are bushy, and black as a raven.
His eyes are like doves beside the water brooks ;
Washed with milk, and fitly set.

His cheeks are as a bed of spices, as banks of sweet herbs :
His lips are as lilies, dropping liquid myrrh.
His hands are as rings of gold set with beryl :
His body is as ivory work overlaid with sapphires.
His legs are as pillars of marble, set upon sockets of fine gold :
His aspect is like Lebanon, excellent as the cedars.

His mouth is most sweet : yea, he is altogether lovely.
This is my beloved, and this is my friend,
O daughters of Jerusalem.

LADIES OF THE COURT

Whither is thy beloved gone,
O thou fairest among women ?
Whither hath thy beloved turned him,
That we may seek him with thee ?

THE SHULAMMITE

My beloved is gone down to his garden, to the beds of spices,
To feed in the gardens, and to gather lilies.
I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine :
He feedeth his flock among the lilies.

KING SOLOMON

Thou art beautiful, O my love, as Tirzah,
Comely as Jerusalem,
Terrible as an army with banners.
Turn away thine eyes from me,
For they have overcome me.

Thy hair is as a flock of goats,
That lie along the side of Gilead.
Thy teeth are like a flock of ewes,
Which are come up from the washing ;
Whereof every one hath twins,
And none is bereaved among them.
Thy temples are like a piece of pomegranate
Behind thy veil.

There are threescore queens, and fourscore concubines,
And virgins without number.
My dove, my undefiled, is but one ;
She is the only one of her mother ;
She is the choice one of her that bare her.
The daughters saw her, and called her blessed ;
Yea, the queens and the concubines, and they praised her.

LADIES OF THE COURT

Who is she that looketh forth as the morning,
Fair as the moon,
Clear as the sun,
Terrible as an army with banners ?

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THE SHULAMMITE

I went down into the garden of nuts,
To see the green plants of the valley,
To see whether the vine budded,
And the pomegranates were in flower.
Or ever I was aware, my soul set me
Among the chariots of my princely people.

LADIES OF THE COURT

Return, return, O Shulammite;
Return, return, that we may look upon thee.

THE MAIDEN'S DANCE

THE SHULAMMITE

Why will ye look upon the Shulammite,
As upon the dance of Mahanaim?

KING SOLOMON

How beautiful are thy feet in sandals, O prince's daughter!
The joints of thy thighs are like jewels,
The work of the hands of a cunning workman,
Thy navel is like a round goblet,
Wherein no mingled wine is wanting:
Thy belly is like an heap of wheat
Set about with lilies.

Thy two breasts are like two fawns
That are twins of a roe.
Thy neck is like the tower of ivory;
Thine eyes as the pools in Heshbon, by the gate of Bath-rabbim;
Thy nose is like the tower of Lebanon
Which looketh toward Damascus.

Thine head upon thee is like Carmel,
And the hair of thine head like purple;
The king is held captive in the tresses thereof.
How fair and how pleasant art thou,
O love, for delights!

This thy stature is like to a palm tree,
And thy breasts to clusters of grapes.
I said, I will climb up into the palm tree,
I will take hold of the branches thereof:
Let thy breasts be as clusters of the vine,
And the smell of thy breath like apples;
And thy mouth like the best wine,
That goeth down smoothly for my beloved, [are asleep.
Gliding through the lips of those that

THE SHULAMMITE

I am my beloved's,
And his desire is toward me.
Come, my beloved, let us go forth into the field;
Let us lodge in the villages.
Let us get up early to the vineyards;
Let us see whether the vine hath budded, and its blossom be open,
And the pomegranates be in flower:
There will I give thee my love.

The mandrakes give forth fragrance,
And at our doors are all manner of precious fruits, new and old,
Which I have laid up for thee, O my beloved.
Oh that thou wert as my brother,
That sucked the breasts of my mother!
When I should find thee without, I would kiss thee;
Yea, and none would despise me.

I would lead thee, and bring thee into my mother's house,
Who would instruct me;
I would cause thee to drink of spiced wine,
Of the juice of my pomegranate.
His left hand should be under my head,
And his right hand should embrace me.
I adjure you, O daughters of Jerusalem
That ye stir not up, nor awaken love,
Until it please.

CROWNED WITH CONTENT

LADIES OF THE COURT

Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness,
Leaning upon her beloved?

KING SOLOMON

Under the apple tree I awakened thee:
There thy mother was in travail with thee, [thee forth.
There was she in travail that brought

THE SHULAMMITE

Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm:
For love is strong as death;
Jealousy is cruel as the grave:
The flashes thereof are flashes of fire,
A very flame of the LORD.
Many waters cannot quench love,
Neither can the floods drown it:
If a man would give all the substance of his house for love,
He would utterly be contemned.

LADIES OF THE COURT

We have a little sister
And she hath no breasts:
What shall we do for our sister
In the day when she shall be spoken for?
If she be a wall,
We will build upon her a turret of silver:
And if she be a door,
We will inclose her with boards of cedar.

THE SHULAMMITE

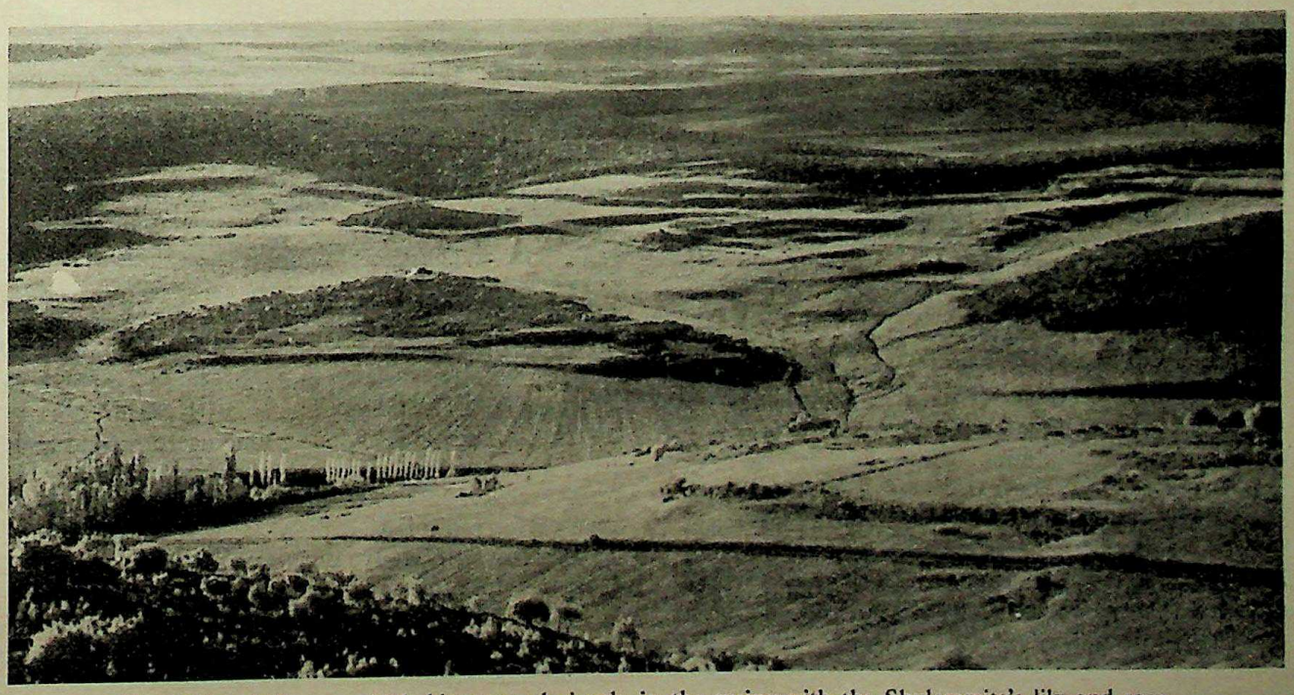
I am a wall, and my breasts like the towers thereof:
Then was I in his eyes as one that found peace.
Solomon had a vineyard at Baal-hamon;
He let out the vineyard unto keepers;
Every one for the fruit thereof was to bring a thousand pieces of silver.
My vineyard, which is mine, is before me:
Thou, O Solomon, shalt have the thousand,
And those that keep the fruit thereof two hundred.

KING SOLOMON

Thou that dwellest in the gardens,
The companions hearken for thy voice:
Cause me to hear it.

THE SHULAMMITE

Make haste, my beloved,
And be thou like to a roe or to a young hart
Upon the mountains of spices.



The Plain of Sharon which blossoms gloriously in the spring with the Shulammite's lily and rose.
Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

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The
Song of Solomon
The Book and Its Story

Solomon & the Rose of Sharon: a Springtime Idyll

by REV. N. H. SNAITH, M.A.
Lecturer at Wesley College, Headingley, Leeds.

EVERY reader of the Bible must at one time have wondered how the Song of Solomon, or, to give it its Hebrew title, the Song of Songs, ever came to be included in the Old Testament.

It is different from every other Book of Scripture. There is not a religious sentence in the whole book. The Name of God is found but once, and then only when jealousy is described as "a very flame of the Lord" (viii, 6 R.V.). It is the only part of the Old Testament where the writer enjoys the beauties of Nature, or speaks of flowers and birds, gardens and streamlets in the way we English people love. Elsewhere, Nature rejoices in the glory of God and in the salvation He has wrought, or praises Him for His bounty and goodness; here we find a poet who delights to see flocks scattered along the distant hillside (vi, 5), and is glad at the freshness of the spring (ii, 11-13).

The Song is one of the five Megilloth, or Rolls, which from ancient times have been read at five of the Jewish holy days. They are found all together in the Writings, or Hagiographa, the last section of the Hebrew Bible. The Song of Songs is the first of them, and it was read at the Feast of Passover, presumably because of the references to the flowers of Spring.

To this custom the Song doubtless owes its inclusion in the first place, but only to give rise to considerable controversy. Its obviously secular character caused the Rabbis to hesitate, just as they hesitated over Esther, Ecclesiastes, or even Proverbs.

Is the Book an Allegory?

ULTIMATELY, the Song came to be interpreted allegorically of the love of God for the ideal Israel; and because of this, together with its traditional association with Solomon, it was finally accepted as Holy Scripture.

The Christians, beginning with Origen in the 3rd century, adopted from the Jews this allegorical method of interpretation, understanding the bridegroom to represent Christ, and the bride to signify either the Church or the believing soul. Many devout men and women have since found great consolation and delight in the Song, notably those who describe mystical union with Christ as the marriage of the soul with Him, and particularly such as Bernard of Clairvaux, whose hymns owe their inspiration to his thoughts of Christ as the Lover of the Soul. To all such, as to the Rabbi Akiba, who first at the end of the 1st century A.D. interpreted the Song spiritually, it is "a holy of holies," and no words are too beautiful to lavish in its praise. This spiritual interpretation is followed in the captions which are to be found at the heads of the chapters in the Authorized Version.

The Song of Songs is a series of love lyrics, which for beauty and freshness cannot be surpassed in any literature. This much is generally accepted. In some of the lyrics a maiden speaks to a group of her companions (i, 5, 6; ii, 7; v, 8; viii, 8). Sometimes a youth speaks to a maiden (iv, 1-7). In other cases a group of women is apparently speaking in chorus, and there are short dialogues (i, 2-5; iv, 16—v, 1), but the absence of definite statements in the text makes it difficult to be sure who actually is intended to be the speaker and to whom the words are addressed.

Modern Essays in Interpretation

MANY students have sought to discover some system of compilation, not being satisfied that the Song is simply a collection of love lyrics with nothing in common except their general theme. There is considerable difference of opinion in this matter. There are three types of solutions which are offered to the problem of the way in which the Song may be a unity. Each solution has its own fascination. We proceed to outline them in turn.

Until a few years ago the most widely-accepted interpretation was that the book was a drama, the sole survivor of ancient Hebrew art. This theory is as old as the "stage directions" which are to be found in Codex Sinaiticus, the codex which was purchased for the British Museum in 1933 (*see* pages 12, 13). In this codex various verses are allocated to different speakers, "the bride to the maidens," "the maidens to the bride," "the bridegroom to the bride," and so on. Clearly some sort of a drama is here presupposed.

Modern suggestions include two forms of this dramatic theory. According to one view, the Song is a drama in five acts of thirteen scenes. There are three main characters and three choruses—court-ladies, citizens of Jerusalem, and shepherds of Shulam (Shunem?). The play opens with the Shulamite longing for her absent lover, longing to escape to him from the royal palace, and the court-ladies ironically reply. Solomon enters, and tries in vain to win her love. Her reply is that there is a true love that cannot be excited artificially, nor can it be commanded, for it comes unbidden.

In the second act, the Shulamite describes a visit which her shepherd lover paid her at her home in the mountains. She goes on to narrate a dream which came to her since she was brought to the palace, how she sought her lover through the streets, and continued to search until she found him.

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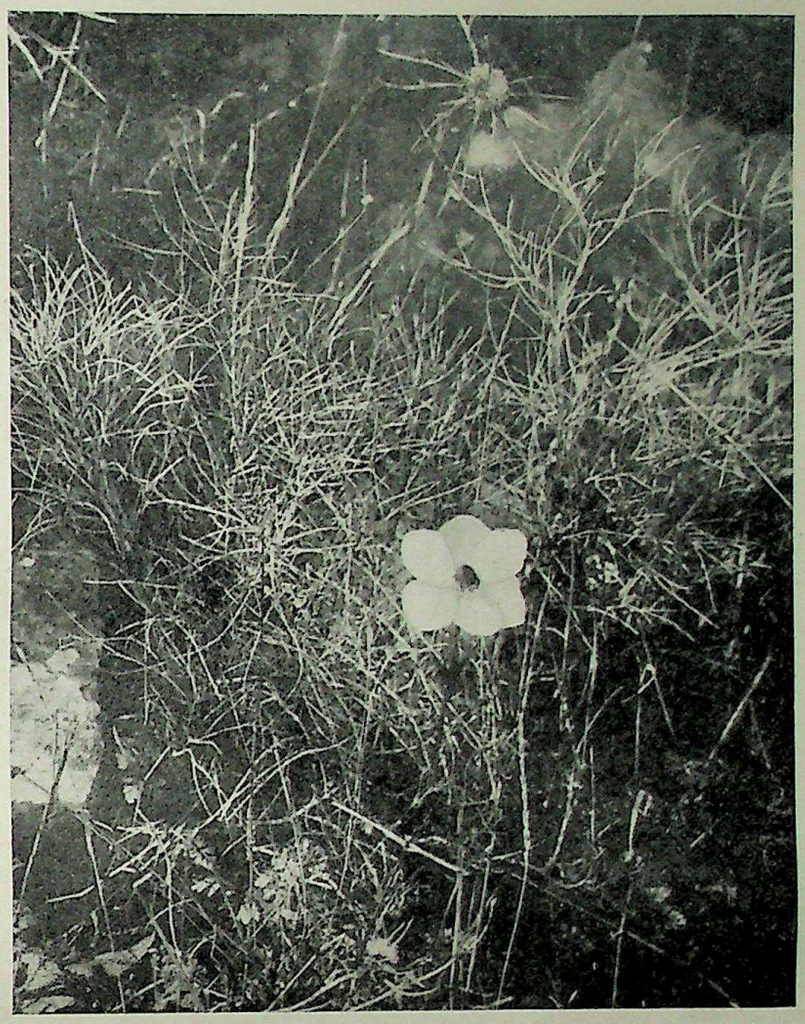
Solomon appears in dazzling splendour in the third act, seeking by his magnificence to overwhelm the rustic maid. The Shulamite, however, hears her absent lover's passionate plea; she answers, and listens to his glad reply. She tells of a second dream. Apparently the king's insistence is having its effect, for, on this occasion, though she seeks him as diligently as before, she cannot find her lover.

In the fourth act, after the court-ladies express their surprise at the maiden's rejection of the king's advances, Solomon once more endeavours to win her, telling of how he first saw her in the nut-orchard. Still she remains faithful to her lover, and in the last act they are happily reunited in their country home.

Some would add to this, that Solomon is converted to higher ideals by the simple shepherd maid, in whom pure love triumphs over sensual love and every kind of enticement.

An alternative scheme is a drama of six acts, each of two scenes, for two main characters and a chorus of court-ladies. (The scheme adopted in pages 643 to 645 is on these lines). The chorus praises Solomon and longs for his caresses. The Shulamite appears, seeking her royal lover. Solomon enters, and there follows a dialogue between the king and the country maiden. The second act consists of monologues by the Shulamite. She tells how, once, the king came to visit her in her home in the hills, how she sang to him a song of the vineyards, and goes on to describe a dream in which she searched for him until she found him. The third act is concerned with the royal wedding. After an interval of time, we have next a story of love lost and found again. The fifth act is in Solomon's park, and ends with a dance by the maiden before the court-ladies. The conclusion shows the royal pair happy together in the old cottage in the mountains.



"THE LILY AMONG THORNS." In the Song of Solomon the lover fervently says that his beloved compared with other women is "as the lily among thorns" (ii, 2, 12). The lily of the Scriptures is identified with the anemone which grows profusely in Palestine, often among thorny shrubs and thistles, until it withers in the heat of summer. In the first two chapters the lyrics are redolent of spring's speedy perfection in the beautiful countryside of Lebanon—when "the flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land."

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

The second solution is one which has met with considerable favour in recent times. It arises out of the result of Wetzstein's studies of the marriage customs of the Syrian peasantry, whilst he was consul at Damascus. For seven days after the wedding the bridegroom and bride are honoured as king and queen. Their throne is a threshing-board set up on the green threshing-floor. Homage is paid to them, and songs are sung in their honour. The chief element in these songs is the *wasfs*, songs in which the physical attractions and the wedding finery of both bride and bridegroom are recounted and praised without the slightest reserve.

On the evening before the bridal night, the chief event is a sword dance by the bride. The dance is accompanied by the songs of a chorus of men and women, the companions of the bride and the friends of the bridegroom. There are undoubted parallels between the Song and the festivities of what is known as "the King's Week," and the suggestion is most fascinating.

The third type of solution connects the Song with the Tammuz-Adonis ritual of Syria. There are, in spite of changes during the centuries, many traces in the Song of words, phrases, and ideas, which are also found in the Tammuz ritual—so much so that it is not easy to see how they are wholly accidental. The topographical background of the Song is, for the most part, that area of North Syria to which the Syrian Adonis ritual primarily belongs. Tammuz is the Mesopotamian counterpart of the Syrian Adonis. He is a vegetation god, who dies in the Autumn. He is sought with weeping by Ishtar, who, though impeded by the watchmen of the underworld, who strip her of her garments, finds her beloved at last. In the Spring Adonis comes to life again, and all the devotees rejoice.

This solution involves the adoption of these agricultural rites of the common life of the people into the worship of Jehovah, with the pagan elements partly removed and wholly re-interpreted. Similar examples of the sublimation of pagan rites can be cited from any

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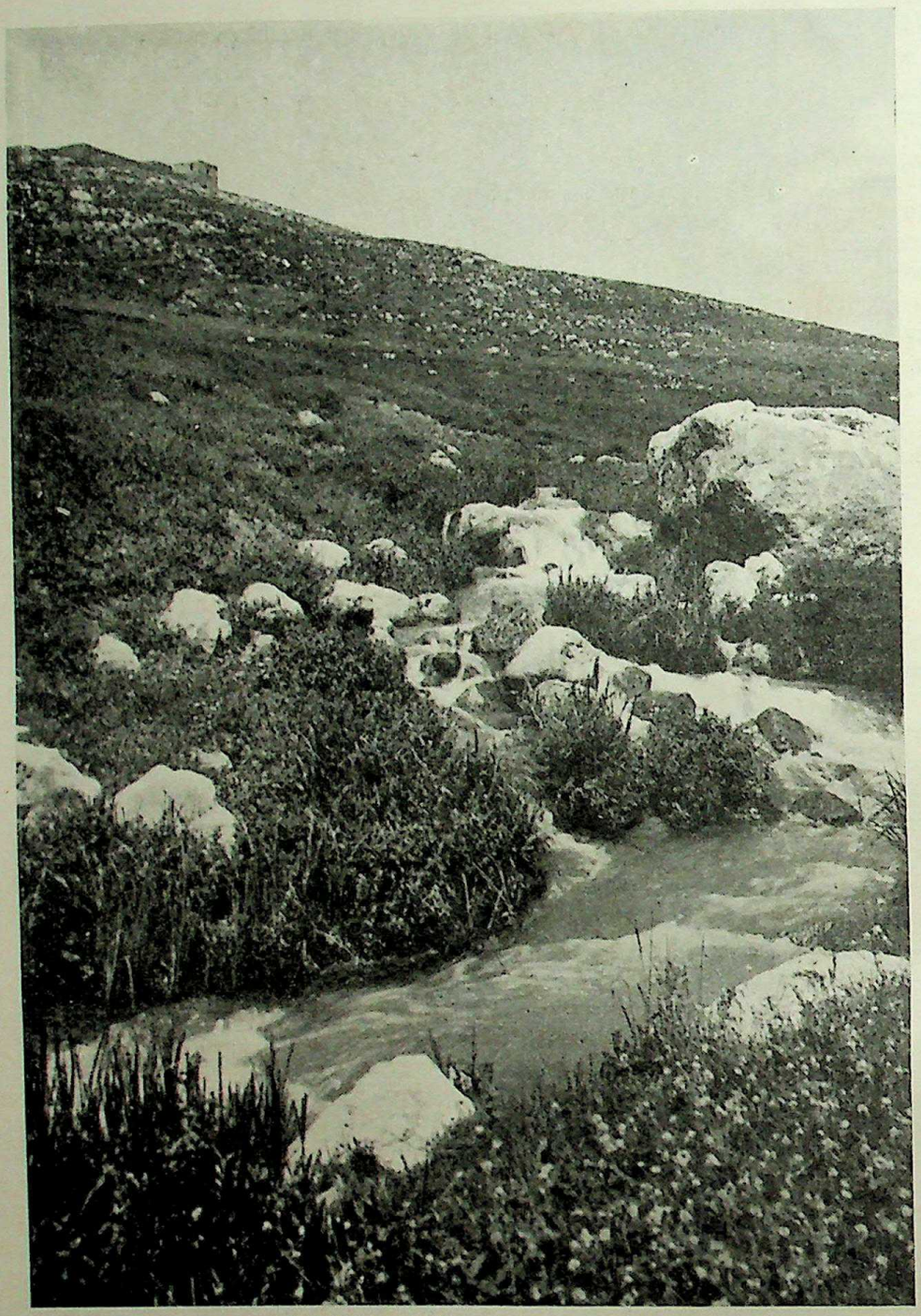

"THE FISHPOOLS IN HESHBON." A pleasant brook, with flowery banks and many lovely pools among the boulders, rises below the ruins of Heshbon, once capital of Sihon, king of the Amorites. From these still pools, dark yet reflecting the light, was drawn the poetical image for the Shulamite's eyes (vii, 4). The gate of Bath-rabbim (many daughters), referred to in the context, may have been a gateway on the existing path leading out of the valley through which the maidens came to get water.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

Christian country; most popular customs are shot through with the relics of ancient heathen customs, with Christmas the most obvious example of all.

There are, in the Old Testament, two references to annual customs whereby maidens go out into the environs of the town to perform a ritual dance. One is the story of Jephthah's daughter (Judges xi), and the other is the account of the rape of the maidens of Shiloh by the Benjamites (Judges xxi). The latter was definitely an annual dance in the vineyards, and it is curious that we have evidence of such a dance twice a year by the maidens of Jerusalem in the last days before the destruction of Herod's Temple. The two days were the fifteenth of Ab in the height of the summer, and on the Day of Atonement. The maidens used to go out dressed in white, and dance in the vineyards, calling upon the youths to choose their mates, urging them to look, not on beauty, but on birth. The youths used to reply in words from the Song of Solomon, "Go forth, O ye daughters of Zion, and look on Solomon with the crown wherewith his mother crowned him in the day of his espousals, and in the day of the gladness of his heart."

And so, we find a betrothal ritual in the days of Our Lord, a vintage-vegetation dance at Shiloh in the days of the Judges which became perforce a betrothal dance, and a story of Jephthah's daughter which is generally recognized as being associated with a vegetation cult, whilst from the Bible story itself it is associated with virginity.

We have now outlined each proposed solution to the unsolved problem of the unity of the Song. Each solution has its confident supporters, and all recognize the difficulty of coming to a fixed and final solution. For our part, we hold that every solution proposed contains part of the truth. The Song of Solomon is a drama, with certainly two main characters and two choruses. It is connected with the wedding rites of the Syrian peasantry, since both the King's Week and the Song are intimately connected with betrothals. And, in addition, we see clear reminiscences of the Tammuz-Adonis ritual; and through that, apart from the youths' reply, with the dancing in the vineyards in the last days of Jerusalem — since, strangely enough, those two times of the year correspond exactly with the two periods associated with the ancient Tammuz-Adonis rites.

We would, therefore, favour the idea of an original Tammuz-Adonis ritual performed twice in the year, of which the story of Jephthah's daughter represents the one, and the story of the Rape of Shiloh represents the other. These customs, in course of time, became betrothal rites, wherein the prototypes were no longer heathen deities, but the splendid king of Hebrew tradition and his consort.

The whole Song, then, may be regarded as a dramatic ritual of songs and dances, with a youth and a maid as the principal actors, accompanied by a chorus of maidens and a chorus of youths.

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Isaiah

I

The Book in Outline

'The Book of the Words of Esaias the Prophet'

by REV. F. TOWNLEY LORD, B.A., D.D.

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ANY attempt to summarize the contents of the Book of Isaiah must take account of certain differences of authorship and historic background. It is only the first 39 chapters in this collection that can be understood as relating, for the most part, to the great ministry of Isaiah. Other and later voices are heard in Chapters xl to lxvi. But in spite of the difficulty of these literary and historical problems it is possible to trace throughout the whole collection a development of thought, and a contribution to the understanding of Hebrew religion, that are of the greatest value.

The story of Isaiah's ministry takes us back to the 8th century B.C., and we have before us the career of a prophet, entirely consecrated to the will of God, who was in close touch with the court of his time, and with the national and international problems that challenged its statesmanship. From Chapter xl onwards we are concerned with issues that perplexed later generations · the restoration of Israel from exile in Babylon; and here the prophecies rise to great heights in the wonderful poems which depict the career of the Servant of the Lord.

From beginning to end these prophecies display unusual literary charm. Of Isaiah it has been said that "No Hebrew prophet has a style more majestic. The loftiness of thought and feeling find a fit expression in his lofty eloquence. In the noble splendour of his verse he is surpassed by no poet of his race. No attentive reader can fail to observe the felicities of his rhythm, the choiceness of his diction, the concise power of his descriptions, the volcanic force of his denunciations, the serene beauty with which he suffuses his picture of Israel's future blessedness." And if, in the later prophecies, we miss something of this forceful charm, we find a compensating combination of grandeur and pathos, and the tenderness of human emotions.

Not the least of the signal merits of this great collection of prophecies is that, while it depicts the problems of an ancient time and the way of their solution, it points forward to those enduring principles of the religious life which found their fullest expression in the person and work of Jesus Christ.

Isaiah Voices God's Complaint

THE Book of Isaiah opens with the prophet's indictment of his own people. They have been unfaithful to their God. Like unnatural children, they have rebelled against their father. "Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth, for the LORD hath spoken. I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me. The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib; but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider." This very disobedience and lack of thought are responsible for the misfortunes that have come upon Judah. "The daughter of Zion is left as a cottage in a vineyard, as a lodge in a garden of cucumbers, as a besieged city."

'To what Purpose your Sacrifices?'

IT is of no avail, declares Isaiah, for the people to urge that due attention has been paid to the ritual of worship. Sacrifices, feasts, fasts—what are these if they lack the sincerity of the heart? In a famous passage, significant as marking the progress of Hebrew thought towards an inward spiritual conception of religion, Isaiah vividly declares God's rejection of mere outward ritual. "To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me, saith the Lord. I am full of the burnt offerings of rams and the fat of fed beasts: and I delight not in the blood of bullocks or of lambs or of he-goats . . . bring no more vain oblations: incense is an abomination unto me . . . your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth: they are a trouble unto me: I am weary to bear them."

Yet the prophet cannot continue in this severe mood. God, though stirred to judgement, still makes clear the way of pardon. "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD; though your sins be as scarlet they shall be white as snow: though they be red like crimson they shall be as wool. If ye be willing and obedient ye shall eat the good of the land." Tender words, yet the prophet feels that they will fall upon deaf ears, for the chapter closes on a stern note. God will purge His people. "Zion shall be redeemed with judgment and her converts with righteousness. And the destruction of the transgressors and of the sinners shall be together, and they that forsake the LORD shall be consumed."

In the next three chapters the prophet reveals himself as idealist and critic, as well as prophet. Still concerned with God's reaction to the waywardness of His people, he gives us three wonderful pictures of Jerusalem. The first sets forth the Holy City in all the glory of her ideal mission to the world. Jerusalem is to be the school of the whole earth, the temple of mankind, and the centre of universal peace. "They shall beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up

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sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."

But Isaiah turns from this city of his dreams to the city that he actually knows, and his sadness as he contemplates the iniquity of his own people is reflected in his language. It is as though he had changed from the major to the minor key. What does he see? A city given up to soothsayers and idolatry. The confidence of the people is still in horses and chariots. Every section of society, from the king downwards, is guilty: even the women who "walk with stretched-forth necks and wanton eyes, walking and mincing as they go, and making a tinkling with their feet."

On this city, forgetful of God and so badly administered, the judgement of God will be severe: "The lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down . . . for Jerusalem is ruined and Judah is fallen: because their tongue and their doings are against the LORD, to provoke the eyes of his glory."

Yet, another Jerusalem will rise, purged by judgement. "When the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof, by the spirit of judgment, and by the spirit of burning. And the LORD will create upon every dwelling place of mount Zion and upon her assemblies a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night. And there shall be a tabernacle for a shadow in the daytime from the heat, and for a place of refuge and for a covert from storm and from rain."

This masterly contrast between the ideal and the actual is followed by a parable of the vineyard, with which this section draws to an end. Isaiah in the manner of a minstrel, singing at a vintage festival, describes a vineyard on which every care had been lavished. The vinedresser "fenced it and gathered out the stones thereof and planted it with the choicest vine and built a tower in the midst of it and also made a winepress therein." But when he looked for grapes he found only grapes that were bad and sour. Such was the condition of Judah, the vineyard of the Lord. "For the vineyard of the LORD of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah his pleasant plant; and he looked for judgment, but behold oppression: for righteousness, but behold a cry."

This picture of the vineyard deserted and laid waste is a parable of what is in store for God's people. The fifth chapter closes with a series of woes pronounced against selfish greed, drunkenness and dissipation among the wealthy classes, doubters and triflers, those who play fast and loose with morality, and self conceit. A foreign power (unnamed, but clearly Assyria) will be God's instrument of judgement on the sins committed by His chosen people.

The chapters summarized so far have given us the prophet's declaration of God's reaction to the faithlessness and ingratitude of the people. Now, for a few chapters, the Book assumes a more personal tone, and we are to learn how Isaiah received his inspiration for God's service, and how he entered into the political and social problems of his time. Chapters vi to ix are important not only on account of this biographical interest but also because of the suggestions they contain that the prophet was beginning to personify his ideas of the future under the great figure of Immanuel.

MANY of the great leaders in Old Testament history, such as Moses, Samuel and Ezekiel, received their inspiration for service in a vision of God's presence. Chapter vi gives us with vivid symbolism and great dignity the vision that sent Isaiah on his way as a prophet of the Lord.

It was in the year of King Uzziah's death that Isaiah saw a vision of God enthroned in exalted splendour in the Temple. In the presence of such holiness he was reduced to utter abasement. "Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone: because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts." Then one of the seraphim surrounding the majesty of God took a coal from the altar and touched Isaiah's lips and said: "Lo, this hath touched thy lips: and thine iniquity is taken away and thy sin purged" Isaiah heard a Voice crying: "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?"; and in that moment he

ISAIAH: A SYNOPSIS

	Chapters
God's Complaint against His People	i
Jerusalem—the Dream and the Reality	ii—v
How Isaiah Received His Call ...	vi
How Isaiah Faced a Political Crisis	vii—ix, 7
The Sad Refrain of Israel's Doom	ix, 8—x, 4
The Fall of Proud Assyria and the Triumph of Jerusalem	x, 5—xii, 6
Isaiah's International Outlook ...	xiii—xxiii
World-wide Catastrophe and the Deliverance of God's people ...	xxiv—xxvii
Political Schemes and the Purposes of God	xxviii—xxxiii
The Glorious Future of Ransomed Israel	xxxiv—xxxv
Isaiah in the Court of King Hezekiah	xxxvi—xxxix
Promise of Restoration	
The Voice of Hope	xl, 1-11
Cyrus the Instrument of God's Purpose	xlv
The Fate in Store for Babylon ...	xlvi—xlvii
The Servant of the Lord ...	xlii, 1-4; xlix, 1-6; l, 4-9; lii, 13—liii, 12
Repentance before Restoration ...	lv—lix
The Glory of the New Jerusalem...	lx—lxii
Other Prophetic Writings	
A Prayer and its Answer... ...	lxiii, 7—lxv
No Temple is Adequate to God ...	lxvi

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"THEY MADE ME THE KEEPER OF THE VINEYARDS"

In the palace where the king had brought her, the Shulamite explains why she is not fair of complexion like the ladies of the Court. She has become sunburnt with exposure —" black but comely "—because her brothers put her to work in their vineyard (Song of Solomon i, 5, 6), " where the vines have tender grapes." This peasant girl of the hill-country of Ephraim, wearing the beautifully-embroidered native garb, spends much of her day in the family vineyard. The grape harvest is still looked upon as the most joyous time of the year, and the whole family assist in gathering the bunches. The Palestinian grape is very sweet and so is particularly good for the making of non-alcoholic grape-juice beverage, a growing industry.

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"AND HIS FRUIT WAS SWEET TO MY TASTE"

The Shulamite compared her lover to "the apple tree among the trees of the wood," and begged him to comfort her with apples sweet to the taste (Song of Solomon ii, 3, 5). Commentators and scholars have variously identified the Hebrew word translated "apple" in the Authorized Version as apricot, quince, and orange. The last-named answers to the description given of tree and fruit; also it flourishes in Palestine and Syria, whereas the apple is difficult to cultivate. As methods of irrigation improve, the modern orange industry develops. The girls pictured are grading "Jaffas", one of the chief exports of Palestine. Regulations govern methods of packing, and there is compulsory inspection of oranges intended for foreign markets.

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"NOR SHALL THE LATCHET OF THEIR SHOES BE BROKEN"

Sandals of simple make, kept on the feet only by thongs or latchets, were worn in Biblical times even as now on occasion. Isaiah added a vivid touch to his description of the enemy who came swiftly without stumbling when he said, " nor shall the latchet of their shoes be broken " (Isaiah v, 27). The shoemaker pictured specializes in this type of cheap footwear. His three-cornered cupboard of a shop in a by-way of Jerusalem is conveniently, if roughly, fitted-up to hold his stock of clogs and sandals. In various stages of manufacture these are displayed in the racks of the doors and on the shelves. He is sawing measured logs of wood which will be split and fashioned into heeled soles of the requisite sizes.

Photo. American Colony in Jerusalem

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"AND SHE WAS THE MART OF NATIONS"

Modern Sidon is a comparatively insignificant seaport, with a setting that sufficiently recalls the romantic past to make it an interesting stopping place for tourists on the road between Haifa and Beirut. Once-splendid Sidon was famed for iridescent Phoenician glass—many examples of "tear bottles" have been recovered for museums and collectors from the ancient necropolis—and for purple dye extracted from murex shells. Now the town is the centre of orange and lemon groves, and does a considerable trade in citrus fruits. At the docks it is possible to imagine some of the great maritime trade described in Isaiah xxiii. On the quays picturesque Syrian sailors still load and unload cargoes "for the merchants of Zidon, that pass over the sea."

Photo. Kurt Lubinski

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made the response which was to inaugurate his lifelong consecration. "Then I said, Here am I, send me."

Thus there came to him a commission to become a teacher of his people: a commission he was to hold in spite of apparent failure and discouragement; until, indeed, God's purpose had cleansed the land through judgement.

How Isaiah Faced a Political Crisis

MUCH of Isaiah's significance as a prophet lies in the way in which he carried his divine message into the national and international complications of his time. It is necessary to understand one such complication if we are to appreciate the meaning of the chapters which now concern us.

Pekah, king of Israel, had formed an alliance with Rezin, king of Syria, in order that their combined forces might prove an effective barrier to the Assyrian aggression. So they invaded Judah with the object of deposing Ahaz and putting in his place one who would fall in with their plans. This invasion caused perturbation in Judah: both king and people were moved "as the trees of the forest are moved with the wind." Ahaz was inclined to seek aid from Assyria, but Isaiah strongly opposed this policy. He urged upon his king that Israel and Damascus were doomed to fail. To support his plea Isaiah gave his famous prophecy of the coming of Immanuel. "Behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel. Butter and honey shall he eat, that he may know to refuse the evil, and choose the good. For before the child shall know to refuse the evil, and choose the good, the land that thou abhorrest shall be forsaken of both her kings." (For a discussion of this passage see page 685.)

The importance of this Immanuel prophecy lies in the fact that it was the beginning of many Messianic conceptions. In subsequent Old Testament prophecy reference is made again and again to the coming of the ideal divine ruler who will be God's instrument for the restoration of His people.

Isaiah's shrewdness as a statesman is seen in the plain warning he gave to his king. Ahaz had always been in favour of appealing to the Assyrians for help. But such a policy, Isaiah pointed out, would only make Judah a bone of contention between Assyria on the one hand and Egypt on the other. Not only to the king, but also to the people Isaiah urged the policy of complete reliance upon God. "Sanctify the LORD of hosts himself: and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread. And he shall be for a sanctuary; but for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel." Very beautifully he declared his own faith. "And I will wait upon the LORD, that hideth his face from the house of Jacob, and I will look for him"—a faith which would sustain him whatever the king and the people might do.

It was true that dark times were coming; but there were brighter days in store. Isaiah closes this section of his prophecy with a picture of the restoration of the nation under the rule of the ideal king. "The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined. . . . For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this."

Isaiah's prophecies hitherto have been addressed, in the main, to the southern kingdom of Judah, but in a short section, comprising parts of Chapters ix and x, he turns to consider the fate awaiting proud Ephraim. The poem has four stanzas, each ending with the refrain, "For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still."

The first stanza pictures the proud inhabitants of Samaria singing, "The bricks are fallen, but we will build with hewn stone; the sycomores are cut down, but we will change them into cedars." The Assyrian attack may have destroyed their buildings, but in their pride the Ephraimites boast that they will build better. But this is a delusion, and the second stanza declares that the people still refuse to turn to the Lord of hosts. "Therefore the Lord shall not rejoice over their young men, neither shall he have compassion on their fatherless and widows; for every one is profane and an evil-doer, and every mouth speaketh folly." The third stanza, under the image of a forest fire, pictures the internal condition of Israel as that of blazing faction where strife has engendered greed and inhumanity. The fourth condemns the judges and rulers for their oppression of the poor and weak. "And what," asks the prophet, "will ye do in the day of visitation, and in the desolation which shall come from afar? To whom will ye flee for help? And where will ye leave your glory?"

Fall of Proud Assyria and Jerusalem's Coming Triumph

BETWEEN the previous prophecies and those which now concern us we must postulate a considerable lapse of time. Isaiah's advice to the king Ahaz, described in Chapters vii to ix, and his prediction of the futility of the Syro-Ephraimitish alliance must have reference to the period 735-734 B.C.; whereas the present oracles fit into a period some thirty years later, when the Assyrian was approaching Jerusalem from the north. The exact historical reference is disputed, but there can be no dispute about the sublimity of Isaiah's conceptions. In originality and vividness this prophecy is nowhere excelled.

There is originality in his statement that Assyria is really (though she does not realize it) an instrument in the hand of God. "Ho, Assyrian, the rod of mine anger, the staff in whose hand is mine indignation! I will send him against a profane nation and against the

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people of my wrath will I give him a charge" (x,5-6 R.V.). In his pride the Assyrian boasts, "Shall I not, as I have done unto Samaria and her idols, so do to Jerusalem and her idols?" But ruin awaits this proud power, this arrogant boaster. "Shall the axe boast itself against him that heweth therewith? Shall the saw magnify itself against him that shaketh it?" God's answer to all this proud boasting will be that "under his glory there shall be kindled a burning like the burning of fire."

This overthrow of God's instrument of chastisement will involve suffering for Judah, but for the remnant that will survive there is good news. They will have learned to look unto their God. This is the theme of Isaiah's heartening words to his countrymen. Though the Assyrian may draw near and menace God's people, even in the moment of apparent victory he will be thwarted. Jerusalem will be saved, and a great reign of peace, under the rule of the ideal prince of David's line, will begin. In a poem which can only be described as magnificent Isaiah pictures this happy issue.

"And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots: and the spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD. And shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the LORD: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears, but with righteousness shall he judge the poor. . . . And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins. The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid: and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together: and a little child shall lead them. . . . They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea."

This superb picture is followed by a prediction that Israel's exiles from all quarters will return to their native land, and in happy fellowship the ancient rivalry of Israel and Judah will cease. Very fittingly Chapter xii closes this section of Isaiah's prophecies with a hymn of thanksgiving to be sung by the restored nation. "Cry out and shout, thou inhabitant of Zion, for great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee."

International Outlook of the Prophet

IN the first group of prophecies already considered it is clear that Isaiah's attention was focused mainly on the fortunes of Israel and Judah, though, as we have seen, his conception of God's providence extended far beyond the confines of his own land. Now, in a long section comprising Chapters xiii to xxiii, we have a series of oracles directed against foreign powers. Merely to enumerate them is to realize how close was Isaiah's observation of international movements. Babylon, Assyria, Philistia, Moab, Damascus, Ethiopia, Egypt, Edom, Tyre, are all the subjects of his vivid portraiture. A rapid summary will indicate the wealth of poetical imagery employed, and the author's extraordinary acquaintance with the conditions of life in the lands which he surveys.

Babylonia Denounced with Fiery Invective

HE begins with a prophecy directed against Babylonia and her king (xiii-xiv, 23), and there are several indications that the historical situation behind this oracle is that of a much later time than that of Isaiah. The Jews are in exile in Babylonia, but their release is imminent, for the Medes are on their way to overthrow the proud city. "Behold, I will stir up the Medes against them . . . their bows shall dash the young men to pieces: and they shall have no pity on the fruit of the womb: their eye shall not spare children. And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah." Babylon becomes a ruin, haunted by demons, and the approach of her king to the lower world is described in wonderful language. "Hell from beneath is moved for thee to meet thee at thy coming: it stirreth up the dead for thee, even all the chief ones of the earth. . . . And they shall answer and say unto thee, Art thou also become weak as we? . . . Thy pomp is brought down to hell, and the noise of thy viols: the worm is spread under thee and worms cover thee. How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning!"

A brief passage (xiv, 24-27) declares that God will overthrow the Assyrian army on the Judaean hills, and the next four verses warn the Philistines that they will suffer at the approach of Assyrian forces while Zion will be saved. In the next two chapters the author turns his attention to Moab. Disaster is to fall upon that country and the inhabitants are advised to seek refuge in Judah: advice, however, which the Moabites through their haughty independence refuse to take. "We have heard of the pride of Moab: he is very proud, even of his haughtiness and his pride and his wrath: but his lies shall not be so. Therefore shall Moab howl!" The opening of Chapter xvii deals with the imminent fall of Damascus: to such an unhappy result have their rejection of God and their worship of foreign gods brought the inhabitants of Ephraim. The prophet has more assuring words for Ethiopia (Chapter xviii). Anxious on account of the approach of the Assyrian forces the Ethiopians had endeavoured to form an alliance with the king of Judah. Isaiah assures them that their fears will prove groundless, for the Assyrian forces will be stayed, and the Ethiopians will worship the God of Israel. "In that time shall the present be brought unto the LORD of hosts of a people tall and smooth, and from a people terrible from the beginning onward; a nation that meteth out and treadeth down, whose land the rivers divide, to the place of the name of the LORD of hosts, the mount Zion" (R.V.).

Chapter xix gives us a wonderful description of the decay which, at the hand of God, will afflict Egypt.

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The prophet is obviously well acquainted with the land and its people. He pictures the consternation among the idols and their worshippers, the outbreak of internal strife, the failure of the system of irrigation, the impotence of Egyptian wisdom, and the collapse of industry. "The fishers also shall mourn, and all they that cast angle into the brooks shall lament, and they that spread nets upon the waters shall languish, Moreover they that work in fine flax, and they that weave networks, shall be confounded." At this point the prophecy rises to one of those sublime spiritual conceptions that are characteristic of Isaiah. The calamity that will fall on Egypt will be followed by the nation's conversion. Five cities will speak the Hebrew language and the Egyptians will come to worship the God of Israel. Thus shall be the splendid consummation, the acknowledgement of God by these great nations. "In that day there shall be a highway out of Egypt to Assyria, and the Assyrian shall come into Egypt, and the Egyptian into Assyria, and the Egyptians shall serve with the Assyrians. In that day shall Israel be third with Egypt and with Assyria, even a blessing in the midst of the land: whom the LORD of hosts shall bless, saying, Blessed be Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of mine hands, and Israel mine inheritance."

Of the remaining chapters in this series of oracles it is sufficient to notice the prophecy of the approaching doom of Tyre (Chapter xxiii) where the author shows once again his intimate knowledge of local conditions. The commercial and colonizing activities of Tyre are described, and, as in the cases of Ethiopia and Egypt, the prophet declares that God will eventually be honoured there. Chapter xx is notable for one of those personal references which occur now and then in the prophecies and help us to form a picture of Isaiah himself. For three years the prophet walked the streets of Jerusalem in the garb of a captive, as a symbol of the fate that awaited the Egyptians and Ethiopians at the hands of powerful Assyria. Probably Isaiah's symbolic action was intended to counteract the influence of the pro-Egyptian party in Jerusalem and assert the folly of any Egyptian alliance.

God's People Preserved in a World-Wide Catastrophe

WE pass now to consider a prophecy, embracing four chapters, which is different from anything which precedes it. The style is different, more artificial than that to which we have been already introduced. The general conception is different. Isaiah's prophecies can generally be placed against a definite historic background, but in this case this can be done only in the vaguest manner. Isaiah, as we have seen, can be idealistic: but in these chapters the idealism passes into apocalyptic. All that can be said with certainty is that they reflect a situation in which the Jews have returned from exile to Jerusalem. The prophecy was intended to bring a ray of light into the depression in which they found themselves. Many considerations, including this late date (the post-exilic period), suggest that the prophecy cannot be regarded as Isaiah's.

"BRAVERY OF TINKLING ORNAMENTS." In the fashion characteristic of her tribe this Beduin woman wears her hair coiled on her forehead and veils the lower part of her face with a decoration of chains, sequins, and coins. Her festival robes are of dark silk embroidered with gold. She displays many articles of finery enumerated by Isaiah in his attack on the vanity of "the daughters of Zion" (Isaiah iii, 18-23). Though often bitterly poor, Arab women seldom lack beads and anklets, to obtain which they make many sacrifices.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

These considerations, however, do not affect its great religious value. We shall find that, more than any of the chapters we have so far studied, this prophecy takes us into the heart of religious experience.

"Behold, the LORD maketh the earth empty, and maketh it waste, and turneth it upside down, and scattereth abroad the inhabitants thereof." In these words the prophet introduces his theme of a great convulsion which is to overtake the whole earth. "The earth mourneth and fadeth away, the world languisheth and fadeth away." "The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard." But after all this can be heard the praises of God's faithful people who have

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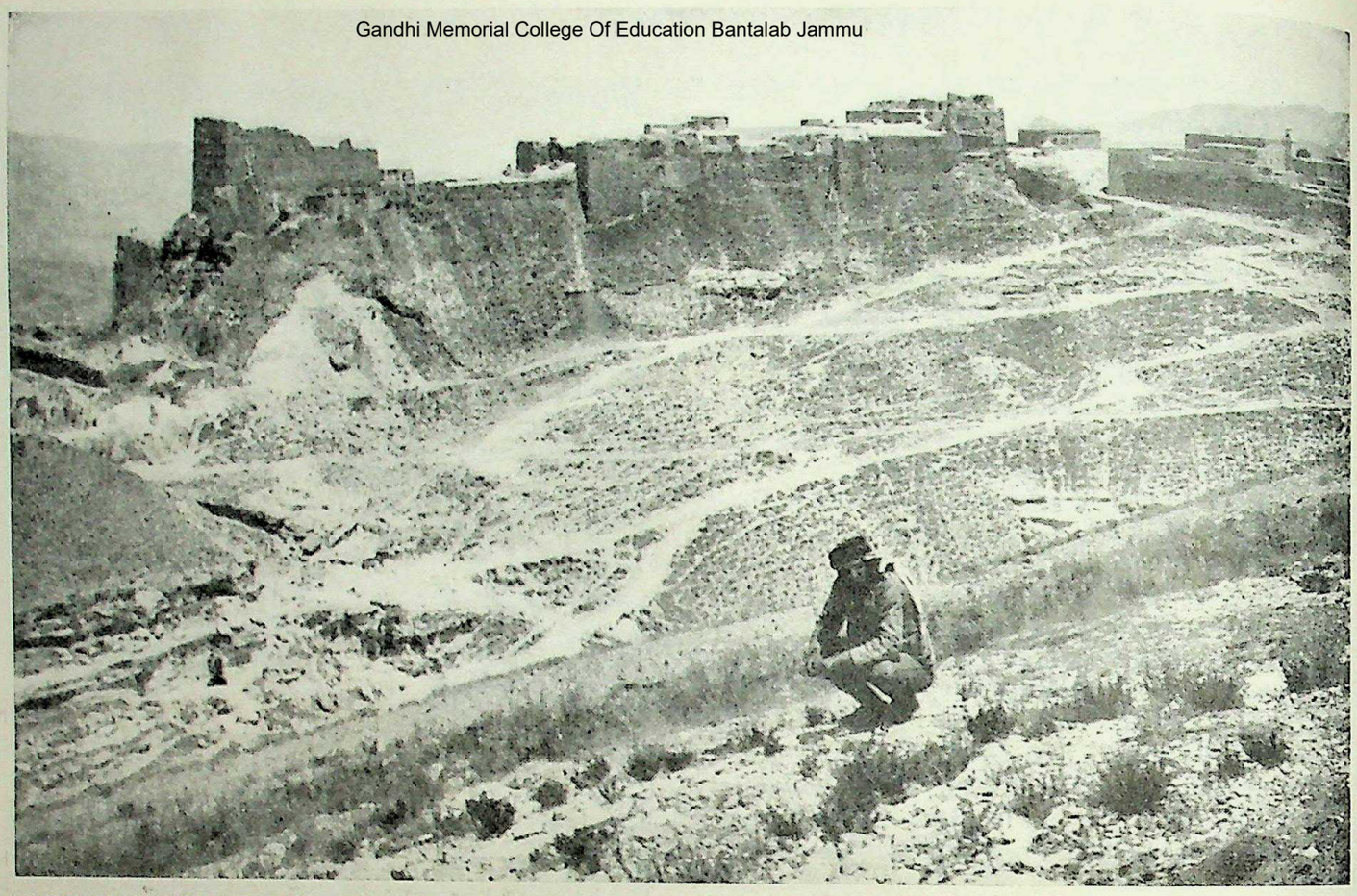

"KIR OF MOAB IS LAID WASTE." Catastrophe overwhelmed the fortress of Kir, or Kir-hareseth, in one night during a period of terror throughout Moab, recorded in Chapters xv and xvi of Isaiah. In the Middle Ages the ruined and deserted citadel was discovered by the Crusaders, who built there the famous castle-city of Le Krak and made it capital of Oultre-Jourdain, principality of the Latin kingdom of Jerusalem. Remains of the walls and towers of the fort, which fell to Saladin in 1188, are seen in the photograph. On the same hill stands the town of Kerak, centre of a Transjordanian municipality.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

been delivered. The hostile city (unnamed) has been overthrown, and the redeemed community becomes lyrical in its praise of God. A day is pictured in which Zion has become the centre of all nations. God is on His throne and the blessedness of his reign will abolish sorrow and suffering, and even death. Scattered through these chapters are hymns of rejoicing, typical of which is the opening of Chapter xxvi. "In that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah; We have a strong city; salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks. Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation which keepeth the truth may enter in. Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee. Trust ye in the LORD for ever, for in the LORD JEHOVAH is everlasting strength."

The main significance of these chapters, however, is neither in their reflection of the rejoicing of the restored exiles nor in their apocalyptic imagery, but in suggestions here and there of spiritual truth of a very high level. Through all the vivid apocalyptic imagery of the ruin that descends upon the material world there is seen the cardinal principle of Hebrew belief that sin finds its results in material calamity: God's judgements of human wrong-doing affect not only man himself but also his dwelling and his possessions. "The earth also is defiled under the inhabitants thereof, because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant."

Notable, too, is the description of God's people in these chapters. No longer are they regarded in their status as a nation with political hopes and aspirations, but rather in their condition of hunger and need. The ideas of infirmity, need and affliction are applied to them, as if the main concern of the people was no longer to be found in political relationships, but in the true attitude of worship. "In the way of thy judgments, O LORD, have we waited for thee: the desire of our soul is to thy name and to the remembrance of thee." It is a people hungering after God that the Prophet depicts for us amid the depression that followed their return from exile.

AND in that great need one special yearning is mentioned. The restored exiles were conscious of the benefits of their restoration—the Temple, God's forgiveness, Divine fellowship—but what of life itself, so short when measured by the earthly span? Hebrew thought in general had not been greatly concerned with the life beyond the grave: but the time was coming when more careful attention was to be given to the future of the individual, and of this we find suggestions in these chapters. The hope of resurrection is perhaps suggested in Chapter xxv, 7, 8. "And he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the vail that is spread over all nations [probably an allusion to mourning customs]. He will swallow up death in victory." Chapter xxvi, 19 is the first of the two Old Testament passages which definitely suggest resurrection, though it is to be noted that in this case the resurrection is limited to Jews and is to be realized in Palestine: "Thy dead men shall live,

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together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead," or, as Dr. James Moffatt's modern translation reads: "O thou Eternal, thy dead shall live again, awaking from the dust with songs of joy. For thy dew falls with light and life, till dead spirits arise."

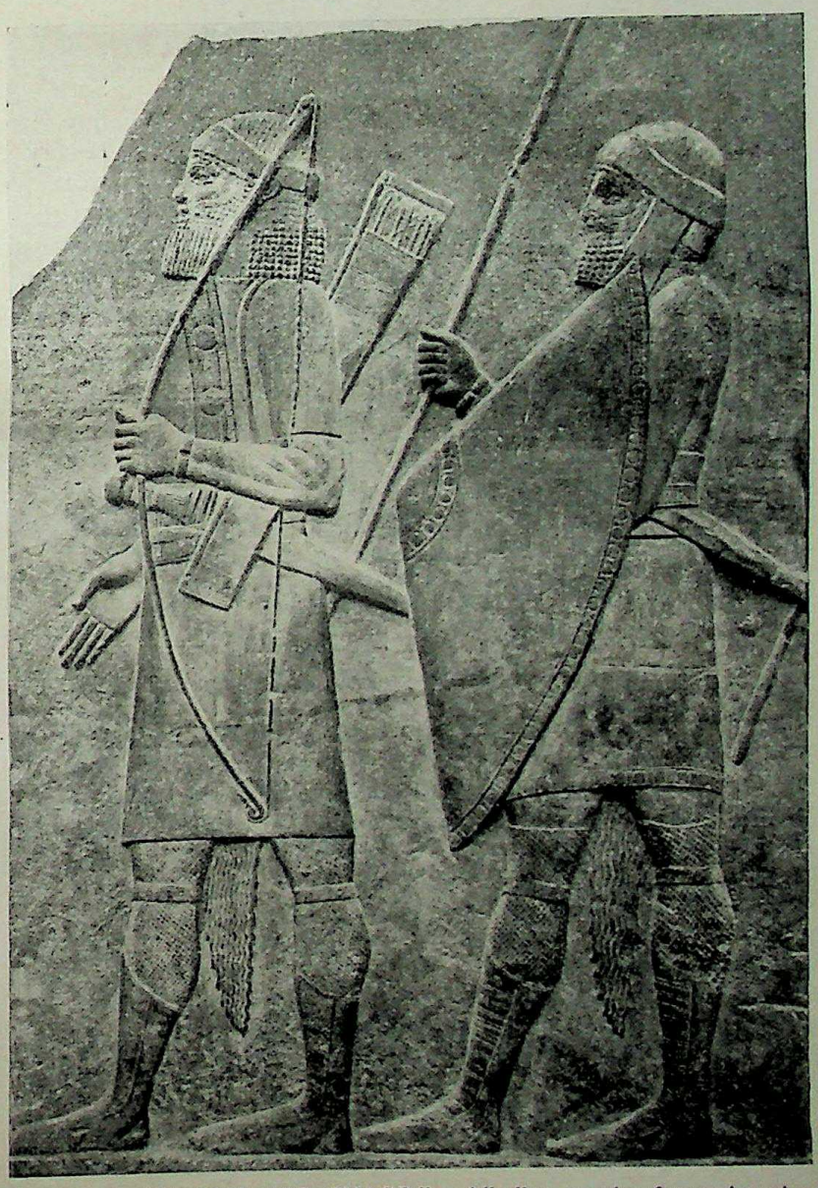
FROM this essay in apocalyptic and spiritual discernment we turn (in Chapters xxviii to xxxiii) to a group of prophecies which, once again, have an historic setting. This is not the same throughout. Chapter xxviii refers to the period prior to the fall of Samaria and is probably to be dated about 725 B.C., while the later chapters in this section belong to the early years of Sennacherib's reign, 705-702 B.C. An editorial hand has brought them together (the discourses have a similarity in their beginning which, in each case, is a prediction of woe). It is not an easy task to decide which parts of these chapters can be attributed to Isaiah, but the general attitude adopted in the prophecies reflects his well-known position in regard to the political problems of his time.

We may conveniently divide the contents of this section into two main parts: (a) a criticism of the people, (b) an assertion of the great purposes of God.

Chapter xxviii begins by an intimation of the approaching fall of Samaria, followed by a severe criticism of all classes in Jerusalem. No wonder that priests and prophets "err in vision" and "stumble in judgment," for they are too much addicted to wine! The political leaders in Jerusalem are at fault, for they will persist in relying on Egyptian help to deliver them from the Assyrian menace. The prophet insists again and again on the futility of the Egyptian alliance. In Chapter xxx we learn that the pro-Egyptian party in Hezekiah's court had sent an embassy to Egypt for the purpose of making a treaty. But it will be in vain—all vain "to strengthen themselves in the strength of Pharaoh and to trust in the shadow of Egypt! Therefore shall the strength of Pharaoh be your shame, and the trust in the shadow of Egypt your confusion." It is a policy of political shortsightedness. In the general condemnation the women are not spared. Trouble hangs over the land, yet the wealthy women are careless and unconcerned. "Many days and years shall ye be troubled, ye careless women: for the vintage shall fail, the gathering shall not come. Tremble, ye women that are at ease; be troubled, ye careless ones: strip you, and make you bare, and gird sackcloth upon your loins. They shall smite upon the breasts for the pleasant fields, for the fruitful vine."

But while the people are indifferent to the realities of the situation the great purpose of God moves steadily forward. It is a purpose involving tragedy and suffering for Judah. The people may despise the prophet's warnings, but they will realize it all in due course. Jerusalem will be besieged. "Woe to you, God's own hearth and altar, O city where David encamped. Let a year or two pass and the feasts go round, then will I press upon this hearth and altar till moaning and bemoaning arise."

This calamity, however, will be but momentary, for the enemy will be checked. "The multitude of thy strangers shall be like small dust . . . and the multitude of the nations that fight against the altar-hearth shall be as a dream of a night vision." At various points in these chapters this promise of deliverance is interposed. Chapter xxviii, 23-29 is a parable of the husbandman who is not for ever



"WHOSE ARROWS ARE SHARP." Alluding to the future invasion of Judah by an Assyrian army, Isaiah foresees the terrible efficiency of the mobilized enemy forces—the chariotry with "wheels like a whirlwind" and the infantry's rapid advance with "bows bent" (Isaiah v, 28). A company of Assyrian foot soldiers was made up of twenty-five files. Each file consisted of an archer and a spearman with a great shield who fought beside and defended his comrade. They wore a uniform of tunic, round helmet and high boots.

British Museum; photo, Mansell

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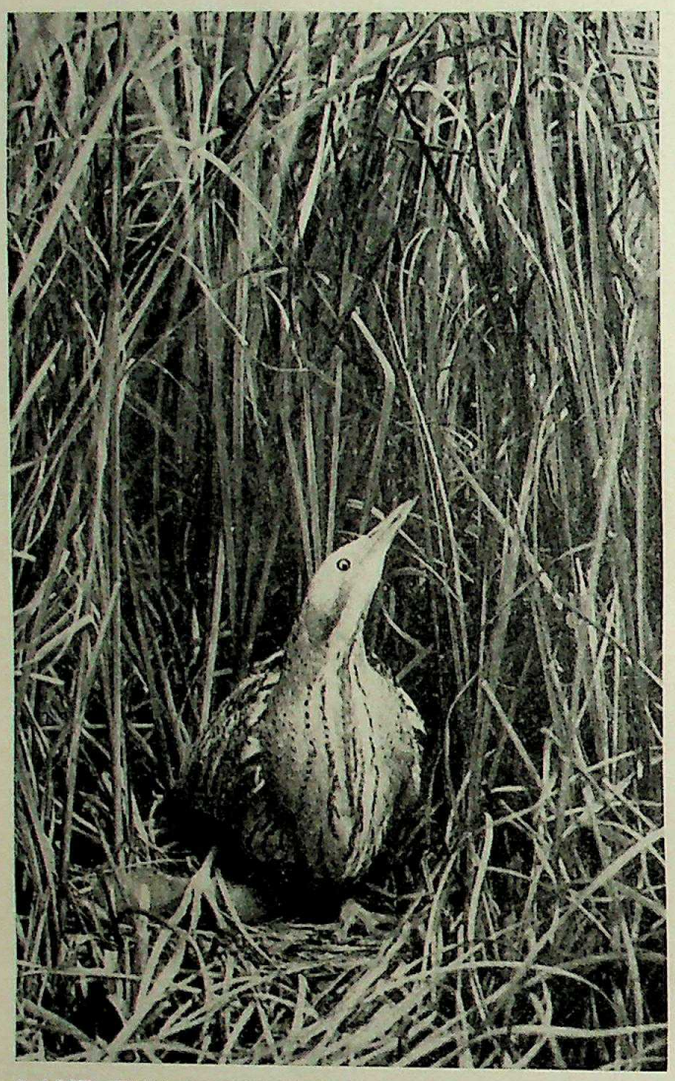

"AND THE BITTERN SHALL POSSESS IT." The Hebrew word rendered in the Authorized Version "bittern" is translated in the Revised Version "porcupine," but the imagery in Isaiah xiv, 23, agrees quite well with the view that the bird was intended. It was an apt figure for the desolation of Babylon as it inhabits wild and abandoned places and its mournful boom was often heard by "pools of water" near the Tigris and Euphrates.

Photo, Eric J. Hosking

ploughing and breaking the soil. He has an end in view—the sowing of his seed. So with the purposes of God. The tribulation He visits on His people is to serve a great end, the restoration of His people. God will surely arise and defeat the proud Assyrian, and the mourning of His people will be turned to rejoicing. "And therefore will the LORD wait that he may be gracious unto you, and therefore will he be exalted that he may have mercy upon you: for the LORD is a God of judgment: blessed are all they that wait upon him. He will be very gracious unto thee at the voice of thy cry: when he shall hear it he shall answer thee." The changed character of the nation is to be matched by a glorification of the world of nature, and in Chapter xxxiii the prophet eloquently describes the prospect: a Zion safe in God's protection, with nothing to disturb the peace and happiness of her people. "Thine eyes shall see the king in his beauty: they shall behold the land that is very far off. . . . Thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down; not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken. But there the glorious LORD will be unto us a place of broad rivers and streams. . . . And the inhabitants shall not say, I am sick: the people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity."

Outstanding in this section is the prophet's conception of God. The description of Zion's true foundation in Chapter xxviii, 16f. indicates that righteousness and justice are the expression of the divine nature, while in Chapter xxxi God's wisdom is contrasted with the folly of those who argued for the Egyptian alliance. And in spite of the severity of divine judgement the prophet would have us see behind it the tenderness of a redemptive purpose. Only such a strong confidence in God's great purposes could have enabled him to give to his own people the advice which has become famous: "In quietness and confidence shall be your strength."

We come now, in Chapters xxxiv and xxxv, to a wonderful picture of the glory that is in store for Israel: a glory heightened by contrast with the visitation of divine wrath that is to fall upon Edom. Such a vehement antagonism towards Edom is shown in Chapter xxxiv that we are driven back into Hebrew history to discover its explanation. The Edomites were regarded as the descendants of Esau, and the ancient rivalry between Esau and Jacob, so clearly emphasized in the Book of Genesis, had been continued through the centuries. Before the conquest of Canaan Edom is said to have refused to allow Israel to pass through his territory (Numbers xx, 18f.). Both Saul and David had fought against the Edomites. When Nebuchadnezzar destroyed Jerusalem in 586 B.C. the Edomites rejoiced at the overthrow of their rivals. Against such an historical tradition as this we can understand why the prophet should depict Edom's doom in such passionate terms.

Edom Threatened with the Lord's Vengeance

CHAPTER xxxiv describes the judgement of Divine wrath on all nations, with special retribution on Edom for past misdeeds. The land will be bathed in blood. "It is the day of the LORD's vengeance, and the year of recompense for the controversy of Zion. And the streams thereof shall be turned into pitch, and the dust thereof into brimstone, and the land thereof shall become burning pitch. It shall not be quenched night nor day: the smoke thereof shall go up for ever; from generation to generation it shall lie waste; none shall ever pass through it for ever and ever."

Over against this terrible picture the prophet sets the glorious future of Israel's deliverance, the triumphant return of the scattered Hebrews and the coming of the golden age. God's people were to return to the land they loved, and the description of all this in Chapter xxxv is a lyric of sustained beauty which has become famous in the world's literature. The prophet speaks to the exiles, assuring them of their coming salvation.

"Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees. Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold, your God will come with

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vengeance, even God with a recompence; he will come and save you." Wonderful things will happen both to them and to their surroundings. "Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert. And the parched land shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water." God Himself will open up for their return a great highway, so plain that even a fool could not mistake it, and safe from prowling lions and beasts. And with what joy will the exiles come back to their homeland!—"with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away."

So Israel the wayward, the forgetful, was to find a happy issue out of all her tribulations; it was the fulfilment of those numerous prophecies of mercy which had sustained God's servants even in the darkest days.

Isaiah in the Court of King Hezekiah

THE next three chapters do not add anything to our knowledge of Isaiah's career, for with little alteration they reproduce the narrative of II. Kings xviii-xx. They record three events in the reign of Hezekiah, and are important as indicating Isaiah's intimate relationship with his monarch, and the consistency of his attitude towards the aggression of foreign powers.

Chapters xxxvi and xxxvii deal with the demands made by Sennacherib king of Assyria for the surrender of Jerusalem. The general who was his messenger thus delivered his ultimatum: "Say ye now to Hezekiah, Thus saith the great king, the king of Assyria, What confidence is this wherein thou trusteth?" But there happened to be in Jerusalem one who had sure grounds for his confidence, and, with the assurance that marked all his career, Isaiah advised his king, "Thus saith the LORD, Be not afraid of the words that thou hast heard, wherewith the servants of the king of Assyria have blasphemed me. Behold, I will send a blast upon him, and he shall hear a rumour, and return to his own land; and I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own land"—a prediction which was fulfilled, for Sennacherib was assassinated by his sons as he was at worship in the house of Nisroch his god.

In a more personal matter Hezekiah was further indebted to the prophet. The king fell ill "and Isaiah came unto him and said unto him, Thus saith the LORD, Set thine house in order, for thou shalt die and not live." This ominous message, a fine illustration of Isaiah's fearlessness in declaring God's word, sent Hezekiah to his knees and, weeping, he prayed to God. His prayer was answered, and Isaiah was commanded to carry this further message to his king: "I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears: behold I will add to thy days fifteen years. And I will deliver thee and this city out of the hand of the king of Assyria." Thereupon the king composed a song of thanksgiving ending "The LORD was ready to save me: therefore we will sing my songs to the stringed instruments all the days of our life in the house of the LORD." Then the narrative drops suddenly from this lyrical level to the very practical but pedestrian record: "For Isaiah had said, Let them take a lump of figs and lay it for a plaister upon the boil, and he shall recover"!

Finally, Chapter xxxix records how Merodach-baladan, king of Babylon, sent a present to Hezekiah and congratulations on his recovery. Hezekiah received the embassy courteously and showed them his treasures, whereupon Isaiah rebuked him, predicting a day when the Babylonians would come and take his treasures. Hezekiah seems to have been very complacent under this rebuke, for his reply was: "Good is the word of the LORD which thou hast spoken."

Chapter xxxix brings us to the end of what may in general be regarded as the prophecy of Isaiah. From Chapter xl onwards we are concerned with prophecies which reflect a different and later historic situation. They make no claim to have been written by Isaiah, or to have been produced in his age. Isaiah, as we have seen, combined warning with hope for the future, and much of what he had to say was directed against Assyria; but it is clear that from now onwards it is Babylon rather than Assyria that is the menace to Israel's happiness. The empire of the proud Assyrian had been succeeded by that of Babylon, and, in the period that elapsed between Isaiah's ministry and the prophecies we are now to consider, calamity had come upon the Jewish people. First in 597 B.C. and then in 586 the flower of the Jewish nation was taken away into captivity. Israel was in exile. Zion was in ruins. Chapters xl to lxvi are to be interpreted as an attempt to reassure the depressed captives with a picture of approaching restoration. There are many Old Testament scholars who divide this last section of the Book of Isaiah into two distinct works, but as there is a unity in the whole section, and as its great message is unaffected by intricate questions of date and authorship, we shall group the essential teaching of Chapters xl to lxvi around the dominant ideas which it was the purpose of the prophecies to emphasize.

The Voice of Hope Comes to the Exiles

"COMFORT ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God." This is the hopeful strain on which the prophecies open. First the prophets and then Jerusalem are commanded to publish the glad tidings. The voices of heralds are heard preparing the way for God's approach through the desert. Another voice declares the certainty of God's word in contrast to the transcience of all things human. Another voice speaks to the people of Jerusalem: "Say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God! Behold the Lord GOD will come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him: behold his reward is with him and his work before him. He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young."

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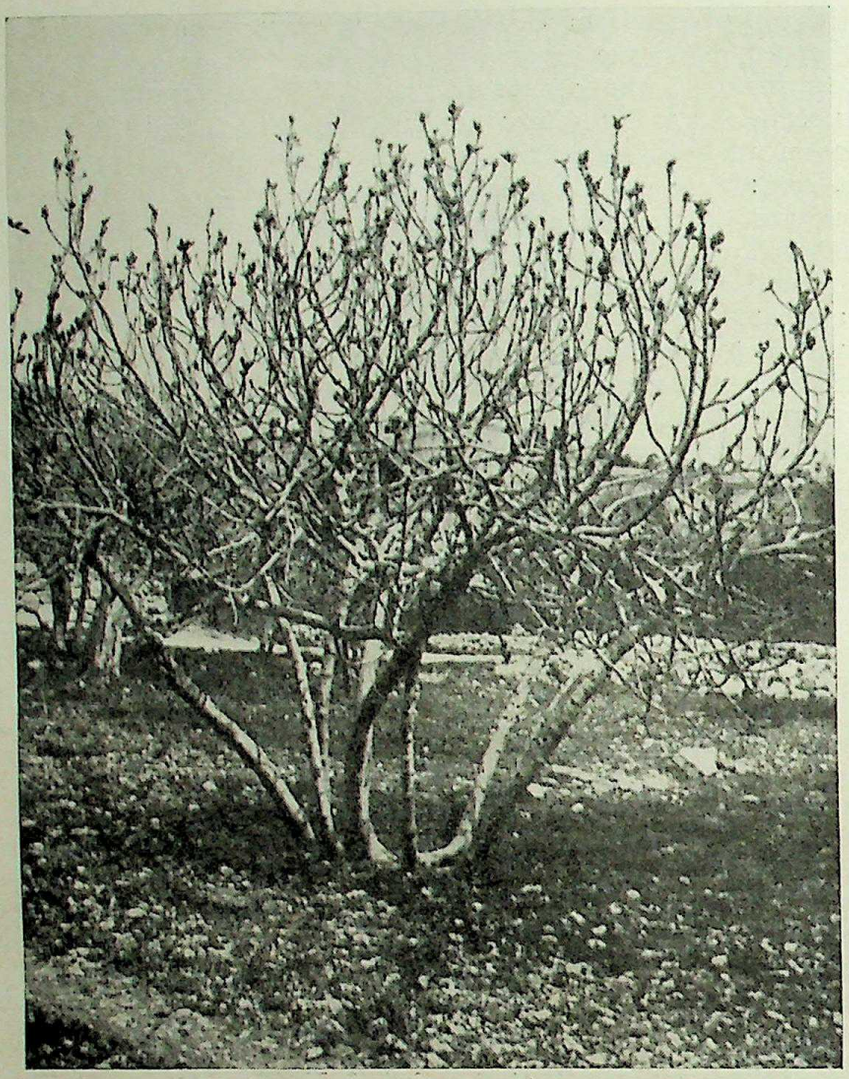

"HASTY FRUIT BEFORE THE SUMMER." This tree bears its crop of first-ripe figs, considered such a great delicacy in Palestine that anyone seeing the fruit desires it and so luscious that "while it is yet in his hand he eateth it up" (Isaiah xxviii, 4). The Prophet uses the analogy to illustrate the quick destruction that will come upon the desirable city of Samaria at "the head of the fat valley" where fig trees still flourish abundantly. Their first fruit ripens in June.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

But how are the people to feel certain of this approaching blessing? The prophet brings forward different arguments to demonstrate God's power and His ability to fulfil His promises. The works of nature reveal His omnipotence. "Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance?" Human spirits cannot compare with Him, nor can the mind express His power and majesty. He is wonderfully able and willing to fulfil all His promises. "He giveth power to the faint, and to them that have no might he increaseth strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall. But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run and not be weary; and they shall walk and not faint."

To the argument from Nature the author adds the argument from History. Chapter xli gives us a picture of a judgement in which the nations of the earth are invited to come forward and plead their cause with God. God's supremacy over their deities is shown in two ways. Only He could have raised up "the righteous man from the east, called him to his foot . . . and made him rule over kings" (probably a reference to Cyrus, of whom more later). Only God can foretell the future. The gods of the nations are challenged to "show the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that ye are gods." But they are impotent. "Ye are of nothing, and your work of nought: an abomination is he that chooseth you." This contrast between God and the deities of the nations is urged on several occasions in the course of these chapters. Chapter xliii, 8f., pictures another judgement scene between Israel and the nations, in which God's superiority in the matter of prediction is demonstrated. Chapter xliv, 9f., satirically describes how the idols are manufactured. With all their pretensions none of these can hinder God's purposes nor harm His people.

THE prophet declares that God has His instrument for the restoration of His people from exile back to Zion. (Cyrus was well known to the prophet and his audience. He was the founder of the Persian empire. Beginning by making himself supreme in his native land of Elam he annexed Media and by the year 546 B.C. he was master of an empire extending from the Caspian to the Persian Gulf, and from the border of Assyria to the Indus. In 538 B.C. he became master of Babylon.) The prophet sees in this formidable leader the means by which God will fulfil His promises. "Thus saith the LORD to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of kings; to open the doors before him, and the gates shall not be shut. . . . I have raised him up in righteousness, and I will direct all his ways: he shall build my city and he shall let go my captives, not for price nor reward, saith the LORD of hosts." Through this chosen leader, called in these prophecies the Lord's shepherd and the Lord's messiah, confusion shall come upon Israel's enemies and deliverance to the captives. "They shall be ashamed and also confounded, all of them; they shall go to confusion together that are makers of idols. But Israel shall be saved in the LORD with an everlasting salvation: ye shall not be ashamed nor confounded world without end."

From Cyrus and his part in the achievement of God's purposes the prophet now turns to consider Babylon. He begins by picturing Babylon's deities, Bel and Nebo. "They stoop, they bow down together; they could not deliver the burden, but themselves are gone into captivity." Then follows an ironical picture of the city, personified as a lady of high rank, brought down to the drudgery of a captive slave. "Come down and sit in the dust, O virgin daughter of Babylon, sit on the ground: there is no throne, O

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daughter of the Chaldeans: for thou shalt no more be called tender and delicate. . . . thou saidst, I shall be a lady for ever . . . therefore hear now this, thou that art given to pleasures, that dwellest carelessly, that sayest in thine heart, I am, and none else beside me; I shall not sit as a widow, neither shall I know the loss of children: But these two things shall come to thee in a moment in one day, the loss of children, and widowhood: they shall come upon thee in their perfection for the multitude of thy sorceries, and for the great abundance of thine enchantments. . . . Let now the astrologers, the star-gazers, the monthly prognosticators, stand up and save thee from these things that shall come upon thee. Behold, they shall be as stubble; the fire shall burn them; they shall not deliver themselves from the power of the flame."

To such destitution will the proud city be reduced, and Babylon's downfall will be the signal for Israel's escape and return to their own land. "Go ye forth of Babylon, flee ye from the Chaldeans, with a voice of singing declare ye, tell this, utter it to the end of the earth; say ye, The LORD hath redeemed his servant Jacob. And they thirsted not when he led them through the deserts: he caused the waters to flow out of the rock for them: he clave the rock also, and the waters gushed out" (xlviii, 20f.).

At this point we may consider together passages in the prophecy which constitute one of the most wonderful religious characterizations in all literature. We have seen how the prophet has established the sovereignty of God, and how he has declared Cyrus to be God's instrument in the work of Israel's restoration. Cyrus, however, soon passes from the prophet's consideration: his function is restricted to the defeat of Babylon. But God's purpose extends much further than a Babylonian overthrow. That, so to speak, opens a door through which the purpose of God can pass to the regeneration of the world. In this sublime conception the Servant of the Lord is introduced to us as God's minister.

IT has long been a point of dispute as to the exact meaning to be given to the term Servant of the Lord. Does it mean Israel as a nation, or a group within the nation, or even an individual? The problem is a difficult one, but, whatever the interpretation may be, the spiritual beauty and value of this figure, and the significance of his divine mission to the world, are beyond dispute.

The ministry of the Servant of the Lord is depicted in four songs. Chapter xli, 8 refers in a general way to Israel as the servant of God, but in xlii, 1-4, the first of the Servant poems proper, the Servant is portrayed rather as an ideal figure, reproducing the best features of the nation, and as God's messenger to foreign peoples. "Behold my servant whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street. A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench: he shall bring forth judgment unto truth. He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth: and the isles shall wait for his law."

In the second of these poems the Servant speaks (xlix, 1-6). He describes his divine equipment, and reflects upon his past experience. His endeavours seem to have been in vain, yet he faces the future in complete reliance upon God. "Then I said, I have laboured in vain, I have spent my strength for nought, and in vain; yet surely my judgment is with the LORD, and my work with my God." The scope of

"AS CORN IS SIFTED IN A SIEVE." Though much chaff is dissipated by winnowing, impurities remain to be sifted from the corn. Coarser rubbish is shaken to the surface of the sieve and thrown on a heap; then by vigorous blowing as the sieve is moved up and down, dust and grass seeds are dispersed or fall through the mesh. Jehovah is imaged by Isaiah (xxx, 28) as coming to sift the nations with the sieve of destruction: "And his breath is as an overflowing stream."

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

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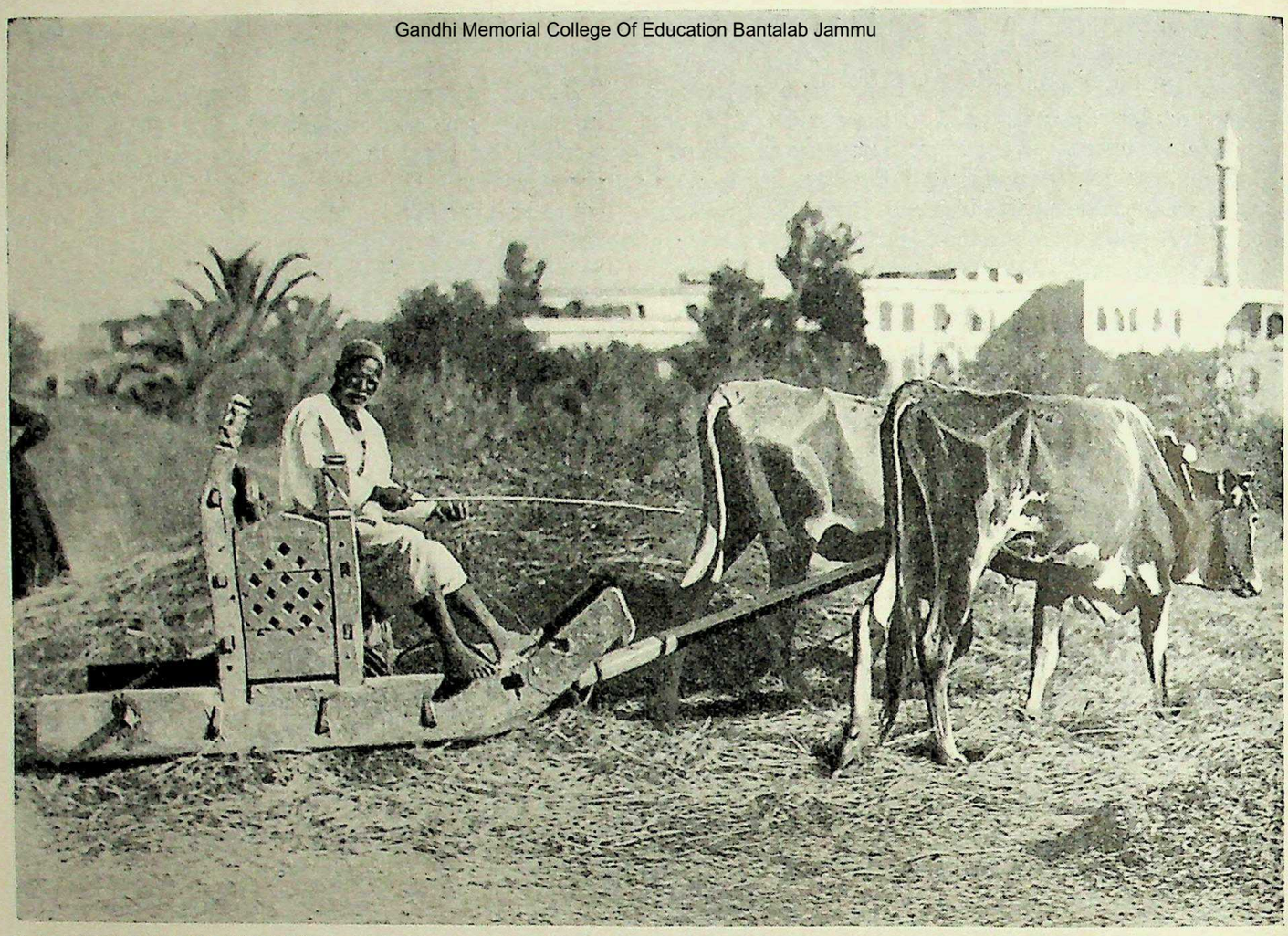

"A NEW SHARP THRESHING INSTRUMENT." The same type of threshing-sledge as that from which the Prophet drew his image for the victorious "men of Israel" (Isaiah xli, 14-16) is still commonly used in Palestine. The Hebrews were to destroy their enemies even as the new sharp flints or iron teeth set in the under part of a sledge cut into the huge mounds of straw, which is finely chopped for fodder. "Thou shalt thresh the mountains, and beat them small, and shalt make the hills as chaff. Thou shalt fan them, and the wind shall carry them away." After this the land would be purged.

Photo, Mondiale

his ministry is clearly expressed. "It is too light a thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth" (R.V.).

The third poem (l, 4-9) recounts the manner in which the Servant engaged in his great mission, and his sufferings in the cause. "The Lord God hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary. . . . I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting." Yet his courage and confidence are equal to every bitter experience. "For the Lord God will help me; therefore shall I not be confounded: therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed."

The final poem (lii, 13—liii, 12) is one of sustained beauty. In its opening verses God depicts the glorious future that awaits His servant in contrast to his present humiliation. "Behold, my servant . . . shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high . . . so shall he sprinkle many nations; the kings shall shut their mouths at him: for that which had not been told them they shall see, and that which they had not heard shall they consider." Then follows the tribute which the Gentiles pay to the Servant. "Who could have believed what we have heard?" they say. This Servant, without form or comeliness, despised, rejected, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief . . . who could have believed it?

His vicarious suffering and martyrdom are described with moving pathos. "Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken. And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth."

The poem closes with God's own tribute. "He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify

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many; for he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors."

NOWHERE does Hebrew thought rise to a higher level than in these poems of the Servant of the Lord. The conception of Israel as destined through suffering to be the means of making known to the world the saving purpose of God is one of the noblest contributions of Hebrew prophecy. It is a sure instinct that has led Christian thinkers to find the fullest and richest application of Chapter liii in the person and work of Jesus Christ.

Readers of the closing section of the Isaianic collection, Chapters lvi—lxvi, will soon discover that the problem of arranging Chapters xl to the end into a harmonious and progressive account is anything but easy. Hitherto we have been concerned with prophecies which look forward to the glorious return of the exiles, but in Chapter lvi, 7 we read that sacrifices are offered at the Temple altar, and the service of prayer. The Sabbath is kept strictly, and the prophet welcomes to the blessings of the Temple the foreigner and the eunuch: all suggesting that the return has been accomplished and a certain organization effected in the Palestinian home. It is considerations such as these which have led some scholars to postulate a later date for this last section of the Book, and another hand at work.

Yet, in spite of such difficulties, it is possible to follow to a further stage the great argument which has already occupied us from Chapter xl onwards. The prophet's problem, as we have seen, was the deliverance of his people from exile. The political side of this problem would be solved, he saw, through the instrumentality of Cyrus. The deeper religious aspect of the problem found its solution in the conception of the Servant of the Lord, who would be the means of spiritual revival. But there was a further matter which needed attention. To what extent were God's people worthy of this divine restoration? Was there not needed a complete change of heart in so many who languished in captivity, ere they could hope to be fit for the glorious future promised to them? Up to this point in the Book no sustained attention has been given to this important question. A group of prophecies now calls for consideration which present this moral and spiritual challenge.

A Glorious Prospect Opened before Zion

IT was indeed a glorious future which the prophet had unveiled. Jubilantly he declared it (li—lii, 12). "Awake, awake; put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city . . . shake thyself from the dust; arise, and sit down, O captive daughter of Zion . . . How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth! . . . Break forth into joy, sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem: for the LORD hath comforted his people, he hath redeemed Jerusalem." Suffering Zion will soon be at peace, with her children round about her (Chapter liv). Let the people be prepared to receive these glorious blessings at the hand of God. "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. . . . Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David. . . . For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree: and it shall be to the LORD for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off" (lv).

Repentance the Condition of Restoration

A GLORIOUS prospect—but only to be realized on conditions. In the next few chapters the prophet turns to consider these conditions, and he is unsparing in his condemnation.

"Keep ye judgment and do justice." This is the command of God, but His people have wandered far from it. The leaders of Israel are denounced because they have neglected the true welfare of their people. They are described as "blind watchmen," "greedy dogs," "shepherds that have no understanding" (lvi, 9—lvii, 2). The people are in no better case, for they have debased themselves with idolatry (lvii, 3-11). The only hope is in penitence and trust in God. "For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones" (lvii, 15).

Chapter lviii represents the Hebrew prophetic attitude at its best. There is no virtue in mere fasting: that is no more than a hollow unreality unless it is accompanied by social righteousness. The fast that God requires is of another order—not for a man "to bow down his head as a bulrush," or "to spread sackcloth and ashes under him." "Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free . . . is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him?"

In the next chapter the prophet represents the people in an act of confession. "We grope for the wall like the blind, and we grope as if we had no eyes: we stumble at noonday as in the night; we are in desolate places as dead men. . . . For our transgressions are multiplied before thee, and our sins testify against

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us: for our transgressions are with us; and as for our iniquities, we know them."

In their plight God will not forsake them. "Behold, the LORD's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear."

Radiant Picture of the New Jerusalem

FROM this denunciation of the shortcomings of the people the prophet now turns, in Chapter lx, to contemplate Zion's glory. In their confession of unrighteousness the people had cried, "We wait for light" (lix, 9). At last the light shines, and in its radiance the glory of the restored Zion is revealed. "Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the LORD is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the LORD shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising."

What a radiant picture it is! Not only do her exiled children return to their home; they are accompanied by treasures of sea and land. Droves of camels, treasure ships from the west, kings from lands afar—so numerous is this incoming throng that the gates of Zion must be open night and day. Precious woods from the forests of Lebanon will be brought to beautify the Temple. Gold and silver will replace brass and iron, peace will take the place of violence, and righteousness shall reign supreme. "Thou shalt call thy walls Salvation, and thy gates Praise. The sun shall be no more thy light by day; neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee: but the LORD shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory. . . . Thy people also shall be all righteous: they shall inherit the land for ever, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified."

Chapters lxi and lxii continue the unfolding of this wonderful picture of God's grace to His people. "Strangers shall stand and feed your flocks, and the sons of the alien shall be your plowmen and your vinedressers. But ye shall be named the Priests of the LORD." Zion will have a new name; no longer will she be called Forsaken or Desolate, but Beulah (bride), and her people Hephzibah (my delight). So confident is the prophet of this happy issue that he bids the people go forth and prepare the road for the exiles' return.

In a short dramatic poem (lxiii, 1-6) he looks into the future and sees a lonely warrior arriving from the battle fields of Edom, his garments all blood-stained. "Who is this?" he asks, and God Himself answers that he comes from exacting vengeance upon Edom. Under this figure is expressed the thought of Israel's triumph over all her enemies.

Then follows a great plea to God that He will fulfil all His promises to Israel. It begins by an act of thanksgiving, in which the gracious deeds of God to His people are recounted. "I will mention the lovingkindnesses of the LORD, and the praises of the LORD, according to all that the LORD hath bestowed on us, and the great goodness toward the house of Israel, which he hath bestowed on them according to his mercies, and according to the multitude of his lovingkindnesses." Confession of their sinfulness leads to a plea for God's compassion. "But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we do all fade like a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away. . . . But now, O LORD, thou art our father; we are the clay, and thou our potter; and we all are the work of thy hand. Be not wroth very sore, O LORD, neither remember iniquity for ever: behold, see, we beseech thee, we are all thy people."

The answer to this prayer is significant. Hitherto in the prophecy we have seen how judgement will fall upon Israel's enemies. Now the prophet makes it clear that in Israel herself there will be judgement, God's faithful servants being distinguished from those who are disloyal. "Ye that forsake the LORD, that forget my holy mountain, that prepare a table for Fortune, and that fill up mingled wine unto Destiny; I will destine you to the sword, and ye shall all bow down to the slaughter: because when I called, ye did not answer." But the righteous remnant will be blessed of God. "I will bring forth a seed out of Jacob, and out of Judah an inheritor of my mountains; and mine elect shall inherit it, and my servants shall dwell there." Once again the good fortune of the righteous is depicted. "For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. But be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create. . . And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people: and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying."

Closing Message of God's Gracious Care

THE last chapter opens with a short section which is difficult to interpret. By some it is regarded as directed against a proposal to erect a temple which shall be a rival to that which has been restored; another interpretation takes the line that, in view of the coming restoration, the prophet reminds the Jews that no human erection is really adequate to the majesty of God. But two points emerge in this section: the impiety of ritual observances such as human sacrifice, the sacrifice of dogs, the sacrificial use of swine's blood, and the honouring of idols; and the qualities of heart that make worship acceptable.

The chapter closes with a contrast between the blessedness in store for Jerusalem and the impending doom of Israel's enemies. God will gather together all the nations before Jerusalem and measure out punishment. Those who survive will be sent to the "isles afar off" to declare his glory among the Gentiles. From all nations the dispersed Jews shall be brought back to Jerusalem, to remain in His favour for ever. "For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me, saith the LORD, so shall your seed and your name remain."

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"HE SHALL GATHER THE LAMBS IN HIS ARM"

One of the Bible's tenderest passages of comfort opens the sixteen chapters of the Book of Isaiah, xl-lv, which are concerned with the prophecy of Israel's restoration after the Babylonian exile. In this passage occurs the familiar simile of the Good Shepherd who carries the lambs in his bosom (Isaiah xl, 11, R.V.). The desert pastures are intersected by deep ravines through which the shepherds lead their flocks in search of water. Sheep sometimes stray into dangerous places and have to be rescued. Shrill and pathetic was the bleating of the lamb seen in the picture until the shepherd with the help of his crook had gathered it from a cleft in the rocks and comforted it as he carried it to its mother in the fold.

Photo, "Daily Mirror"

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John S. Sargent, 1856-1925

"HEARKEN TO THE WORDS OF MY SERVANTS, THE PROPHETS"

The American painter John Singer Sargent, who for a quarter of a century was the most provocative and fashionable portraitist in London, began in 1899 his fine series of mural decorations, the Pageant of Religion, in the Public Library at Boston, U.S.A. Specially notable is the frieze of the Hebrew Prophets, part of which is reproduced by permission of the Library Trustees in this and the facing page. The types created are monumental, yet humanly characteristic. In this section Isaiah, the sublime orator, whose call was a vision of God's glory, is contrasted with Jeremiah, the sad-faced poet whose charge was "to pull down and to destroy" before he could build or plant. Behind them stand intolerant Jonah and the zealously vigilant Habakkuk.

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"QUENCH NOT THE SPIRIT. DESPISE NOT PROPHESYINGS"

In the forefront of this group of the Prophets is Ezekiel, severe critic of Israel, expounder of the principle of individual responsibility, and pastor of his fellow exiles in Babylonia. By his side is Daniel, "a man greatly beloved," hero of the apocalyptic Book named after him and seer famed for wisdom and righteousness. On the left are the strikingly dramatic figures of Amos and Nahum. The latter, known as the Elkoshite, is represented with arm outstretched as if emphatically pointing a minatory utterance concerning the downfall of Assyria and destruction of Nineveh. Amos, the inspired farmer from Tekoa, has a staff and shepherd's sling. The rugged nobility of the conception of this initiator of the great prophetic movement in Israel is particularly impressive.

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"BRING YOUR BRETHREN IN LITTERS AND ON MULES"

This Palestinian method of transport is more comfortable than it looks. The wooden litter, gaily canopied in printed cotton to shelter occupants from the sun, sways gently with the even pace of the mule led by its master. Though it has not quite the endearing cheerfulness of the donkey as a caravan animal, the mule is persevering and intelligent, despite the proverbial obstinacy which causes occasional wayward lapses. Biblical references show that mules were highly esteemed, largely superseding asses as riding animals for princes and persons of distinction during the time of the monarchy. They are mentioned in Isaiah lxvi, 20, among the "swift beasts" that shall bring back the dispersed Jews to Jerusalem.

Photo, Keystone

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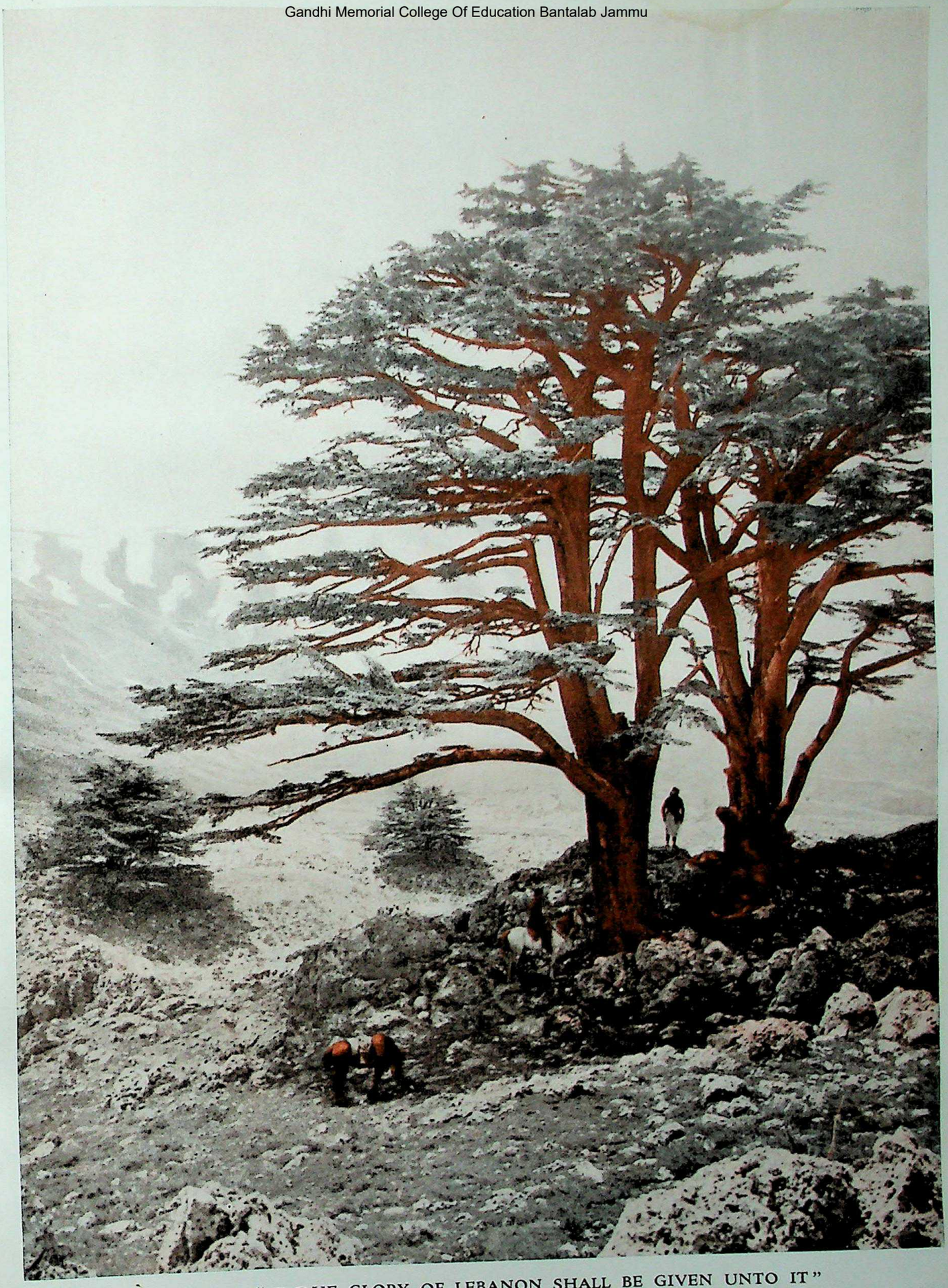

"THE GLORY OF LEBANON SHALL BE GIVEN UNTO IT"

Veteran cedars of Lebanon standing on a knoll apart from the large grove—which must have been far more extensive in the days of Isaiah—are objects of special interest and veneration to the Syrian natives. The mountains, snow-capped for most of the year, are a refreshing background to sub-tropical, palmy Beirut from whence the excursion to the Cedars is usually made. The way passes through wide plantations of banana trees. In contrast to Palestine Lebanon is well supplied with streams. The Prophet, implying that the rock-choked wilderness would become fruitful as this fertile district (Isaiah xxxv, 2, 4,) was encouraging the people to hope for the time when God should come " with a recompence " for their suffering.

Photo, E.N.A.

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Edward Bendemann 1811-1899

"JERUSALEM REMEMBERED IN THE DAYS OF HER AFFLICTION"

Having been imprisoned before Jerusalem fell to Nebuchadrezzar's forces in 586 B.C., Jeremiah was released to witness the destruction of the city and the doom of his people, a doom which he had prophesied for so long. The German painter of Jewish descent, Edward Bendemann, depicts the Prophet lamenting amidst the ruins while the women mourn: "Rachel weeping for her children; she refuseth to be comforted for her children, because they are not" (Jeremiah xxxi, 15, R.V.). Bitterness was added to Jeremiah's grief by knowing that if he had been listened to by those in authority, Jerusalem could have been saved and Judah spared the Babylonian captivity. His only comfort was his steadfast trust that God would bring about the ultimate restoration of His people.

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Raphael, 1483-1520

"UNDER THE FIRMAMENT WERE THEIR WINGS STRAIGHT"

Ezekiel's vision of the winged creatures or cherubim which appeared from "a fire infolding itself, and a brightness was about it, and out of the midst thereof as the colour of amber" (Ezekiel i, 4), provided Raphael with the subject for a famous picture now in the Pitti Gallery, Florence. The great Renaissance painter, however, failed to suggest the symbolism of the Biblical description. All too solid appears the flesh of this gracefully-composed group resting on a concrete cloud. Despite the wings, his mythological creatures are rendered in realistic fashion. The vision of the Prophet's call was one of ineffable glory—a dream in a trance—elaborated in his poetical remembrance of a great spiritual experience.

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"THE EXCELLENCY OF CARMEL SHALL SEE THE GLORY OF THE LORD"

Renowned from Old Testament times for its perennial green, its flowers and olive trees, Mount Carmel is one of the beauty districts of Palestine. "Excellency of Carmel" (Isaiah xxxv, 2) may be rendered "splendour of gardens." On the top of the height overlooking the Mediterranean is the Hospice of Stella Maris and the Carmelite Monastery, parent-house of the Order founded here in the 12th century. Mount Carmel has given its name to the range of hills about 12 miles long running south-east from Haifa. The outskirts of this port can be seen to the right of the photograph. The railway runs at the foot of the height which is a popular resort.

Photo, E.N.A.

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LITERARY BEAUTY OF THE BIBLE. XXII

Warning and Promise in Isaiah

THE Book of Isaiah is the first of the prophetic books of the Bible, and in many ways the greatest. Certainly the man whose name it bears stands out in its pages as one of tremendous stature, the grandest of the prophets of what may be styled the middle period of the Old Testament, well qualified to rank with Elijah in the preceding period and Daniel in the one that followed. The best indication of the Prophet's place in the Hebrew hierarchy is afforded by the numerous references in the New Testament, in the Gospels as in the Epistles and Acts, to that "which was spoken by Esaias the prophet."

In all parts of the Book there are passages of wonderful depth and beauty, in which the prophet has been moved by the intensity of his religious convictions and experiences to utterances of wonderful eloquence. Such, for example, is the passage from the fortieth chapter which inspired Handel to write one of his noblest songs in "The Messiah." This and several other passages of inimitable beauty and prophetic power are given below.

UNTO US A CHILD IS BORN
ix, 2, 3, 6

THE people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined. Thou hast multiplied the nation, and not increased the joy; they joy before thee according to the joy in harvest, and as men rejoice when they divide the spoil.

For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

DESERT SHOWS BLOSSOMS
xxxv, 1, 7—10

THE wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose.

And the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water: in the habitation of dragons, where each lay, shall be grass with reeds and rushes. And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein. No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk there: and the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

A VOICE CRYING IN THE WILDERNESS
xl, 1—8, 29—31

COMFORT ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the LORD's hand double for all her sins.

The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain; and the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together; for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it. The voice said, Cry. And he said, What shall I cry? All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field; the grass withereth, the flower fadeth; because the spirit of the LORD bloweth upon it; surely the people is grass. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth; but the word of our God shall stand for ever.

He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall; but they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.

AWAKE, O ZION
lii, 1, 2, 7

AWAKE, awake; put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city; for henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean.

Shake thyself from the dust; arise, and sit down, O Jerusalem: loose thyself from the bands of thy neck, O captive daughter of Zion.

How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!

THE MAN OF SORROWS
liii

WHO hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed? For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows; yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living; for the transgression of my people was he stricken. And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth.

HO, EVERY ONE THAT THIRSTETH
lv, 1—2, 6—9

HO, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness.

Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near: let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.

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Isaiah

II

The Story of the Book

Fiery Denunciation and Fervent Promise in an Age of Turmoil

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As in the case of some of the other books of the Old Testament, the Book of Isaiah is of a composite character, and its origins must, therefore, be sought in different directions. But here the question arises: Granting, with every modern Old Testament scholar, that this book contains material belonging to different ages and from the hands of different writers, how comes it that it has all been placed together under the name of Isaiah? This is to be accounted for in several ways. We can touch only briefly on these, for to deal with them in detail would demand discussions too technical and lengthy to be set forth here; but even a cursory glance will show that the subject of origins is involved.

When the prophet Isaiah came among his people to teach, and exhort, and denounce, it stands to reason that he addressed them by word of mouth; and this took place during a period of at least forty years, so that the utterances were both intermittent and independent. How, when, and by whom were they reduced to writing? Our book gives us some slight indication of this; but slight as it is, the passages in question are very instructive. The first is viii, 1 (R.V.), where we read: "And the LORD said unto me, Take thee a great tablet, and write upon it with the pen of a man . . ." which means that the writing was to be of such a kind that the ordinary man might be able to read it; as distinct, presumably, from the kind of writing to be referred to in the next passage we shall consider. As to this first passage, however, we are not here concerned with the contents of the writing, nor with the prophet's purpose in thus inscribing it, but simply with the fact that we have here one of the ways in which the prophet's utterances were preserved; an unusual way, it is true, and doubtless exceptional.

But as to the kind of writing, a very instructive illustration is afforded by the recently discovered Lachish tablets; these writings, scratched on pieces of glazed pottery, suggest, among other things, that the style of writing was not uncommon at that time (they belong to the seventh century B.C.), and, as the passage before us shows, this is also likely to be true of Isaiah's time, a century earlier. It would have been a rough, but fairly large, script, legible to many who could not read the ordinary written style of the more cultured.

To this latter reference is made in our second passage, viii, 16 (R.V.): "Bind thou up the testimony, seal the law in my disciples," *i.e.*, the prophet's disciples are to be the depository of the testimony and teaching which he had delivered; but the phrases used, "bind up," or "tie up," and "seal," clearly indicate the way in which the disciples were to become the "depository": they are to tie up the rolls on which, as his disciples, they had written down his words, and they are to seal these collected documents as a precious record of his words for reference in later times (*see also* Chapters xxix, 11, 12; xxx, 8).

These two passages, then, enable us to see clearly enough one of the origins of our book, namely, a collection of parchment or papyrus rolls containing the prophet's discourses, delivered at different times, and gathered together by his disciples.

This, however, does not explain how it came about that a great deal of the material of our book which cannot have come from Isaiah is nevertheless gathered together under his name. To explain this it must be remembered, first, that before, and during, and after, the time of Isaiah there were many other prophets who worked among the people; and there is every reason to believe, as indicated in the second of the passages quoted above, that these prophets likewise had their disciples, who wrote down and preserved the discourses of their leaders. So that the rolls of many prophetical discourses were in existence, and they increased as time went on.

Further, it is certain that there were many prophets whose names have not come down to us, *see e.g.*, I. Kings xiii; it is impossible to believe that none of these left writings; the number of books in existence to which a prophet's name is attached shows that it was customary for prophets to have their utterances set down in writing; and if their names were not recorded, that was of secondary importance, provided their writings were preserved. We have, as an instructive example of this, the Book of Malachi, which is anonymous; Malachi is not a proper name, it means "my messenger" (*see* Malachi i, 1 and iii, 1), and would be applicable to any true prophet.

Gathering Together the Rolls of Prophecy

Now the Old Testament, as we now have it, shows that all the prophetical writings available were at one time gathered together; of the details of this process, and the period or periods at which it gradually took place, we know but little; but its consummation is clear before our eyes. Prior to this gathering-process we must picture to ourselves the existence of a number of independent rolls of prophetical writings, some with titles, and some anonymous. Through use, these rolls became damaged in course of time, and fresh copies had to be made of them; then it was that anonymous pieces became attached, in some cases, to those with titles, with the result that later they came to be regarded as belonging to the prophet under whose name they now appeared. Then there is also this further consideration; economy was demanded in the use of the parchment, or papyrus, on which the writings were copied; hence open spaces would be utilized by filling them up with material taken from some other book.

This can be very interestingly illustrated. A few years ago a 14th century manuscript came to light containing a doctrinal dissertation, in poetical form, by the Nestorian Bishop Elijah of Anbar (he died in A.D. 940). In the middle of the dissertation (between parts i and ii) there is an insertion of five psalms in Syriac; these psalms have nothing to do with the dissertation; they are of distinct importance, as there is every reason to believe that they belong to the Psalms literature of the Old Testament; in fact, one of them is Psalm cli, preserved in the Septuagint.

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It is certain, from the form of the Syriac, that these psalms were originally translated from Hebrew.

From our present point of view the interesting thing is that these psalms are inserted in the middle of the doctrinal dissertation, written many centuries later, and with which they have nothing to do. The reason why this was done was because on an early manuscript of the dissertation a blank space had been left after Part I ; this was utilized in later days by a scribe for writing down the five psalms ; it was done for economy's sake because parchment was not always easily procurable ; other instances of a similar procedure exist. If, then, as late as the 14th century A.D. we find that vacant spaces on manuscripts were utilized for the purpose of preserving valuable scraps of composition whose authors were unknown, it cannot cause surprise if the same thing was done many centuries earlier when materials for writing were much scarcer.

Finally, there is, in this connexion, one other thing to be noted : in the Book of Genesis we have, among other narratives, a collection of traditions concerning Israel's patriarchs ; although in later times the whole of the Pentateuch was ascribed to Moses, the collector, or collectors, of these traditions would never have supposed that Moses could have composed writings about occurrences which happened centuries before he was born ; yet the Pentateuch became known as " The Five Books of Moses."

Again, in the Book of Psalms there are a number of collections of sacred songs written by various psalmists living at very different times ; but the collector, or collectors, of these would not have dreamed of ascribing all these to David, as can be seen, for example, by the words in Psalm lxxii, 20 : " The prayers of David, the son of Jesse, are ended ; " yet the whole book came to be known as " The Psalms of David."

And, once more, in the Book of Proverbs there are various collections of wise sayings ascribed in the titles to different authors, so that the collector, or collectors, could not have supposed that Solomon wrote them ; yet the book opens with the words : " The proverbs of Solomon, the son of David, King of Israel." Therefore, just as we have collections of patriarchal traditions, sacred songs, and wise sayings, belonging to different times and different authors, gathered together, respectively, under the names of Moses, the great religious leader, David, the great psalmist, and Solomon, the great sage ; so we have collections of prophetical discourses, belonging to different times and different authors, gathered together under the name of Isaiah, the greatest of the prophets.

It is hoped that this will have explained how it has come about that there are many passages in our book which did not originally figure in it. What has been said points also to one of the origins of the book, as indicated in the book itself.

How the Word of the Lord Came to Isaiah

BUT the ultimate origin of all the prophetic writings is to be sought in divine communications accorded in ecstatic vision ; and in the case of Isaiah this has been so wonderfully set forth that some detailed consideration of it is demanded. If we touch here, to some extent, on the teaching of the prophet, that is unavoidable.

Isaiah was one day standing in the inner court of the Temple, his eyes directed towards the Holy of Holies, called the *Debir*, or innermost chamber. His mind was sunk in meditation ; his thoughts were concentrated upon God ; and he was also thinking of his own people, so unworthy, because of national sin, to be the people of God. Suddenly his eyes closed and he was transported, in ecstasy, to the heavenly spheres. While his mortal body stood in unconscious immobility, his spirit was supernaturally vivified ; his inner vision was opened, and his spiritual consciousness became supernormally active. And he gazed, but not with bodily eye, upon the presence of the Almighty : " I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple,"—so in after days he attempted to describe the indescribable.

Human language was, naturally enough, totally inadequate to express the spiritual experience. That is inevitable. It was the same, centuries later, with St. Paul ; he had a similar experience, and, in halting words, tried to express what he had seen and heard, but could not ; he said he had heard words which it was not possible for a man to utter ; meaning that it was outside the scope of human language to express spiritual utterances (II. Corinthians xii, 1-4 R.V. " which it is not lawful for a man to utter " conveys an erroneous impression).

Human Speech Falters before the Ineffable

ISAIAH'S attempt to speak of what he had witnessed is very instructive because we are able to see the incongruities, the inevitable incongruities, which arise when trying to put the transcendental into human speech ; he speaks of the Lord as sitting upon a throne ; but how can He Who is pure spirit be thought of as " sitting " ? Yet how else was Isaiah to express it ? He speaks of the " train "—the Hebrew word is " skirts "—of the Almighty.

We should almost be inclined to think of that as irreverent, did we not realize the impossibility of describing what had been seen. But as Isaiah was impelled to tell of his experience he had no alternative but to use human language and human ideas with their tremendous limitations. So he says : " his train filled the temple " ; he is not, of course, speaking of the temple in which his body was standing ; it is a heavenly temple which becomes spiritually visible. Then he goes on to describe the spiritual beings in the presence of the Almighty ; here again he is forced to use human language and human ideas ; for how can he know the nature of these spiritual ministers of the Lord ? So he describes them as Seraphim because the people had long known by tradition of semi-divine beings called by this name. But the picture he draws of them is intended to express the glory and majesty of God in Whose presence even the most exalted of spiritual beings stand in humble reverence : " Each one had six wings ; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly "—fly, that is, to fulfil the behests of the Almighty.

And he continues : " And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts : the whole earth is full of his glory." At the sound of their mighty voices Isaiah seems to feel the ground trembling under him ; and as they shout in praise, smoke, as it were, proceeds from their mouths, for, as the prophet says, " the house was filled with smoke." The Seraphim, because of their mighty power, send forth their breath like smoke when they raise their voices in praise ; so it appears to the prophet. The three-fold repetition of " Holy " implies that the host of the Seraphim took up the shout of praise in antiphonal emulation, declaring the glory of God. And as it is in Heaven, so, as the Seraphim sing, does His glory fill the earth : " The whole earth is full of his glory."

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"MERODACH-BALADAN SENT A PRESENT TO HEZEKIAH." Chaldean king of Babylonia, 721 to 709 B.C., Merodach-baladan sought an alliance with Hezekiah against Assyria. To his embassy were displayed the treasure and armoury of Jerusalem (Isaiah xxxix, 2.) This proceeding showed that Hezekiah was willing to enter into such an alliance, and brought stern rebuke from Isaiah who presaged the danger to Judah of intrigue with foreign nations to throw off Assyrian suzerainty. On this tablet Merodach-baladan is represented (left) with a Babylonian magnate.

British Museum

Then, in great fear, the prophet speaks: "Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts." The two points of special note here are that, with absolutely true instinct, Isaiah feels his unworthiness as a human being in the presence of the heavenly beings; and, secondly, this is emphasized by his being indissolubly connected with his people; he may be, undoubtedly feels, that he is far above them in his zeal for God and the right—but still, as a member of a sinful nation from which he cannot dissociate himself, he is utterly unworthy, even in ecstasy, to be in the presence of the Almighty and His host of heavenly beings.

The emphasis laid on the *lips* is significant; with the tongue, or lips (which means the same thing) praise is given to God, *but* also acknowledgement of *false gods*; Isaiah knows that *he* is not guilty of this, but he cannot dissociate himself from his nation, the great bulk of which had been, and still was, guilty of idolatry, *i.e.*, in the acknowledgement and worship of other gods. That is why he says that both he and his people are of "unclean lips." After he has spoken the words just quoted, the account goes on: "Then flew one of the seraphim unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar; and he touched my mouth with it, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged." That iniquity should be taken away and sin purged by such means has worried some commentators quite unnecessarily: it is simply a symbolic way of expressing the truth that where there is confession of sin as the outcome of sorrow for sin, there is forgiveness, the sin is burned away, as it were. Isaiah, as we have just seen, had confessed his sense of sinfulness; and the picture of the purifying efficacy of fire was one which was quite familiar in those days (*see e.g.*, Numbers xxxi, 21-23).

THEN the account of the vision continues, and Isaiah hears the voice of the Most High asking who will act as His messenger to proclaim His message to the people; this is put in question form, not as a command, in order to emphasize the free-will of Isaiah to undertake whatsoever it shall please the Almighty to ask of him: "And I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" And Isaiah replies: "Here am I; send me." Then Isaiah receives his commission. The words, put into the mouth of God, which follow, present, at first sight, a real difficulty: "And he (*i.e.*, God) said: 'Go and say to this people, Hearken continually, but understand not, and see ye continually, but perceive not. Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and be healed again!'"

As these words stand in our translation they sound very cruel; they are not cruel, but they tell a very terrible truth. They will be more easily understood if rendered in this way; Isaiah is to say to the people: "Ye will hearken continually (*i.e.*, to the message that I shall deliver), but ye *will* not understand; and ye will see continually, but ye *will* not perceive"; that simply means: you will hear what I say, but you will not make the slightest attempt to understand it or to act upon it.

That is precisely what had been the case in the past when earlier prophets had spoken; and Isaiah, with his knowledge of what had been, and with his foresight, knew only too well how it would be in the future. Where

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there is a definite setting of oneself against all knowledge of God, and the wilful purpose of not doing according to His will, there results ultimately an absolute inability to attain to the one and to avoid the other. The habit of unbelief and the habit of evil-doing become second nature; and that obstinate second nature is only intensified in its obstinacy when the attempt is made to recall it to something better.

The divine intention was never that the people whom He had chosen should ignore his revelation; but it was in accordance with the divine purpose that continued defiance of His will should be punished by incapacity to abandon it. That is why it is said: "Make the heart of this people fat, and their ears heavy . . ."; in form it is a command, but actually it is a statement of psychological fact of what is bound to happen in the case of the people being in the spiritual state in which they were in Isaiah's time.

In face of this we can well understand Isaiah's despairing words: "Then said I, LORD, how long?" Possibly, however, there gleams through these mournful words a flickering hope that a time may come when the heart of the people may turn, and healing may be vouchsafed to them. But no, it is too late now; and the answer comes: "Until cities be waste without inhabitant, and houses without man, and the land become utterly waste." And so it happened.

That is the end of the vision. We have devoted considerable space to it, but not without reason. First, because it is a most instructive example of the kind of ecstatic and realistic vision which at times was experienced by the prophets; it is an intermingling of the supernatural with human ideas of a perfectly normal character; and that is just what is to be expected. Secondly, because it tells of the occasion on which Isaiah was called by God for the work to which he was destined. And thirdly, because it gives us some insight into the prophet's character; he was a man to whom the reality of the existence of God was overpowering, and, as such, he towered above the great mass of his contemporaries in holiness of living, in his conception of God, and in his realization of the spiritual world. Very striking, too, is his attitude when confronted with the nature of his mission; he knows beforehand that it will be in vain, at any rate during his lifetime, yet he does not flinch. He was one of those grand men who strive in zeal and single-heartedness, irrespective of what may come. Success, reward? They do not come into consideration where the one all-absorbing aim is to carry out the will of God.

Isaiah's vision is not to be regarded as the clothing of an idea in symbolic form, nor as the pictorial representation of a conception, as has been held by some; it was an experience, a fact of actual occurrence to the prophet. The terse account, the vivid expression, the inability to interpret adequately, so different from the long-drawn-out descriptions and allegorical pictures met with in the vision-accounts of some of the later prophets, bear witness to its having been a potent reality to the prophet Isaiah.

It is in this revelation of God to Isaiah that the true and ultimate origin of our book is to be sought.

Kings & Peoples in Isaiah's Oracle

ACCORDING to the superscription of the book Isaiah's activity was exercised during the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah; there is some uncertainty as to their exact dates, but the following may be given as approximately correct: Uzziah, 786–744, but from 757–744 his son, Jotham, was co-regent; as sole ruler Jotham reigned from 744–741; his son, Ahaz, from 741–725; his son, Hezekiah, from 725–696.

For the proper understanding of the Book of Isaiah some knowledge of the historical background is absolutely essential. We shall, therefore, take a brief glance at the history of each of these reigns.

The reign of Uzziah was a prosperous one. The Assyrians under Ashurdan had broken the power of Syria, so that Israel had nothing to fear from that country; the Assyrians had to withdraw from the west owing to troubles in other parts of their empire; it followed that both Israel and Judah were left free to develop in their own way. We are concerned only with the southern kingdom. In II. Kings xiv, 22, it is recorded that Uzziah "built Elath, and restored it to Judah." Elath was in Edomite territory, a seaport situated at the extreme north of the Aelanitic Gulf, *i.e.*, the north-eastern arm of the Red Sea; that meant, therefore, a considerable extension of territory for Judah. Further, according to II. Chronicles xxvi, 6-8, Uzziah fought with success against the Philistines, and built cities in their land; the Arabians and Ammonites were also subdued; it is said that "his name spread abroad even to the entering in of Egypt;" that means, to the extreme south-west of Palestine; thus "he waxed exceeding strong."

Uzziah also did much for the economic welfare of his people; the details of this are given in II. Chronicles xxvi, 10, where it is said that "he loved husbandry." It was in the year 757 that Uzziah was stricken with leprosy; the royal duties therefore devolved upon his son, Jotham, though he still continued to hold the title of king. The reign of Uzziah is so far important from our present point of view in that, when Isaiah began his ministry in the year that Uzziah died, 744, he found himself in the midst of a people whom the prosperity of that reign had debauched, graphically described in Isaiah ii, 5-22; v, 1-24.

Of the short reign of Jotham the Book of Kings tells us almost nothing, but according to II. Chronicles xxvii, 1-9, he continued the work of his father; the details of his reign there given, however, cannot be relied upon as authentic. In II. Kings xv, 37 it is said that he was threatened by Rezin, the king of Syria, and Pekah, the king of Israel.

Before we come to the reign of Ahaz a word must be said about Assyria. Under the vigorous king Tiglath-Pileser (745-728) this country was becoming more and more powerful, and dark clouds were beginning to loom on the horizon for both Israel and Judah. Tiglath-Pileser subdued his most dangerous enemy, the Armenian kingdom of Urartu, during the years 743-739. This accomplished, he was free to turn his attention to the west, which he determined to conquer. In the year 738 he defeated Rezin of Damascus, the capital of Syria, from whom he received tribute. An Assyrian force also marched against Samaria; but as the Israelite king, Menahem, undertook to pay tribute, thereby acknowledging Tiglath-Pileser's suzerainty, the Assyrians withdrew (II. Kings xv, 17–20).

About a couple of years after this, Menahem died; his son, Pekahiah, after a short reign, was murdered by his captain, Pekah, the son of Remaliah, who usurped the throne of Israel. Pekah was evidently a forceful, though unscrupulous man, and chafed under the Assyrian yoke;

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and he determined to withdraw his allegiance to Assyria. For this purpose he entered into an alliance with the king of Syria, Rezin, who was equally anxious to gain his indpendence. But they both felt that to ensure success it was necessary for the southern kingdom of Judah to join them. They set about, therefore, to achieve this purpose. This brings us to the reign of Ahaz.

We have just seen that the Kings of Syria and Israel had attempted to force Jotham, the father of Ahaz, to join their alliance; but apparently he died before any decision could be taken, so that as soon as Ahaz came to the throne, these two approached him with a similar purpose. But Ahaz refused, and this brought upon him the vengeance of these two rulers. Rezin, we are told, took Elath (II. Kings xvi, 6), and incited the Edomites and the Philistines to attack Judah; we read in II. Chron. xxviii, 17-19 (R.V.) "For again the Edomites had come and smitten Judah, and carried away captives. The Philistines also had invaded the cities of the lowland, and of the South of Judah, and had taken Beth-shemesh, and Aijalon . . ." After this preparatory step the confederates joined forces and invaded Judah; an army was sent against them by Ahaz, but was defeated; thereupon the allied armies came farther south, and laid siege to Jerusalem (II. Kings, xvi, 5).

It is in Isaiah vii-ix that this Syro-Ephraimite invasion of Judah is spoken of; there we read: "And it was told the house of David (= Ahaz), saying, Syria is confederate with Ephraim. And his heart was moved, and the heart of his people, as the trees of the wood are moved with the wind" (vii, 2). We learn from Isaiah vii, 6 that the object of these confederates was to dethrone Ahaz, and to place on the throne of Judah a certain man spoken of as "the son of Tabeal" (Septuagint Tabeel), of whom nothing is otherwise told us, though it is quite possible that he headed the conspiracy against Ahaz referred to in Isaiah viii, 12; as the nominee of the confederates this man would doubtless have supported them in their revolt against Assyria.

Words of Good Cheer for King Ahaz

JERUSALEM then was besieged, and Isaiah vii, 3-9 gives us the picture of Ahaz going to inspect the water supply, when he is met by Isaiah, who comes to encourage him and to give him confidence in his present straits: "Take heed," he says to Ahaz, "and be quiet; fear not, neither let thine heart be faint, because of these two tails (ends) of smoking firebrands, for the fierce anger of Rezin and Syria, and of the son of Remaliah."

The fact is, Ahaz had no need to be afraid; he was entrenched in the strongest fortress in the land, which could easily hold out for months; his enemies, on the other hand, were in a desperate hurry to get a third ally without whom they knew they could not withstand Assyria. They had revolted against their suzerain, and Tiglath-Pileser was not the man to let the grass grow under his feet.

All that Ahaz had to do was to "be quiet," to sit still, for a few weeks, and the allies would be scampering away before the Assyrian army. Realizing this, the prophet does his utmost to calm Ahaz; but in vain. Ahaz believes that his one hope of safety lies in making friends with Assyria: "So Ahaz sent messengers to Tiglath-Pileser, king of Assyria, saying, I am thy servant and thy son: come up, and save me out of the hand of the king of Syria, and out of the hand of the king of Israel, which rise up against me. And Ahaz took the silver, and gold that was found in the house of the LORD, and in the treasures of the king's house, and sent it for a present to the king of Assyria" (II. Kings xvi, 7, 8).

His request was immediately complied with by Tiglath-Pileser, for it fell in entirely with his own purpose of conquering the west country; and the confederates suffered a terrible fate; the whole of Syria and Phoenicia were ravaged; Damascus fell in 732; the kingdom of Israel was over-run, and masses of the people were carried away captive. Pekah continued for a short time as vassal king, but was then murdered by Hoshea (II. Kings, xv, 29, 30), who occupied the throne; but the land was organized into Assyrian provinces, and Hoshea was but a shadow-king; and before long the kingdom of Israel became a thing of the past.

But we have anticipated a little. Ahaz was delivered from his enemies, it is true; but his lot was far from enviable; as the vassal of Assyria, great burdens were placed upon him; these are described in II. Kings xvi, 17, 18; he must have been greatly impoverished; it is said in II. Chronicles xxviii, 19: "The Lord brought Judah low because of Ahaz." He died in 725.

Hezekiah's Place in the Prophecies

COMING now to the reign of Hezekiah, we must note that the chronology, as given in the Old Testament, has become involved and cannot be relied upon. One thing, however, is certain, and that is that Hezekiah came to the throne of Judah as a very young man, probably under twenty years of age. There is no doubt that for many years peace reigned during his kingship; he came to the throne in 725, and presumably followed the example of his father in recognizing the overlordship of Assyria. Nothing is told us about his reign until the year 713, when, in common with the Philistines, Edomites and Moabites, a movement arose to throw off the Assyrian yoke with the help of Egypt.

The folly of this attempt is shown by Isaiah in chapter xx of his book. The revolters were punished; but for some reason, hitherto unexplained, there is no evidence of Judah having been invaded. Fear of Assyria kept the western nations quiet until the death of the Assyrian king, Sargon, in 705. He was succeeded by Sennacherib, and the change of ruler was the sign for renewed unrest. Foremost here was the vassal king of Babylon, Merodach-baladan; he was supported by the Elamites, the Aramaeans of Mesopotamia, and various Arab tribes; but he also sought the help of the western nations.

To this time belongs his embassy to Hezekiah, spoken of in II. Kings xx, 12-19 and Isaiah xxxix, 1-8; in the former passage we are told that "Hezekiah hearkened unto them, and shewed them all the house of his precious things, the silver, and the gold . . . there was nothing in his house, nor in all his dominion, that Hezekiah shewed them not . . ." For the envoys of the declared rebel against Assyria to be received so open-heartedly meant that Hezekiah intended to join in the revolt; for the present, however, he hesitated as he wished to be assured of Egyptian help.

Then it was that Isaiah, though now too late, came forward to dissuade Hezekiah from his undertaking: "Woe to the rebellious children, saith the Lord, that take counsel, but not of me"; the words which follow (Isaiah xxx, 1), "and that cover with a covering" are quite misleading; the margin (in the Revised Version), however, gives three alternative renderings: "that weave a web," which would refer to secret negotiations; secondly,

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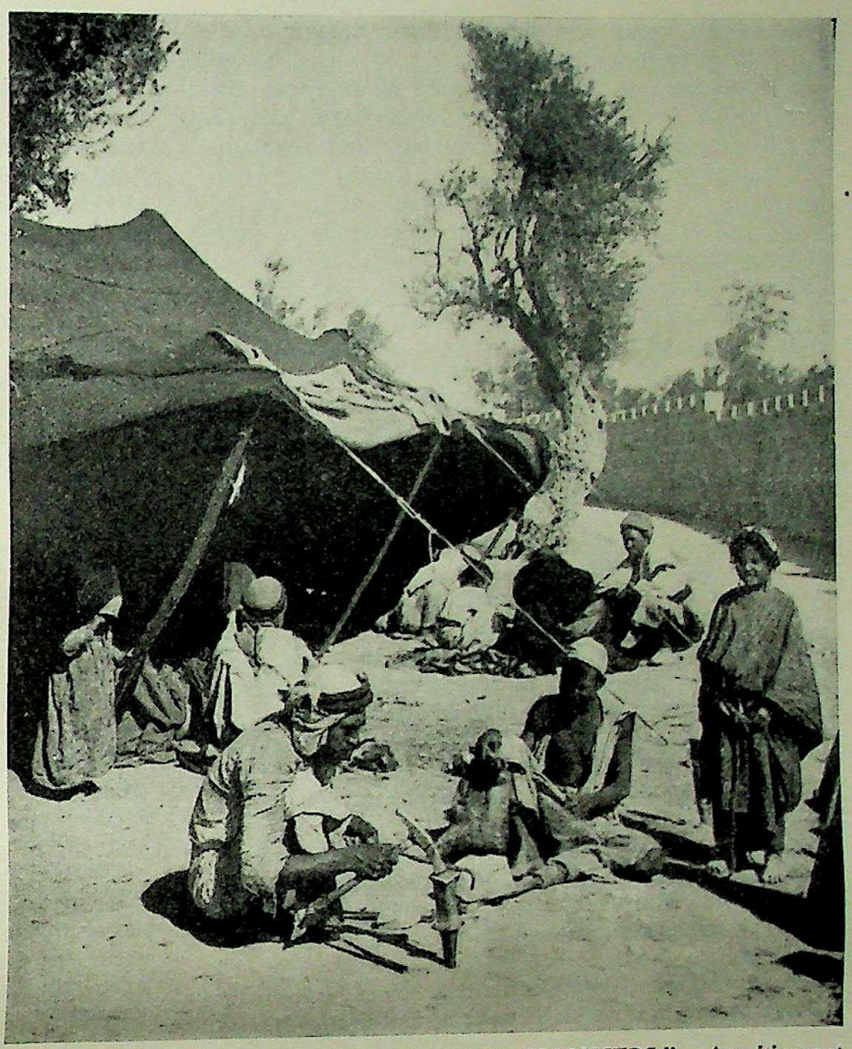
"that pour out a drink-offering," which was the act whereby a treaty was ratified; and thirdly, "which make a league." In any case, the reference is to Hezekiah's alliance with Egypt; he had already taken this unwise step, for the passage goes on to speak of those "that walk to go down to Egypt, and have not asked at my mouth, to seek refuge in the refuge of Pharaoh, and to trust in the shadow of Egypt. Therefore shall the refuge of Pharaoh be your shame, and the trust in the shadow of Egypt your confusion" (Isaiah xxx, 1-3). It then goes on to refer to the embassies sent by Hezekiah; the two places mentioned, Zoan and Hanes, show that more than one intrigue was on foot; Zoan (= Tanis) was in the north-east of Egypt, Hanes lay to the south of Memphis.



"THE SMITH FASHIONETH IT WITH HAMMERS." An itinerant Beduin blacksmith who has pitched his tent outside a village is here seen at work with hammer and anvil. In the Book of Isaiah are various references to workers in metal. Soldering and rivetting, use of bellows for the iron-smelting furnace heated by charcoal, sledge-hammer, anvil, and the strength of the smith's arms, are all mentioned (Isaiah xli, 7; xliv, 12; liv, 16). The Hebrew smith forged copper (brass), bronze, and iron, manufacturing gates, fetters, knives, cooking pans, weapons of war, metal plates for chariots, and armour.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

THIS revolt was joined by the Philistines, Ammonites, Moabites and Edomites, as well. But the movement, as doubtless Isaiah saw, had not been prepared with sufficient care, and there was no organized system of resistance, so that the Assyrian king was able to checkmate it at once. He moved victoriously down the Mediterranean coast, first attacking Tyre and Zidon; their defeat disheartened the others; the kings of the Ammonites, of the Moabites, and of the Edomites, brought tribute and paid homage to their overlord. The cities of Philistia were attacked and overcome. Sennacherib's speedy advance southwards had the effect of preventing the western and eastern revolted kingdoms from joining forces; he was thus able to deal with them piecemeal; and this applies with special force to the southern enemy, Egypt; for the Egyptians were, by Sennacherib's speedy movement, cut off from joining their allies. The Egyptians had, indeed, begun to move, but they were met by the Assyrians at Eltekeh, in the lowland of Judah, and badly defeated, so that they fled back to their own land.

All the kingdoms which had revolted were thus crushed, with one exception: having dealt successfully with the enemies mentioned, Sennacherib turned to Judah. In Isaiah i, 2-17, which belongs to this time, we get a picture of the dismay of the inhabitants of Jerusalem as they realized that nothing stood now between the Assyrian army and their city.

Isaiah utilizes the subdued state of mind of the people of Jerusalem to bring home to them their careless life and disregard of God; he cries out in their hearing: "Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth, for the LORD hath spoken; 'I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me. The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib; but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider'" (i, 2, 3); in other words, they are more stupid than the beasts of burden who instinctively know who looks after them.

In verses 7, 8 the prophet gives a picture of the devastated condition to which the Assyrian army has reduced the country, and of the isolation of Jerusalem in the midst of it: "Your country is desolate; your cities are burned with fire; your land, strangers devour it in your presence" (R.V.)—these last words are very significant; they dare not come out of the city on account of the ravaging Assyrian hordes, and so they are described as impotently watching what is going on without being able to help their unfortunate fellow-countrymen. And of Jerusalem Isaiah speaks in bitter irony: "The daughter of Zion is left as a booth in a vineyard, as a lodge in a garden of cucumbers, as a besieged city"—this last expression, "*as* a besieged city," is also very pointed because, as a matter of fact, the city was not yet surrounded by the Assyrians, the actual siege had not begun; but Jerusalem was just *like* a besieged city because the people dared not come out of the walls.

Isaiah's reference here to the desolate state of the country is grimly illustrated by one of Sennacherib's inscriptions; on what is known as the Taylor Cylinder (now in the British Museum) this king says: "But as for Hezekiah of Judah, who had not submitted to my yoke, forty-six of his strong cities, together with numberless fortresses and small towns in their neighbourhood, I invested and took by means of battering rams and the assault of scaling ladders (or 'siege-towers'), the attack of the foot-soldiers, mines, bills, and axes. I brought from the midst of them and counted as spoil 200,150 persons, young and old, male and female, horses, mules,

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asses, camels, oxen, and sheep without number . . ." This belongs to the year 701.

In Jerusalem, as the prophet goes on to show, the people sought to make amends and to propitiate Jehovah by piling up sacrifices in the belief that this would assuredly incline Him to intervene, and to avert the threatened evil. The folly of this is drastically set forth by the prophet: "To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the LORD; I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he-goats . . . Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me; new moon and sabbath, the calling of assemblies I cannot away with—iniquity and solemn assembly!" (He means, what an incongruity!) "Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth . . ."; and he ends with an appeal to the people to amend their ways: "Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings; cease to do evil; learn to do well." Thus does the prophet utilize the present calamity to move the hearts of the now panic-stricken people.

Very soon after this the Assyrian army invested Jerusalem and blockaded it. Sennacherib himself had remained in Lachish, a city in the lowland country about twenty-five miles south-west of Jerusalem; but he sent a detachment of his army to reduce Jerusalem. Hezekiah would have held out if he could, but his soldiers began deserting to the enemy, and he saw there was nothing for it but to submit. So he sent an ambassy to Sennacherib at Lachish, saying: "I have offended; return from me: that which thou puttest on me will I bear" (II. Kings xviii, 14). Sennacherib accepted Hezekiah's submission, though the tribute imposed was a heavy one.

But almost immediately after this Sennacherib seems to have broken faith with Hezekiah, and sent a "great army" against Jerusalem, demanding unconditional surrender. In this strait Hezekiah sought counsel from Isaiah, who advised him to stand firm and not to surrender. This advice Hezekiah wisely followed. Almost immediately after a plague broke out in the Assyrian army, and a false rumour spread that an attack from Egypt was pending; but most serious of all, news was received by Sennacherib that Merodach-baladan had once more invaded Babylonia. This made it imperative for Sennacherib to hasten back to Nineveh. Thus, quite unexpectedly, Jerusalem was freed from all danger.

On the Morrow of Sennacherib's Disaster

WE can understand the exultation of the people in Jerusalem; the sudden disappearance of the enemy; the wearing anxiety lifted; the possibility of breathing freely again; it was grand, and the people gave full vent to their delight. Nevertheless, it was utterly misplaced; they were thinking solely of themselves; but what about the plight of their countrymen outside of Jerusalem? What about the fleeing soldiers of Judah, routed by the Assyrians? What about the dead and dying strewn all over the countryside? What about the thousands of their compatriots—men, women, and children—carried captive in the hands of the Assyrians? What about the ruined cities, the burning homesteads, the devastated fields? No, it was no time for rejoicing: "What aileth thee now?" cries Isaiah to the city gone mad, "What aileth thee now, that thou art wholly gone up to the house-tops? Thou that art full of shoutings, a tumultuous city, a joyous town. Thy slain are not slain with the sword, neither are they dead in battle" (Isaiah xxii, 1, 2 R.V.); he is thinking, of course, of the masses slaughtered by the Assyrians; and then he reminds them of the flight of the Judaean army, and of those taken prisoner—was that any occasion for rejoicing? "All thy rulers fled away together, they fled afar off; all thy mighty ones were taken, together with thy archers" (amended text, Isaiah xxii, 3). It was no time for rejoicing, but for sorrow (Isaiah xxii, 4 R.V.).

What happened during the remaining four or five years of the life of Hezekiah we do not know, but the land was evidently left in peace. This completes, therefore, in general outline, the historical background of that part of our book which belongs to Isaiah.

The Doctrine of God in Isaiah's Message

TO some extent there is, as is to be expected, identity of teaching on the subject of God among all the prophets; but each prophet emphasizes one or more attributes of God which thus become characteristic, as being outstanding in his doctrinal presentation.

In the case of Isaiah, a very cursory examination of his book shows that his dominant conception of God is expressed in the words: *Holiness, Majesty, Glory;* with which there is indissolubly connected the thought of divine *Righteousness.* His earliest utterance is: "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory" (vi, 3). The expression, "the glory of his majesty" is a frequent phrase (*see* ii, 10, 19, 21), and likewise his description of God as "the Holy One of Israel," which occurs several times (*e.g.*, v, 24; xxx, 11, 15). These and other passages express explicitly Isaiah's fundamental conception of God; but it is implicit in many others. And this teaching which, as we have said, is not absent from the thoughts of others of the prophets, is Isaiah's special contribution to the Old Testament doctrine of God.

Joined to it indissolubly is the divine attribute of righteousness; that, it is true, is again common to all the prophets; for they were concerned to emphasize the immeasurable contrast between the absence of moral demands on the part of the imaginary deities of the popular religion, and the indispensable requirements of the All-Holy Who was the All-Righteous—we say, imaginary deities of the popular religion, but it will, of course, be understood that they were real both to the people and to the prophets in pre-exilic times. So Isaiah says in the name of God: "I will make justice (not 'judgement,' as the R.V. renders the word) the line, and righteousness the plummet; and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall flood the secret place (of falsehood)" (xxviii, 17).

Elsewhere the prophet says: "The LORD is a God of justice; blessed are they that wait for him" (xxx, 18); justice and righteousness are practically synonymous terms. It follows necessarily that the God of justice and righteousness is One to Whom every form of evil is abhorrent, and that He is, therefore, a righteous Judge Who wields righteous judgement and punishes evil-doers: "The Lord standeth up to strive (a forensic term), yea, he treadeth forth to judge the peoples. The LORD will enter into judgement with the elders of his people, and with the princes thereof" (iii, 13, 14); that is a thought frequently expressed by Isaiah (v, 5ff.; ix, 17ff.; 27ff.).

Nevertheless, Isaiah is not forgetful of the divine attributes of loving kindness and mercy: "Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule with justice. And a man shall be as an hiding-

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place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land"; the prophet is speaking of the time of peace and happiness which God will grant to those of His people who are faithful to Him. And what words could more beautifully express God's loving condescension and mercy than i, 18, 19, where the prophet, speaking in the name of God, says: "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."

The next thing to note in Isaiah's teaching is that God is the *God of History*. This, too, is a doctrine common to all the prophets; but attention must be drawn to the way in which Isaiah sets it forth. Thus, for example, he tells of how God will bring Ethiopia and Assyria, symbolically described as the "fly" and the "bee," as scourges upon the people of Judah (vii, 18-20): "In that day shall the Lord shave with a razor that is hired in the parts beyond the river (*i.e.*, the land beyond the Euphrates—Assyria) the head and the hair of the feet, and it shall also consume the beard." The picture is a realistic one, picturing the way in which God will use Assyria for making a clean sweep of the land.

In another striking passage, ix, 11, 12, it is said: "Therefore shall the Lord raise up against him (*i.e.*, Ephraim) an adversary, Rezin; and he will stir up his (*i.e.*, Ephraim's) enemies; the Syrians in front and the Philistines behind, that they devour Israel with open mouth"; the reference here is to Syria compelling Israel (Ephraim) to join in resisting the Assyrians, just as they together tried to force Judah to join them afterwards; this is not mentioned in II.Kings, but from this passage it would seem that Syria and Philistia together compelled the Israelites to join the alliance against Assyria. At any rate, the point is that the prophet teaches that this movement against the Israelites was guided by God.

Once more, in x, 5-9, Assyria is spoken of as God's instrument for punishing Judah; the words are put into the mouth of the Almighty: "Ho Assyrian, the rod of mine anger, the staff in whose hand is mine indignation! I will send him against a profane nation, and against the people of my wrath will I give him charge, to take the spoil, and to take the prey, and to tread him down like the mire of the streets" . . . But when the purpose for which Assyria has been used is accomplished, then Assyria, in its turn, shall be punished, since she ascribed her power to her own strength, and did not acknowledge Him Who ordained this: "For he hath said, By the strength of my hand I have done it, and by my wisdom; for I am prudent . . ." (x, 13ff. R.V.); thus speaks Assyria.

THEN, in the words in which the punishment of Assyria is proclaimed, we have the most striking passage in the book illustrative of the doctrine that God is the God of History; it is in xiv, 24-27: "The LORD of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand: that I will break the Assyrian in my land, and upon my mountains tread him under foot; . . . . This is the purpose that is purposed upon the whole earth; and this is the hand that is stretched out upon all the nations. For

"A COTTAGE IN A VINEYARD." Isaiah compares the isolation of Zion with the watchman's lonely booth in a vineyard (Isaiah i, 8). During the time of the grape harvest constant guard must be kept at night against spoliation of the vines by foxes and jackals. This watchman and his wife stand at the entrance of the stone hut which they have inhabited throughout the ingathering. In their baskets are some of the choicest fruit grown for local consumption. Scientific development of grape-cultivation is mainly restricted to the varieties suitable for raisins, for wine-making, and for concentrated grape-juice.

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the LORD of hosts hath purposed, and who shall disannul it? and his hand is stretched out, and who shall turn it back?"

It will be realized that this is a very important passage as illustrating the Isaianic doctrine. We are not now concerned with examining the tenability of that doctrine, but only with setting it forth; otherwise we should have to discuss how far in world history the divine will predominates, and in how far the divinely accorded gift of free-will to man is misused by man. Clearly that very big and difficult question cannot be dealt with here.

God Revealed as the Lord of Nature

THEN we come to a third element in Isaiah's doctrine of God, namely, that He is the *God of Nature*. Since the belief was firmly established that God was the Creator of all things, it might be urged that belief in Him as the God of Nature follows obviously, and needs no further discussion; to some extent that is true; but the deductions which the prophet draws from his belief in God as the God of Nature necessitates our considering the subject a little more closely. In speaking of the day of vengeance on the people for their wickedness, Isaiah says, in the name of God: "And men shall go into the caves of the rocks, and into the holes of the earth, from before the terror of the LORD, and from the glory of his majesty, when he ariseth to shake mightily the earth" (ii, 19 R.V.); the reference here is, obviously, to an earthquake which God will bring about.

In another and more striking passage (xxix, 6) it is said: "There shall be a visitation of the Lord of hosts, with thunder, and with earthquake, and great noise, with whirlwind and tempest, and the flame of a devouring fire." All the well-known and terrible accompaniments of an earthquake, like the earthquake itself, are thought of as being brought about by the direct interposition of the Almighty in the course of Nature, and for a particular object, similarly in xxx, 30. So that the prophet holds that, on occasion, God causes an earthquake or sends lightning, tempest, and hailstones, *ad hoc*, as it were.

As the Creator of all things, God, the prophet would say, could and did use such things for the specific purpose of punishing the wicked. It is a subject which suggests much thought. Even in these days, with our very greatly increased knowledge of natural laws and of the causes of natural phenomena, such as earthquakes, storms, rains, and so on, there are many people who see in such events special acts of God. So that we cannot be surprised at the prophet living many centuries ago, having such circumscribed ideas about the Divine activity.

We would not for a moment deny the truth of the prophet's belief in God as the God of Nature; we are only questioning the correctness of his *interpretation* of occurrences in the natural world. Clearly, if we believe that God is the God of Nature, the Creator of all things, we must believe, too, that all which happens in Nature is according to His will; but we must and do believe also that as the God of Nature, God created the laws of Nature; and the laws of Nature work irrespective of the doings, whether good or bad, of men: "He maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust" (Matthew v, 45).

It can, of course, be urged that if God made the laws of Nature, He can also, if it be His will, abrogate them, or alter them for specific purposes; but the words of Our Lord just quoted suggest that this is not the Divine method.

Isaiah's interpretation of Divine action in History and Nature may, thus, not have been altogether in accordance with actualities; but his conception of and teaching concerning the Personality of God were sublime.

Now we come to Isaiah's doctrine of the Messiah. In the prophet's teaching here there are some underlying conceptions of a spiritual nature which were ultimately realized; they are a witness to his living faith in God; but it must be recognized that he does not use the terms "Messiah" and "Messianic Age." He speaks of an ideal ruler who will rule over Israel in a happy time to come; but he does not apply to them the terms "Messiah" and "Messianic Age." Certain passages in his book have been interpreted in a Christian sense, but we are here concerned only with what they meant to Isaiah.

The Messianic Age and the Messiah belong together, but Isaiah does not always speak of them together. Let us first see how the prophet describes the future time of happiness which we call the Messianic Age.

"And it shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the LORD's house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow into it. And many peoples shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths. For out of Zion shall go forth instruction, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. And he shall judge between the nations, and decide concerning many peoples; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more" (ii, 2-4).

Again: "And the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the adder's den ['glittering eye']. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea" (xi, 6-9).

And, once more, to complete the picture: "And the eyes of them that see shall not be closed, and the ears of them that hear shall hearken. The heart also of the rash shall understand knowledge, and the tongue of the stammerers shall be ready to speak plainly . . . . Then justice shall dwell in the wilderness, and righteousness shall abide in the fruitful field. And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and confidence for ever. And my people shall abide in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting-places" (xxxii, 3, 4, 16-18).

Messianic Interpretation of Isaiah's Prophecies

WE have quoted all this in full, familiar as most of it is, because it is just these passages which have been interpreted in a Messianic sense. Natural as that interpretation is in the light of our conception of the ideal Kingdom of righteousness and peace taught by Our Lord, it must be recognized that to Isaiah they were not prophecies of the Messianic Age, but the lot of the purified people of Judah which issued from the faithful remnant. To Isaiah this time of bliss was coming in the near future; and the scene of its existence was to be the land of Judah.

His expectations were not realized; nevertheless, his words express faith in a divine purpose, and the subse-

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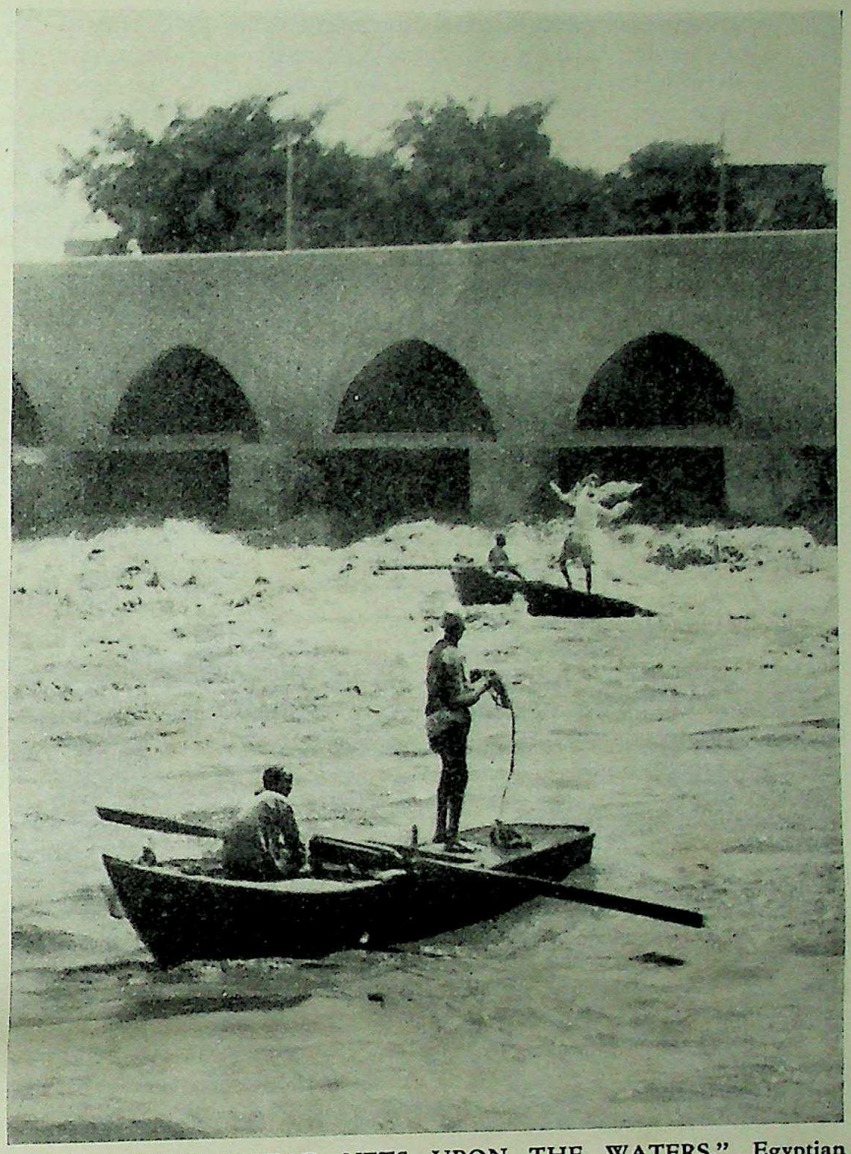
quent history of religious belief shows that this faith was justified. That divine purpose came about differently from what the prophet expected, more slowly, yet in a way which far exceeded anything that Isaiah conceived of. In the light of fuller revelation we can see how he was being guided, according to his capacity for apprehension, in a path that led ultimately to the fullness of truth; and in that sense the passages may be interpreted as Messianic.

Isaiah, in describing the time of happiness to come, speaks of one who will then be the ruler of the people. Of that wonderful figure we must think next, the central figure who makes that glorious time of righteousness, peace, and happiness, what it is. There are four passages in which he is spoken of; each demands some consideration. The first is vii, 14, 16: "Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; behold, a young woman hath conceived, and shall bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel . . . and before the child shall know to refuse the evil, and choose the good, the land whose two kings thou abhorrest shall be forsaken" (verse 15 seems to be a marginal note which has been put into the text, it breaks the logical sequence between verses 14 and 16).



"THEY THAT SPREAD NETS UPON THE WATERS." Egyptian fishermen cast their circular nets into the swift stream of the Nile below the barrage near Cairo. In the oracle on Egypt, Isaiah, prophesying that the river and its canals will dry up, causing the unemployment of the fishermen and famine in the land (Isaiah xix, 5-8), alludes to the Nile as the "sea." During the period of its inundation it would not be called a river by Hebrews accustomed to describe as a sea any wide stretch of water.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

LET us examine this passage without any preconceived notions. The first requisite is to consider the context in which it stands. Ahaz, king of Judah, is in great fear owing to the threatened invasion of his country by Rezin and Pekah, the kings of Syria and Israel, respectively. Isaiah is commanded by the Lord to adjure Ahaz not to be perturbed about the intentions of these two rulers, because what they threaten to do "shall not stand, neither shall it come to pass" (vii, 7); and he ends his harangue with the words: "If ye will not believe, ye shall not be established" (vii, 9).

Evidently Ahaz and his escort did not believe; for Isaiah goes on to challenge him to ask of God some sign, that is, some striking event in the natural world, whether from below, from Sheol, or from above, from heaven, which will prove to him that God is not forgetful of His people. Ahaz refuses to do this as being an unwarrantable request to make to the Almighty. This, being merely another proof of the king's lack of faith in God, prompts the prophet to declare that the Lord Himself will give a sign; a child shall be born, he says, who will receive the name of Immanuel, "God with us," and before the child can discern between good and evil, that is, in two or three years' time, the lands of the two kings in question will be devastated.

The significance of the sign lies in the name Immanuel, "God with us"; the name which the child is to receive is the guarantee, the earnest, that God will be among His people, and that therefore they will be safe from their enemies. Not only so, but for a child to receive such a name implies that he is to be no ordinary child; he is to be God's representative among the people. The prophet does not say so, but it is obviously implied, and the proof of this is seen in viii, 8, 10, where Immanuel is conceived of as the ruler of the people.

In the light of its context, that is the meaning of this passage. Perhaps it will be thought that this is a very matter-of-fact, uninspiring explanation; but we have tried to take the passage simply as we find it, without reading in any outside ideas. It may be asked what help such a sign would have been to Ahaz, seeing that it could not in any case occur for some months, whereas the *present* was the time of anxiety for him? To that, however, it can be replied that inasmuch as Ahaz had, by his want of faith, refused to ask for a sign which would have been given to him there and then, it was but fitting that he should now have to wait for it.

Then, to refer to another point; it need hardly be said, for the fact is so well known, that there is no question here of a virgin conceiving; the Hebrew word *'almah* means simply a young woman, or a young wife—in our passage, of course, the latter; but the figure of the mother here is wholly subordinate. Some commentators have supposed that the father was Isaiah, others hold that it was Ahaz; neither view has the slightest support in the text. That

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no father is mentioned, which would be the most obvious thing to look for in those days, only shows that the whole picture is an imaginary conception, framed by the prophet in order to place on record the truth that if God is with His people there is nothing to fear. It is the name, and what it implies, and the child who bears the name, that are the central points. As we shall see, the name and the child constitute in the mind of the prophet, the starting-point for his sublime conception of the ideal ruler in the time of happiness to come.

With the post-Biblical Messianic interpretations of this passage, Jewish and Christian, we are not here concerned, but only with Isaiah and his teaching; to him it is certain that the passage was not intended to be Messianic in our sense. This, however, must be added: the advent of our Lord was an illustration, in the spiritual sphere, of those gracious purposes of God towards His people in which Isaiah expressed such confident faith, and it verified in a pre-eminent degree the import of the name *Immanuel*.

'For unto us a Child is Born'

OUR next passage is: ix, 6, 7 (Hebrew 5, 6): "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called, Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and of peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness, from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts shall perform this."

This passage is preceded by a prophecy of the time when the Assyrian power will be broken and all the terrors of the Assyrian onslaught will have been brought to an end; and the prophet tells of the light that will dawn upon the troubled land; the time of happiness and prosperity will then come (ix, 1-5, Hebrew viii, 23—ix, 4); the description of him who will rule over all the land in that time then follows in the passage quoted.

In the words, "For unto us a child is born" we have the point of attachment with the conception of the child Immanuel; and the description of the ruler which follows shows the justification of the name Immanuel having been given to him; each of the titles given him is an illustration of the name "God with us." In considering the meaning of these titles we must guard ourselves against being influenced by the traditional meanings which have become attached to them; we must understand them in the sense of the Hebrew; that is, in the sense in which the prophet intended them to be understood.

"His name shall be called"; the titles which follow are not proper names like Immanuel; if they were the text would run, "and his names shall be called"; they are titles descriptive of the nature and personality of the ruler, as well as of the characteristics of his rule. The titles are four in number according to the Hebrew text, not five as in the Revised Version. "Wonderful Counsellor" (lit. "wonder of a counsellor"); that is, one whose directions and guidance will arouse the admiration of his subjects because of their wondrous wisdom and foresight.

"Mighty God"; this rendering of the Revised Version is calculated to give quite a wrong impression. The Hebrew expression is *el gibbor*, lit. "god of a mighty one," or "hero," similar in construction to "wonder of a counsellor"; but *el*, though normally meaning "God," is sometimes used in reference to human beings, as a comparison with God, to express the idea of might; for example, Ezekiel xxxi, 11: "I will deliver him into the hand of the mighty one (lit. 'a god') of the nations"; Job xli, 25 (Hebrew 17): "When he raiseth himself the mighty ones (lit. 'the gods') are afraid" (cp. also Genesis xxxiii, 10; I. Samuel xxix, 9; II. Samuel xiv, 17, 20; xix, 28 (Hebrew 27); Zechariah xii, 8). This title, therefore, means a god-like hero, or warrior; it does not connote anything in the nature of divinity.

"Everlasting Father"; this rendering is again misleading; one has but to remember that the prophet explicitly states that it is the Davidic throne which the ideal ruler is to occupy, in order to see that there is here no idea of eternity. The Hebrew word rendered "everlasting" (*'ad*) is often used in reference to men in the sense of long-enduring; *e.g.*, Psalm xxi, 6 (Hebrew 7): "Thou makest him blessings for ever," spoken of the king, *i.e.*, he is a means of prosperity for a long time; similarly in Amos i, 11; Isaiah xxvi, 4; xlvii, 7; Psalm ix, 18 (Hebrew 19); Psalm xxii, 26 (Hebrew 27); Psalm lxi, 8 (Hebrew 9); and elsewhere, the word is used in reference to human beings, and cannot therefore contain the idea of eternity.

The word "Father" in this title is used in the same sense as in Isaiah xxii, 21, where it is said of Eliakim: ". . . and I will commit thy government into his hand; and he shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and to the house of Judah," see also Job xxix, 16 and elsewhere. The construction of the title is similar to that of the preceding titles, and might therefore be rendered, "Father of long duration" or the like. It should be mentioned that the identical Hebrew word for "everlasting" means also "booty" or "prey," *e.g.*, Isaiah xxxiii, 23: ". . . then was the prey (*'ad*) of the great spoil divided," see also Genesis xlix, 27; Zephaniah iii, 8; accordingly, some commentators render this title "Father of Booty," in which case "Father" would connote "possessor," as in Job xvii, 14; it must be allowed that after the preceding title of god-like hero, or warrior, there is something to be said for this rendering.

Finally, we have the title "Prince of Peace." The full appropriateness of this title is seen when we recall the prophet's descriptions of the time of peace and prosperity which he envisages; we have dealt with these, and have seen how the prophet pictures that age as one of righteousness and of the knowledge of God which bring peace; peace among the nations ("they shall beat their swords into plough-shares"), peace among his own people ("and my people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting-places"), peace among the lower creation ("the wolf shall dwell with lamb"), and peace in the natural world (justice in the wilderness, righteousness in the fruitful field). A Prince of Peace in truth!

The Ideal Ruler as the Prophet sees Him

THESE four titles which the prophet gives to the ideal ruler may thus be rendered: "Wonderful Counsellor," "God-like Hero," "Father long-abiding," "Prince of Peace." We repeat that we are not dealing with the interpretations of these titles belonging to times subsequent to Isaiah; we have merely attempted to express their Hebrew connotation, and what they meant to the prophet. He tells us that he is describing an earthly ruler of the house of David—not the kingdom of God. But the ruler, though not divine, is superhuman.

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"AS A YOUNG MAN MARRIETH A VIRGIN"

The Prophet of Zion's Restoration uses imagery of a wedding to express God's love for mankind. "As the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride so shall thy God rejoice over thee" (Isaiah lxii, 5). In Palestine a marriage feast may continue as in Biblical times for several days before the ceremony. All business is set aside for the festivities. The photograph shows relations and friends of the bride-elect pouring out into the narrow street to meet the bridegroom and his procession, whose approach is heralded by the loud singing and playing of accompanying musicians. Later the festal crowd will escort the pair to his house where the bride, veiled, perfumed and adorned, is formally received over the threshold.

Photo American Colony in Jerusalem

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"DOTH THE PLOWMAN PLOW CONTINUALLY TO SOW?"

Isaiah illustrating the working-out of God's purpose sets forth a parable of the intelligent husbandman whose methods meet the needs of each case. The prophet asks if the ploughman continues to "open and break the clods of his ground?"—not after his field is properly prepared for sowing (Isaiah xxviii, 24, 25, R.V.). Though a city dweller in Jerusalem Isaiah, lover of his land and people, possessed an intimate knowledge of country life. The light plough, requiring the full attention of the farmer to keep it straight within the stony furrow, and the mattock, used to break up heavy lumps and eliminate roots of briar and thorn, were comparisons that would bring home his appeal to many whom he desired to persuade to righteousness.

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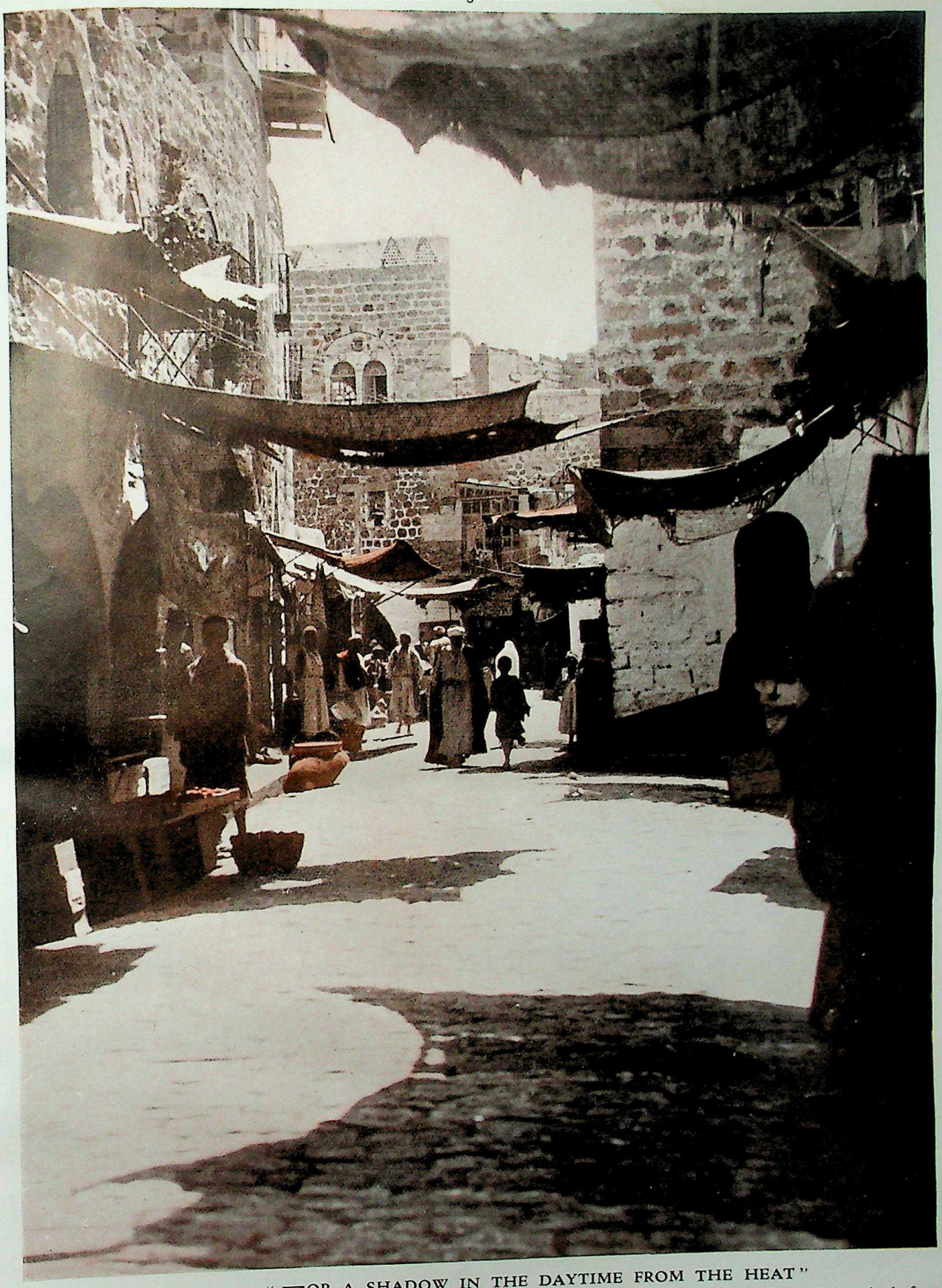

"FOR A SHADOW IN THE DAYTIME FROM THE HEAT"

Beneath the blazing summer sky in Palestine it is easy to understand why shade from rock, tree and tent—"a place of refuge" in blistering heat (Isaiah iv, 6)—is often used by the Biblical writers as a simile for God's protection. In Hebron, city of Abraham and notable specimen of an Arab town, awnings are stretched from one tall stone house to another or framed over doorways. They are often too threadbare and flimsy to provide real shelter, but the shadows they cast are most welcome to the eyes. Even in this industrial town there are plenty of natives with nothing to do for hours but yawn in the shade, refresh themselves with slices of green melon, and watch the desultory activities of those who ply trades or sell wares in the little shops.

Photo. G. P. A

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PORT OF TYRE "WHOSE ANTIQUITY IS OF ANCIENT DAYS"

Today Tyre is a small coast town with a harbour resorted to by light craft and cargo vessels. Picturesque ruins of marble columns and portals are to be found in the streets which lead to the docks, recalling past glorious epochs of Phoenicia's "crowning city." In the Oracle on Tyre (Isaiah xxiii), probably either the siege by Shalmaneser V about 726 B.C., or Sennacherib's invasion a quarter of a century later, is referred to by Isaiah. Renowned as a great commercial centre some centuries before the splendid days of King Hiram, friend and ally of David and Solomon, Tyre became more important than Sidon, the parent city. Tyrian ships owned by merchant princes, who were "the honourable of the earth," traded with the known world.

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Now we come to: "And there shall come forth a shoot out of the stock of Jesse, and a branch out of his roots shall bear fruit; and the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord." (The repetition 'and his delight shall be in the fear of the Lord,' is not part of the original; the Hebrew has, 'and his smelling is in the fear of the Lord'). "And he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, nor give decisions after the hearing of his ear; but with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the needy of the land; and he will smite the ruthless with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked. And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the cincture of his reins" (xi, 1-5).

The characteristics of the ruler are thus enumerated: Wisdom, understanding, counsel, might, knowledge, and fear of God—this last means awesome recognition of, and faithfulness to, God; these are all virtues which any man can possess; but in his case they are unique, for the prophet prefaces them with the words: "the spirit of the Lord was upon him," implying that they are of a nature different from similar gifts granted to ordinary men; they are of divine essence, unerring in their working. It is not fanciful to see in these words the prophet's intention to indicate that the ruler was endued with something of the divine spirit; not actually divine himself, but partaking of the divine. As a result, he does not judge like an ordinary judge by seeing and hearing witnesses, because he sees into the hearts of men and discerns good and evil in them; with equity he reinstates the poor, and by his word annihilates the wicked. He is suffused with righteousness, and faithfulness is the essence of his being. It is a wonderful conception.

Very instructive is it to note how in these three passages the prophet presents his picture of the ideal ruler in an ascending scale: first the child, whose name denotes that God is with His people; then the God-guided ruler who is superhuman; and, finally, the superb figure endowed uniquely with the Divine spirit.

Benign Influence of the Prince of Peace

THERE is one other passage to be considered; but, as here depicted, the ruler partakes of the character of nothing more than a righteous king by whose power and influence his subjects are turned to a different nature (xxxii, 1-5): "Behold a king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule with justice. And a man shall be as an hiding-place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. And the eyes of them that see shall not be dim, and the ears of them that hear shall hearken. The heart also of the rash shall understand knowledge, and the tongue of the stammerers shall be ready to speak plainly. The fool shall be no more called noble, nor the churl said to be high-born."

This passage adds little regarding the characteristics of the ideal ruler. One point, however, calls for notice, and that is the great contrast between what is said here of the seeing eyes and hearing ears, and the prophet's dark outlook when he first began his ministry—"make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes, lest they see with their eyes and hear with their ears." In the prophet's conception the spirit of this king of righteousness so permeates his people that all evil and unlovely elements in their natures will be changed; hard-heartedness, obstinacy, wrong judgement, want of discernment—all that is unworthy of the citizens of his kingdom is obliterated by the benign influence of this Prince of Peace. Herein we may see the point of attachment with what the prophet says of the spirit of the Lord upon him who came forth from the stock of Jesse (xi, 1ff.).

These, then, are the four outstanding passages in our book which give us Isaiah's teaching about the ideal ruler who will rule over his people in that time of happiness which he contemplates.

Prophecies Uttered by Other Mouths

WE must now briefly consider those portions of our book which, though not the work of Isaiah, have been embodied in it for the reason already indicated. To set forth in detail why these portions cannot claim Isaiah as their author would take up far too much space; but that something should be said about this is demanded.

These portions must be divided into two categories: those which have been inserted here and there among the genuine writings of Isaiah, and the great body of material which has been appended to his book; to this latter a somewhat fuller discussion must be accorded.

As to the former, mention may be made first of chapter xii. As this contains quotations from writings long subsequent to the time of Isaiah (*e.g.*, Psalm cv, 1; cxlviii, 13), it cannot have come from him; moreover, it may be noted that this prophet never quotes from other books. Chapter xix consists of two independent writings (vv. 1-15 and 16-25) of late date; the former belongs to the Greek period, about 300 B.C. onwards, the latter to Maccabean times, in the middle of the 2nd century B.C. This is generally recognized. Chapters xxiv-xxvii are apocalyptic in developed form, and from their very nature belong to the apocalyptic literature proper, dating from about 200 B.C. onwards. Chapters xxxiii-xxxv, both on account of their apocalyptic elements, and also for other reasons, into which we cannot go now, are centuries later than the time of Isaiah. Chapters xxxvi-xxxix are history, and are, in the main, taken from II. Kings xviii, 13—xx, 19. Certain other portions are held by some commentators to be non-Isaianic; but as differences of opinion are held regarding them we shall leave them aside.

With regard to chapters xl-lxvi a good deal more needs to be said; and here there are two distinct books, which must be discussed separately. Of the first (Chapters xl-lv) it may be said without exaggeration that it is in some respects the most important of Old Testament writings. Let us first see why it cannot have been written by Isaiah; the passages to be quoted in this connexion will indicate both the historical background and some of the characteristic teaching of the prophet.

We have seen that Isaiah began his ministry in the year that king Uzziah died (vi, 1), that is, in 744 B.C. But these chapters, xl-lv, present us with a state of affairs which belongs to a time 200 years later; the people of Judah are living in captivity in Babylon, where they have been for half a century of so; but the time of their captivity is drawing to an end. In xlii, 22ff. it is said: "But this is a people robbed and spoiled; they are all of them snared in holes, and they hide in prison houses; they are for a prey, and none delivereth; for a spoil, and none saith, Restore . . . Who gave Jacob for a spoil, and Israel to the robbers? Did not I, the Lord? he against whom we have sinned, and in whose ways they would not walk, neither were obedient to his teaching. Therefore he poured upon them the fury of his anger. . ."

These words point to the plight of the people in captivity, which has come upon them because of their

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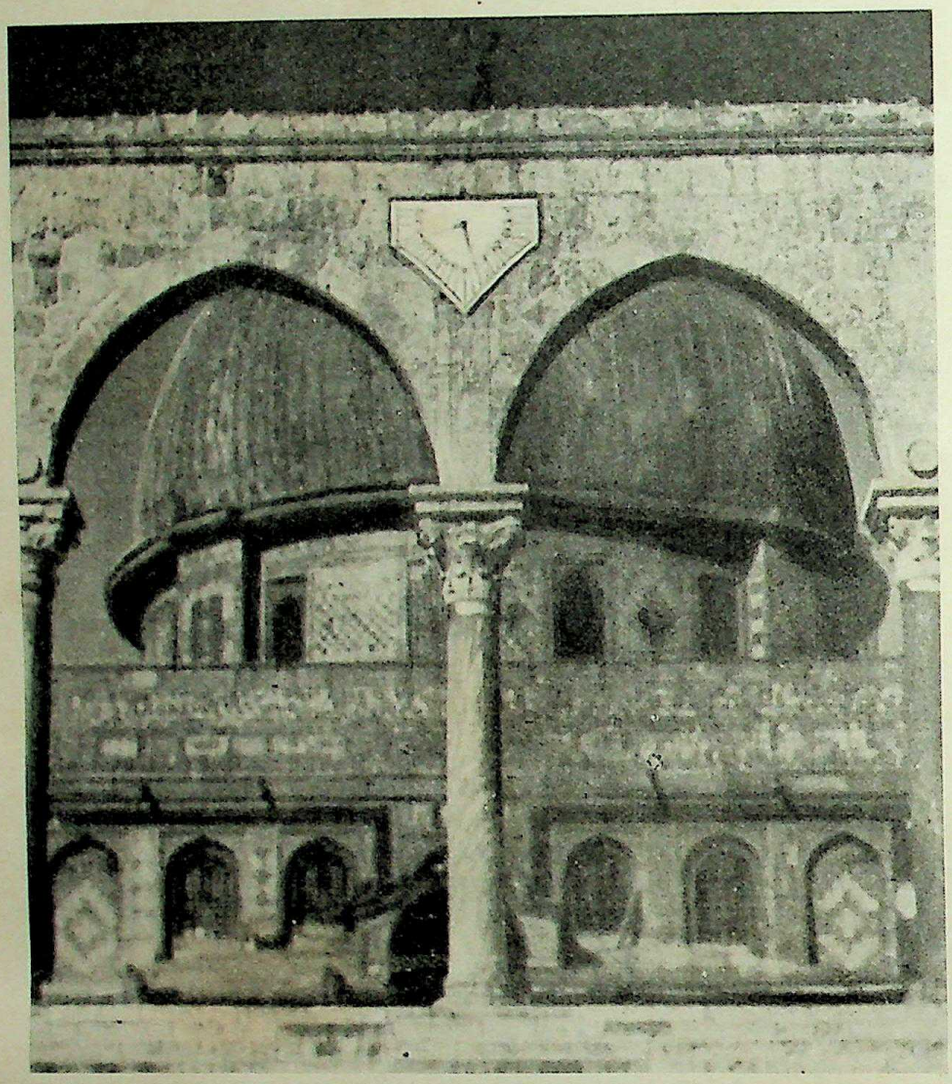

"SHADOW . . . GONE DOWN IN THE SUN DIAL." A contrivance for measuring time by the shadow cast by the sun was in use in Jerusalem in the days of Ahaz, father of king Hezekiah. Unlike the present sundial on the so-called "scales"—the arcade seen above in front of the Dome of the Rock—on the Temple Area, or Haram-esh-Sherif, it would appear to have had steps (Isaiah xxxviii, 8; II. Kings xx, 9-11). The arcade is known to Moslems as the scales, because of a belief that in the Day of Judgement the scales of justice will be suspended there.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

wickedness and their faithlessness to their God; but it is not said *where* the place of captivity is. This is seen from another passage, xliii, 14: "Thus saith the Lord, your redeemer, the Holy One of Israel: For your sake I have sent to Babylon, and I will bring down the bars of the prison, and (as for the Chaldeans) I will still their shouting with sighs." That makes it clear where the place of captivity was—Babylon (the latter part of the verse is emended, the Hebrew text is corrupt).

Again, in lii, 2, 3, where Jerusalem is personified as the nation, it is said, "Shake thyself from the dust; arise, O captive Jerusalem; loose thyself from the bands of thy neck, O captive daughter of Zion. For thus saith the Lord: Ye were sold for nought; and ye shall be redeemed without money." But further, it is clear that the Captivity is drawing to an end; thus, in li, 14, the prophet says: "The captive exile shall soon be released, and he shall not die (going down) to the Pit, neither shall his food fail"; there are other passages to the same effect.

Another thing showing that this part of the book cannot belong to Isaiah is the mention of Cyrus, the Persian ruler from 538–529 B.C.; he it is who, as God's instrument, brings the Captivity to an end; in xli, 2, 3 he is referred to as he whom God "hath raised from the east, whom he calleth in righteousness to his foot. He delivereth up nations before him, and maketh him rule over kings . . ."; and in xli, 25 the prophet says in the name of God. "I have raised up one from the north, and he is coming from the rising of the sun. I call him by his name, and he shall trample upon rulers as upon the mire, and as the potter treadeth the clay"; in xlv, 1 he is mentioned by name: "Thus saith the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him . . ." (So, too, in xliv, 28).

Then we have the further argument that Jerusalem is a ruined city, and the Temple is destroyed, that cannot refer to the time of Isaiah; it must be after 586 when the Babylonian Captivity began.

These facts then—that the people are in captivity, which is drawing to an end, the mention of Cyrus; and that Jerusalem and the Temple are in ruins—show that Chapters xl-lv cannot belong to Isaiah. In the past it was believed that these chapters did actually contain the words of Isaiah, and that he uttered them in the spirit of prophecy, in Ecclesiasticus xlviii, 22-25, which occurs in the long section in which the writer, Ben-Sira, commemorates the great ones of the past, it is said of Isaiah that "he was great and faithful in his vision; in his days the sun went backward (Isaiah xxxviii, 8) and he added life to the king (Isaiah xxxviii, 5). By a spirit of might he saw the latter end, and comforted the mourners of Zion. He declared the things that shall be to eternity, and hidden things before they came to pass."

That was written about 180 B.C., and the final words are clearly in reference to what is said in the second part of our book. Ben-Sira, seeing that this second part was attached to the first part, took for granted that the whole belonged to Isaiah, and believed that the prophet prophesied about the Captivity and the Return. There are those at this day who believe the same.

IN itself one cannot say that such a thing is impossible; if a prophet is inspired by God, with whom time does not exist, one must allow that it is possible for a prophet to predict things long before they happen. But the only thing is that there must be some purpose about it; such a thing as purposeless action on the part of the Almighty is inconceivable. Now, what purpose would there have been in Isaiah's predicting things about a couple of centuries—at any rate 150 years—before they came to pass? Who would be benefited by it? It is certain that if people heard of such prophecies, or saw them written down, they would not believe a word of them; and if they did, what good would it do them?

No, we must remember that the prophets were practical men; the function of the Hebrew prophet was to declare the ways of right living, and to teach divine precepts *to those among whom they lived*, and to foretell what would be the consequence to *them* if they continued in their

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wickedness and disobeyed God. To tell them what would happen a hundred or two years hence would be pointless.

But there are further reasons showing that they are not his. In comparing the two sets of chapters, i-xxxix and xl-lv, there are various kinds of differences which preclude the possibility of their being from the same author. We will consider these quite briefly:

(i) It is impossible not to notice the contrast of the prophetical attitude towards the people taken up in the two parts of the book. A couple of quotations from each of these parts will suffice to illustrate this contrast:

"Ah, sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evil-doers, children that deal corruptly; they have forsaken the LORD, they have despised the Holy One of Israel" (i, 4 R.V.); and again: "The LORD will enter into judgement with the elders of his people, and the princes thereof: It is ye that have eaten up the vineyard; the spoil of the poor is in your houses . . ." (iii, 14, 15 R.V.). Utterances of this kind are characteristic of Isaiah, they occur over and over again: *denunciation of sin, proclaiming of punishment*—though exhortations to better living are not wanting. In striking contrast to this are the repeated *words of consolation* and *encouragement of hope* which run all through Chapters xl-lv; this note is sounded at the opening of the book: "Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry ye unto her that her time of service is accomplished, that her punishment is accepted, that she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins" (xl, 1, 2). And in xli, 8, 10 (R.V.): "But thou, Israel, my servant, Jacob, whom I have chosen, the seed of Abraham, my friend; thou whom I have taken hold of from the ends of the earth, and called thee from the corners thereof, and said unto thee, Thou art my servant, I have chosen thee, and not cast thee away; fear thou not, for I am with thee; be not dismayed, for I am thy God; I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness." True, this prophet, too, sees the sins of the people, and upbraids them; this, however, comes but incidentally; consolation and encouragement are the key-notes of his utterances. Two such contrasted attitudes as these cannot have come from the same prophet.

"GONE INTO CAPTIVITY." The Babylonian gods Bel (Marduk) and Nebo, patron of wisdom, are mentioned in Isaiah xlvi, 1, when the Prophet sees them in a vision taken from their shrines and carried away captive, "a burden to the weary beast." Nebo is represented wearing a horned tiara in this limestone statue, dated to about 811 B.C., from the palace at Nimrud. His emblem was a wedge supported by a horned dragon.

British Museum; photo, F. W. Mansell

(ii) A second point of contrast is in respect of those who will be partakers of the time of happiness to come. According to Isaiah, this is reserved for a remnant only: "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the remnant of Israel, and they that are escaped of the house of Jacob, shall no more again stay upon him that smote them; but shall stay upon the LORD, the Holy One of Israel, in truth. A remnant shall return, even the remnant of Jacob, unto the mighty God. For though thy people, O Israel, be as the sand of the sea, only a remnant of them shall return—a consumption is determined—overflowing with righteousness" (x, 20-23). And we recall the name which the prophet gave to his son, Shear-jashub, "a remnant shall return" (vii, 3), in reference to this doctrine of the remnant which is so prominent in his book.

In striking contrast with this is the other prophet's repeated assurance that the *whole* people shall rejoice in that day of salvation: "Thus saith the LORD that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel: Fear not, for I have redeemed thee; I have called thee by thy name, thou art mine . . . Fear not: for I am with thee; I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather thee from the west; I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back; bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the end of the earth . . ." (xliii, 1-7). That gathering-in of the whole people presents a very different point of view from that of Isaiah's doctrine of the remnant. The two conceptions come from different minds, and are prompted by different circumstances.

(iii) Once more, there is a great difference in these two bodies of literature regarding Israel's relation to the world. In the conception of the prophet Isaiah, the nation of Israel stands apart from the world. The nations of the world do not acknowledge the Lord, and are His enemies; there are a number of oracles against them in which they are denounced, and their downfall declared. In xiii, 11, 12 (R.V.), these words are put into the mouth of the Almighty: "And I will punish the world for their evil, and the wicked for their iniquity; and I will cause the arrogancy of the proud to cease, and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible. I will make a man more rare than fine gold, even a man than the pure gold of Ophir."

TO Isaiah, it may be truly said, the nations of the world might well be ignored; as compared with that grand remnant of Israel which was faithful to the Lord, they were of no account. The chosen remnant of Israel which would bear witness to their God was self-contained, apart from the world, which at the best was like stubble for burning: "And the light of Israel shall be for a fire, and his Holy One for a flame; and it shall burn and devour his thorns and his briers in one day" (x, 17)—spoken in reference to Assyria: "I will punish the fruit of the stout heart of the king of Assyria, and the glory of his high looks. For he hath said, By the strength of my hand have I done it, and by my wisdom . . . and I have put down the inhabitants like a valiant man" (verses 12, 13).

On the other hand, in Chapters xl-lv there is set forth, not only the salvation of the nations, but their salvation through the instrumentality of the Jewish nation! Thus, in xlv, 22-24 the prophet says, in the name of God:

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"Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else. By myself have I sworn, my word is gone forth from my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return; unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear. Only through the Lord, saith one, have I prosperity and strength;—even to him shall men come; all they that are incensed against him shall perish together and be put to shame" (*see also* lv, 4, 5; lii, 10 and elsewhere).

And Israel is to be the means of salvation for the Gentiles: "Thus saith the LORD: the toilers of Egypt, and the merchants of Ethiopia, and the Sabeans—the tall ones—unto thee shall they come over and shall be thine; they shall follow after thee and serve thee, and bow down before thee, and plead before thee (saying), Of a truth, God is with thee, and there is none else, there is none other God. Verily thou art a God that hideth thyself, O God of Israel, the Saviour" (xlv, 14, 15); these last words, which are put into the mouth of the nations, mean that to them God has hitherto been hidden; now they acknowledge Him as the only God, the God of Israel, who is their Saviour; Israel, as it says in lv, 4, 5, is His witness among the peoples, so that Israel is God's instrument for their salvation.

In addition to all that has been said, there are also the great differences in style and phraseology; but as these cannot be appreciated without a knowledge of Hebrew we must leave them aside.

A brief reference is, however, demanded to what are known as "the Servant of the Lord" Songs. They are contained in Isaiah xlii, 1-4; xlix, 1-6; l, 4-9; lii, 13-liii, 12. In the light of their use in the New Testament, their supreme importance will be readily appreciated. Many modern scholars believe these Songs to have been independently, composed by a prophet who lived a little later than the time at which the rest of these chapters (xl-lv) were written, and that they are, therefore, post-exilic. This may well be the case. Their date and authorship are, however, of comparatively small moment; for the wonderful figure presented in them, and the teaching they contain, make their content of infinitely greater importance than the time at which they were written, or their composer. How to account for their position in the text of our book as we now have it need not trouble us; there are various ways in which this can be explained, as already pointed out. The main thing is that these gems have been preserved.

'A Man of Sorrows, Acquainted with Grief'

UNLIKE the "servant" described elsewhere in these chapters as the nation of Israel (*see, e.g.*, xlii, 19-24, xliii, 10), in these Songs he is an individual of quite unique character: the spirit of the Lord is on him; he is to proclaim righteousness to the Gentiles; in fulfilling the work laid upon him by God he acts in quiet submission, without vaunting, and without thought of self; with touching consideration for the weak and feeble, he bears witness for the truth; nothing discourages him, for he is set on establishing justice on the earth. Though his labour seems to have been in vain, he does not falter, for his recompense is with God; and at the last he will be the means of saving not only Israel, but also the Gentiles. Through him the salvation of God will reach unto the ends of the earth. In his humility he does not claim to be a teacher, but only, as it were, one who is taught; but he is taught of God: "the Lord God hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away backward." Therefore the ill-treatment accorded to him by men is nothing to him; he knows that God will help him. But it is in the last of the Songs that his personality and work are most wonderfully depicted.

Here it is that the prophet gives us the deepest insight into the meaning and purpose of the life, and death, and after-life, of the "servant." He begins by setting forth what is to be the final outcome of all the "servant's" work and suffering: it sounds incredible that this, to men, unattractive and despised figure, so contemptible in their eyes, stricken by God, as they thought, because of sin, should in reality be far greater than they could conceive; one before whom even kings bowed down in reverence. But so it is, as the prophet proceeds to relate, the central points of his teaching about the "servant" being: that he suffered for the sins of his people; that through his suffering he brought them peace, for that suffering on their behalf was the means of their being healed from the disease of sin; that for them he laid down his life, "cut off from the land of the living"; and that, nevertheless, the foreordained will of God shall be accomplished by him after his resurrection from the dead: "he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand."

That this conception of "the Servant of the Lord" should have become a literal reality centuries later is the most striking and wondrous thing which the Old Testament has to offer.

Latest Additions to Isaiah's Book

AS to the other collection of prophetical discourses, contained in Chapters lvi-lxvi, not so much need be said: they do not reach the high level of the preceding discourses. It may be well to point out briefly why they are to be regarded as of different authorship and of different date. The first thing to notice is that both the historical background, as well as the religious and moral condition of the people, have changed. Whereas, in the previous collection the evidence is overwhelming to the effect that it belongs to exilic times, this collection contains numerous indications which stamp it as post-exilic. Thus, according to lvi, 1-5, for example, the people are settled in the land, and are called upon to observe the ordinances of the law ("keep judgement, and do righteousness"), and to keep the Sabbath; and the Temple has been rebuilt ("unto them will I give in mine house and within my walls a memorial and a name better than sons and daughters").

The insincere worship of the congregation is spoken of in lviii, 1-7, their sins have separated them from God (lix, 2), and the verses which follow record their deplorable moral state (*see also* lvii, 1, 2); their idolatry is spoken of in lxv, 11, 12.

All this is as different as possible from what obtained during exilic times. Then in lvi, 9—lvii, 13 references are made to abuses of various kinds, and the prophet clearly has in mind the Samaritans and their syncretistic worship, who caused so much trouble to Nehemiah. Other elements occur in this collection of prophecies which point clearly to post-exilic times.

It will thus be seen that the Book of Isaiah contains prophetical writings by several prophets who lived at different times. For centuries they were believed, one and all, to have come from Isaiah; the recognition that this is not the fact need not cause heartburnings: messages of truth are not the less true for having been uttered by nameless messengers.

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Jeremiah

I

The Book in Outline

'That which was spoken by Jeremy the Prophet'

by REV. ALBERT PEEL, M.A., D. Litt.

Editor of "The Congregational Quarterly";
Author of "Q: The Earliest Gospel," etc.

WERE the Book of Jeremiah in chronological order, and all the work of the prophet himself, it would be a comparatively easy task to describe its contents. It is far from being as straightforward as that. It contains many elements, of which the chief are the oracles uttered by Jeremiah at different times or attributed to him; passages biographical in character, written by Jeremiah or dictated to his secretary, Baruch; and historical sections, written by someone who knew the prophet well, probably by Baruch. A later compiler has brought all these elements together, by no means as systematically as a modern historian would do. Indeed the cynic might say that the only scheme he had in his mind was to baffle the reader!

The book begins well enough, with the account of the prophet's call in Chapter i, but for a long time we are tossed hither and thither, never knowing in what period of Jeremiah's career we shall next find ourselves —in the reigns of any one of five kings, or even subsequently, where material has been added. Even the most ingenious solver of cross-word puzzles would at times almost despair of fitting the sections of the book satisfactorily together. It is no wonder, then, that many people begin the book with curiosity and zeal, but soon find themselves "in wandering mazes lost," cease their endeavour to read through the book, and content themselves with feeding their souls on a few of its most familiar passages.

BETWEEN Chapter i, in which we read of the call of the prophet as a young man, and Chapter xxi which sees him as an old man just before the destruction of Jerusalem 40 years later, we have no progressive narrative, but a large number of prophecies or sermons, from different periods but saying much the same thing, interspersed with moving soliloquies and poignant appeals to the Lord. After more oracles we find ourselves in Chapter xxv back in Jehoiakim's reign 16 years earlier. Then, happily, in Chapter xxvi a more or less connected history begins, with oracles interspersed, until Chapter xlv. The prophecies on foreign nations occupy xlvi-li, and the last chapter of all, lii, is a reproduction of the Book of Kings' narrative of the fall of Jerusalem.

"How did the book come to be like this?" is a natural question. Fortunately there is sufficient evidence in the book itself to enable us to furnish an answer, and to show us that the problem is by no means so insoluble as at first appears. The critical date is 605 B.C., when Babylon was decisively victorious over Egypt at Carchemish. The power from the north so long prophesied by Jeremiah was seen to be a power indeed, and Jeremiah appears to have thought the time opportune for collecting his addresses, as we should say today, and giving a more permanent form to the oral messages he had been delivering since his call. The poetical form in which his teaching had been cast enabled him to recall it easily, and his scribe Baruch took it down at his dictation.

Baruch, as we shall see, read the roll in public, and knowledge of its contents came to the ears of the king, who destroyed it in anger. Nothing abashed, Jeremiah dictated it anew, with additions. *This roll became the nucleus of our present Jeremiah,* probably containing much of Chapters i-xxv. To this nucleus additions were subsequently made; at xxvi the extracts from Baruch's biography of Jeremiah begin, some oracles being incorporated; xlv is a personal oracle to Baruch; xlvi-li are the foreign oracles, and lii the Appendix from the Second Book of Kings.

The Greatest Figure in the Old Testament

ONE main difficulty in dealing with the Book of Jeremiah is that it is impossible to make the book really intelligible and helpful without understanding its arrangement, and in dealing with the intricacies of order and date it is so easy to miss the greatness of the man whose name the book bears.

Does it not suggest what manner of man Jeremiah was to read that 600 years after his day "some said" that Jesus of Nazareth was Jeremiah come to earth again? Does it not open a window on Jeremiah's character when we remember that the words written by the prophet of the Exile about one who was "despised and rejected of men" had probably Jeremiah in mind, though today men invariably think of them as describing Jesus, Who saved through suffering? Did not both cry out to God in their loneliness as they bore the cross that was laid upon them?

Jeremiah is the greatest figure in the Old Testament. His deep personal religion, his stress on the individual's responsibility, his shrinking from the burden laid upon him and his courageous bearing of it through the long years—these are the outstanding characteristics of the man revealed in this book. Sometimes he reminds us of Cromwell, when he is trying to express an intimate mystical experience or the consciousness of being God's appointed man of destiny; sometimes, too, in his moods of depression. We must never allow the man to be buried under the difficulties that present themselves in our study of the book.

And if as we work through the book we sometimes despair of making men realize Jeremiah's greatness,

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we despair also, especially with ordinary Bibles in our hands, of showing that he was a poet. It is only necessary to read aloud some of our modern English translations in verse form to realize how they "go with a swing" and would easily capture the ears and impress themselves on the memories of listeners. When we read through the book with Baruch's prose and Jeremiah's poetry alternating we become conscious that in Jeremiah's life, as in many another, suffering and song are intertwined. Of him surely it is true, "Only suffering draws the inner heart of song." Sir George Adam Smith aptly describes the book as like to "canoe voyages in Canada, in which the canoe now glides down a stream and is again carried overland by what are called portages to other streams or other branches of the same stream."

The Book begins: "The words of Jeremiah . . . To whom the word of the LORD came in the days of Josiah the son of Amon, king of Judah, in the thirteenth year of his reign. It came also in the days of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah, unto the end of the eleventh year of Zedekiah the son of Josiah king of Judah, unto the carrying away of Jerusalem captive in the fifth month."

Josiah became king of Judah in the year 639 B.C., and in 626 Jeremiah was called to the prophet's task. When he died we do not know, but he lived through some of the most striking events of his time, through years which saw the fall of Nineveh and the destruction of the Assyrian Empire (612), the defeat of Egypt by Nebuchadnezzar (605), the carrying away into exile in Babylon of the flower of his people in 597, and the destruction of Jerusalem and the second captivity in Babylon in 586.

The facts in this paragraph must be expanded somewhat if their significance is to be understood, and their full relevance to the book realized. (For the history of the time see the chapter beginning in page 719). Just as Belgium has been the cockpit of Europe, so Palestine has been the battleground on which great empires have waged deadly warfare. Already readers of these pages have learnt how Israel, overawed by the might of neighbouring nations, Assyria and Egypt, had disobeyed the word of the Lord, and turned to them for help instead of trusting in God. When Josiah, a boy of eight, became king of Judah in 639—the northern kingdom of Israel had long since disappeared—the Assyrian Empire, exhausted by incessant war, was nearing the end. Manasseh, Josiah's grandfather, had been a loyal vassal of Assyria, which in his day was still strong enough to wage a successful campaign against Egypt. But in the early years of Josiah's reign Egypt rebelled, and the Assyrians were too much occupied nearer home to take up the challenge. Babylon, determined on independence, allied itself to the Medes, the empire-builders of the future, and the combination was far too strong for the decadent Assyrians, whose weakening fingers could no longer retain their grip. Ashurbanipal, the Assyrian emperor, died in 626, aware that the days of his empire were numbered: "I cannot away with the strife in my country . . with cries of woe I bring my days to an end." After his death internal warfare was renewed in Assyria; most of the subject kingdoms threw off the yoke, Babylon in 626 becoming an independent kingdom under Nebopolassar. Indeed Babylon, supported by the Medes, seemed on the way to becoming so powerful that Egypt, who naturally had hoped the Assyrian Empire would be replaced only by small kingdoms from whom no rivalry could be feared, actually backed the dying Assyria for a time. But nothing could prevent the final doom. The wild Scythians, mercenaries whom the Assyrians had used, broke away, united with the Medes and Babylon, and sacked Nineveh, "that great city," in 612. Henceforth it is the Babylonians and the Medes who dominate the stage: Assyria is no more. In 608 Judah's existence as an independent kingdom came to an end, when Josiah was killed in resisting Pharaoh Necho at Megiddo. It was an age like our own, when crowns and thrones perish, kingdoms rise and wane. If these facts are always kept in mind, the Book of Jeremiah becomes much more intelligible.

Anathoth, where Hilkiah, Jeremiah's father, lived, was three or four miles from Jerusalem, some 2,500 ft. above sea-level, and facing to the north. It belonged to Benjamin, but had become attached to Judah, though the tribal sympathies and memories turned to Ephraim. To Anathoth Solomon had banished Abiathar, the high priest, when Joab was murdered, and there Abiathar's descendants still lived. Jeremiah

JEREMIAH: A SYNOPSIS

	Chapters
The Prophet's Call	i
Early Oracles	ii-iv, 24
The Scythians, Instruments of God's Wrath	v-vi
Warnings against Treachery and Idolatry	vii-x
The Covenant	xi-xiii

Judgement on Zion

The Drought and Other Prophecies	xiv-xvii, 18
The Sabbath Day	xvii, 19-27
The Potter's House...	xviii
The Broken Bottle	xix-xx, 6
Zedekiah and the Fate of Jerusalem	xxi
Oracles on the Kings of Judah ...	xxii-xxiii, 8
Oracle on the False Prophets ...	xxiii, 9-40
The Basket of Figs	xxiv
The Cup of the Lord's Fury ...	xxv
Jeremiah's Life Saved	xxvi
Predictions of Speedy Return from Exile Declared False	xxvii-xxix

Messages of Hope

Prophecies of the Restoration ...	xxx-xxxi
The New Covenant	xxxi
Incidental and Historical Prophecies	xxxii-xlv
Oracles of the Nations	xlvi-li

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"SWEET CANE FROM A FAR COUNTRY." Jeremiah warning his countrymen that God requires obedience and not sacrifice, refers to the uselessness of incense offering without honest desire for righteousness. The incense burnt was composed of spices from Sheba, country of the Sabeans in South Arabia, and of exudation from "sweet cane" (Jer. vi, 20). The latter may have been the calamus reed, or possibly the sugar-cane brought from India where it has been cultivated since remote antiquity. Into Egypt it was introduced by Arabs. Sugar vendors in the market at Luxor are pictured selling cane to natives who crush it in hand-mills to extract the juice or in primitive mills worked by an ox or camel.

Photo, W. L. Emmerson

himself was probably one of them, and he would no doubt hear much of Eli and the Ark, and the destroyed shrine of Shiloh.

The boy's keen eyes took in all around him—in the home, in the countryside, and further afield. He was clearly a lover of Nature, and often drove home his lessons by references to blossoms and figs, vines and rains. Two miles away was the road from Jerusalem to Shechem, and as he watched its traffic, the boy realized that his village was not the world. He heard of wars and rumours of wars, and of fierce folk in the north. From the priests of Anathoth he learnt of the past, and, though possibly not from them, he heard of the teaching of the prophets—of Hosea (whom in so many ways he resembles), of Isaiah, of Micah.

BUT as he looked round him he saw little sign of the influence of these prophets. Manasseh showed his allegiance to Assyria in nothing so much as in his religious observances: "he built altars for all the host of heaven in the two courts of the house of Jehovah"; Jehovah was but one god along with foreign deities; the Canaanite Baalim, the fertility gods, were worshipped. This state of things prevailed in the early years of the boy King Josiah.

When Jeremiah heard his call, he was probably about twenty-four, devout, serious, intelligent, and already aware of the sins of his people and of the relationship between international politics and religious professions. It is in keeping that the call, which he describes in his own words, was individual and intimate, lacking all the glamour of the word that came to Isaiah in the Temple in the year that King Uzziah died. Jehovah tells Jeremiah that he was destined before his birth to be "a prophet unto the nations," and, when he pleads his youth, promises His constant presence, touches the young man's mouth, and makes him His messenger:

> See, I have this day set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build, and to plant.

Two visions followed, concerned not so much with the nations as with Judah. Through the sight of the rod of an almond tree, Jeremiah is reminded that the Lord is wakeful to fulfil His word, and a seething cauldron suggests that trouble will come to Judah from the north, whence already Assyrian invasions had been known, though at the moment Jeremiah had probably the Scythians in mind. In any case the invaders were the instruments of Jehovah's judgements on Jerusalem and the cities of Judah for their apostasy. Jeremiah is commanded to declare this doom fearlessly; though princes and priests and people withstand him, they will not prevail, for Jehovah is his protector.

Naturally the quiet, shy young countryman shrank from the call; obedience to it meant confronting all the powerful in the land, and earning at best unpopularity, at worst hatred. Throughout his life we see the conflict waged within: a natural sensitiveness at war with the sense of vocation, the continual questioning of the Lord why this burden had been

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laid upon him of all men, and the longing to escape from it:

> Oh that I had in the wilderness a lodging place of wayfaring men; that I might leave my people, and go from them! for they be all adulterers, an assembly of treacherous men.

Time and again Jeremiah was tempted to lay down the burden; even as a young man he had realized his way would be hard, but as the years went by and his knowledge grew, and his youth could no longer be urged as an excuse, it became harder than he had ever dreamed even in his most despondent moments, at times a burden too grievous to be borne.

Often he cried out to the Lord from the depths, on one occasion vowing that he would be His messenger no more, but he had to say to Baruch:

> Then I said, I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name. But his word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay.

Verily he was in a strait betwixt two; but there was no doubt of the ultimate victory. Jeremiah was not the man to turn his back on duty, no matter how unpleasant in performance and risky in its consequences. He conquered his moods and endured to the end. Practically the rest of the book is an illustration of the way in which this sensitive soul obeyed the call of God despite the suffering obedience inevitably entailed.

'Hear Ye the Word of the Lord'

JEREMIAH'S first prophecy is typical of the rest. He delivers the word of the Lord about Israel's shameful unfaithfulness to Him. God reminds her how He had loved her when she was a youthful bride in the wilderness. Why have the people forgotten Him, Who led them through the perils of the desert unto a goodly land? What unrighteousness, what fault, have they found in Him that they have deserted Him, defiled the land with idolatrous worship, and done a thing without parallel even among the heathen—changed their gods, "forsaken the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water." From these cisterns whose muddy dregs fail them, they turn to Egypt and Assyria for help. Their sin will bring its inevitable punishment.

And how shameful it is. The people have thrown off all restraint; like a she-camel in the grip of uncontrollable lust, they rush about, worshipping the Baalim, calling sticks and stones their parents. They find fault with Jehovah, but their rebellion and apostasy are the cause of all their trouble. Punishment has had no effect, ingratitude has been shameful—"my people have forgotten me days without number." Yet Israel still claims the rights she had as Jehovah's bride, though she persists in her sin, a wife with many lovers. Judgement must be entered against Israel, and Egypt will prove a vain reed, even as Assyria. At this point (iii, 6-18) a comparison between Israel and Judah is inserted, apparently some time in Josiah's reign, "Israel" here referring to the northern kingdom only. Judah should have been warned by the fate that had befallen Israel because of her idolatry, but with that horrid example before her eyes, she had persisted in walking in the same way, and returned to Jehovah only hypocritically.

"Backsliding Israel hath shown herself more righteous than treacherous Judah." Israel is exhorted to acknowledge her transgressions, repent, and return to Jehovah. Jehovah will bring her to Zion, where she shall be truly taught; no Ark will be needed, for each individual shall be taught directly; Israel and Judah shall dwell together, and all the nations come to Jerusalem.

Jehovah would gladly accept Israel as His child, but she has dealt treacherously with Him (iii, 19-iv, 4). Then comes a heartbroken confession by the children of Israel from the heights, a contrite acknowledgement that the high places have proved vain, that they have sinned against God, Who alone could help. God replies that if Israel truly repents, she can return to His presence, and, blessed herself, will become a blessing to the nations. But she must "break up the fallow ground" (Hosea x, 12), be prepared for plough and harrow to break through the hardened soil, and clear the ground from thorns. Only thus, only in a changed heart, could a right relationship with God be established.

Now come oracles (iv, 5—vi, 30), dating from the time of Jeremiah's call, perhaps revised later, dealing with the Scythians. The repentance of Israel has not been genuine. The people had better take refuge in the cities, for God is bringing vengeance from the north, and the lion, the destroyer, is on his way. King and princes, priests and prophets, will all be dismayed at the fierce anger of the Lord. They will complain that the Lord has deceived them with promises of peace. But God will send the foe as a whirlwind, which shall sweep away grain and chaff alike. The avenger approaches, rebellion against the Lord has brought him, the doom of Judah is certain unless she renounce her wickedness.

Jeremiah bursts out in anguish at the thought of the fate of his people (iv, 19-22) and at the sight of their folly and sin. He sees a vision of the earth and sky—the earth is chaos, as at the first, the heavens have no light, the mountains are shaking, the birds have fled, no man is to be seen, the fruitful field is wilderness, the cities are cast down. Such is the desolation the Lord will bring.

THEN follows a picture of flight before the enemy, when the attempt to lure the attackers from murder by harlots' wiles will fail: the people will sink down exhausted.

There is no redeeming feature in the people: if but one upright man could be found in Jerusalem, Jehovah will pardon. Though they take the Lord's name on their lips, their hearts are far from Him; despite correction they are stubborn in sin. Jeremiah excuses them because they are the common people, ignorant and unlearned, but when he turns to the "great men"

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he finds them no better. Therefore, says the Lord, all must be destroyed. How can I pardon them when they abuse all my gifts, using for evil ends that which is good? Punishment is inevitable, and the avenger must work God's will on a treacherous people: they have doubted God's word spoken by the prophets; His word by Jeremiah shall be as a flame consuming them as wood. From afar a mighty nation, a nation of fighting men, shall fall upon them ravaging the land, beating down the cities. When they ask why God allows this, Jeremiah must tell them that as they served strange gods at home, so they must serve strange men abroad. They will not fear God, Who has set bounds to the sea, nor remember that it is He who gives rain and harvest. They are all in rebellion; wicked men wax mighty, gathering ill-gotten gains, and oppressing the poor and needy. Must not the Lord be avenged on such a nation?

"THEY ARE UPRIGHT AS THE PALM TREE." In a denunciation of false gods, introduced into the Book of Jeremiah, development of the simile of the palm's straight growth forms a comparison with idols beautiful to look upon but that "cannot do evil, neither also is it in them to do good" (Jeremiah x, 5). The Prophets are powerful in their preachings on the demoralizing effects of superstitious fears. The tree referred to is the date palm; its fruit grows in great bunches at the base of the tuft of leafy branches.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

WORST of all is the failure of the religious leaders. "the prophets prophesy falsely, and my people love to have it so"; in foolish optimism they mislead the people, crying, "Peace, 'tis well" when there is no peace. But the avenger from the north is at hand. The Benjamites must flee south from Jerusalem; not even Zion and the fenced cities will now be safe, for the foe is Jehovah's instrument in punishing wickedness. If the invaders fail to attack at noon, "the shadows of the evening are stretched out," and they will attack by night. There will be no stay to the destruction; doom will fall on young and old, men, women, and children alike; the Lord's patience is exhausted, for everyone deals falsely. The people have refused to walk in the old paths or to listen to the trumpet blasts of warning. They have rejected Jehovah's directions, and He desires not their sacrifices and offerings. The invader from the north will come, cruel, fierce, irresistible, with a reputation that has already spread terror far and wide. Jeremiah has assayed the people, but it has been impossible to purge the dross away: they are "refuse silver," God will not have them.

Up to this point the narrative has been comparatively straightforward, for the "Scythian songs" clearly belong together. Now we come to a very difficult section, for there is no clear indication of date or circumstances, and no attempt made to put the oracles in chronological order. Readers of the book must always be on guard against assuming that oracles that follow one another were delivered consecutively. Possibly they were arranged according to subject matter—perhaps as Jeremiah dictated to Baruch one speech suggested another of a later date. Sometimes allusions enable us to place an oracle in its context, but this is not always so. One about which we can be certain is vii, 1—viii, 3, for the scene is described in Chapter xxvi when, at the beginning of Jehoiakim's reign, Jeremiah is ordered to make a speech at the Temple gate.

Here we have the speech, which enraged the hearers, who are told to amend their ways, and not think that

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the possession of the Temple will give them security if their lives are immoral. Only by righteousness and justice can they be free from condemnation. If they steal and murder and lie, and walk after other gods, and then think themselves secure if they come to the Temple, they are making it a den of robbers. They know what Jehovah did to Shiloh, glorious because it housed the Ark; even so, if they trust in the Temple rather than in the living God Himself, it will share Shiloh's fate, and the people will be treated as Ephraim. Jeremiah must not pray for them, for God will not hear they make cakes to the Queen of Heaven and offerings to other gods; God will pour out His fury upon them and destroy all. He demands not offerings and sacrifices, but obedience. He has tried to enter into a covenant relationship with them, and sent His prophets, but they have been stiffnecked and worse than their fathers. Nor will they listen to Jeremiah.

A lament for the rejection of the people follows: they have defiled the Temple, and offered human sacrifices, burning their sons and daughters. The scene of this abomination shall be called the Valley of Slaughter, for it will be filled with unburied corpses:

> Then will I cause to cease from the cities of Judah, and from the streets of Jerusalem, the voice of mirth, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride: for the land shall be desolate.

Not only so, but the bones of the great will be dragged out of the tombs and scattered; those who are alive at that day will wish they were dead.

The next oracle (viii, 4—ix, 1) follows on similar lines, proclaiming the disaster coming to Judah. Jehovah says His people are unnatural in their deceit, ingratitude, and backsliding. Even the birds know when to migrate, and what instinct is for bird and beast, religion should be for man. But Judah does not know the ordinance of the Lord. False scribes have misled them, and the wise have rejected the word of the Lord. Destruction is sure, strong cities will not save them, from the north the enemy comes.

In a characteristic passage (viii, 18—ix, 1) Jeremiah then pours forth his soul in sorrow at the afflictions of his people. They ask if God has forsaken Zion—"the harvest is passed, the summer is ended (all the summer fruits gathered) and we are not saved." The prophet mourns for his people, asking if there is no physician, no medicine, to heal them. He would weep night and day for the slain.

It is not easy to fix the date of the section (ix, 2-26) which follows, but it seems to belong to Jehoiakim's reign. Its burden is the same as the previous ones, the ruin certain to follow the slander and deceit of the people; they speak peace with the mouths, but in their hearts are conspirators. It makes the prophet wish to flee from them to a lodge in the wilderness. Who can understand why God has allowed Jerusalem and the cities of Judah to become desolate? It is because of the idolatry of the people, who will have to drink gall and wormwood and will be scattered among the nations. The mourning women should be called, for Zion is spoiled, "death is come up into our windows, it is entered into our palaces"—the children and the young are cut off.

The next oracle must not be paraphrased, but must speak for itself:

> Thus saith the Lord, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches.

An intrusive passage (x, 1-16), clearly not from Jeremiah, about the idols of the heathen is then

"THE STORK IN THE HEAVEN." Jeremiah, reprimanding the people for their stubborn continuance in error, tells them that they show less intelligence than the birds. Dove, crane, and swallow observe their migrating seasons; "the stork in the heaven knoweth her appointed times;" but Israel does not understand the laws of God (Jeremiah viii, 7). The storks seen above in flight are in pursuit of locusts near Jerusalem. A reason for the popularity of the birds is their usefulness in clearing away pests of insects and small reptiles. The common stork is thus immune from wanton destruction.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

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"BRING IT IN BY THE GATES OF JERUSALEM." While the vast suburbs springing up beyond walled Jerusalem are ultra-modern and "Western" with their big hotels, cinemas and garages, once any of the city gates are entered the visitor soon realizes that change stays outside. Wheeled vehicles can travel only short distances. Even the sure-footed donkeys laden with sacks of produce must negotiate carefully many of the tortuous and stepped streets. Our photograph shows the Damascus Gate. This was not in existence in Jeremiah's time but the traffic of burden-bearers in and out remains the same.

Photo, Dorien Leigh

introduced—idols that are harmless, helpless, and good for nothing, that have to be propped and carried and adorned. The graven images are vanity, but Jehovah is God, the creator of the universe, Who controls the elements, Jehovah, Who has chosen Israel for His people.

Then the prophecy is resumed. There is a rumour of a great commotion in the north, a people coming to devastate Judah. The besieged had better prepare to leave, for God is throwing them out of the land.

A FEW words are necessary here to introduce another phase of Jeremiah's activity, which opens in Chapter xi. The Scythians, after all, did not attack Jerusalem, but made their way south along the coast. Jeremiah's confident predictions had proved mistaken, and he was a laughing-stock. In 621 came a decisive event in the history of Israel and in the life of Jeremiah. The finding of the Law Book —the central portion of the Book of Deuteronomy— in the Temple, and its acceptance by Josiah as the basis for a reformation of religion has already been described (see page 210). That reformation involved the centralizing of worship in the Temple, and the demolition of the country shrines. Josiah carried through his purification with zeal, but there was much opposition to it, driven underground for a time, to show itself afterwards when priests and people reverted to the old ways, especially after Josiah's death in 608. Jeremiah no doubt favoured the reformation at first, though conscious that it was not radical enough, and often acquiesced in merely because of royal authority. To him the spiritual message of the Book of Deuteronomy, with its insistence on the covenant relationship between Jehovah and his people, was infinitely more important. This background must be kept in mind if the remaining chapters of the Book of Jeremiah are to be intelligible.

The words of the Book of Deuteronomy echo in Jeremiah's advocacy of the covenant in Chapter xi. Jehovah bids him pronounce His curse on men disobedient to the covenant He made with their fathers

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at the Exodus, and exhorts them to be faithful to it and take warning from the fate of their ancestors. They have not done so, but have gods in every city, Baalim in every Jerusalem street. Therefore Jeremiah must not pray for them, for the Lord will not hear.

Suddenly a welcome bit of narrative appears: Jehovah warns Jeremiah that the men of Anathoth, irritated by their townsman's advocacy of the reformation, threaten his life if he does not cease. Their resentment was natural, for the priesthood of Abiathar resident in Anathoth were fiercely opposed to the monopoly of worship granted to the Zadokites in Jerusalem. Jeremiah was as ignorant of the plot "as a gentle lamb led to the slaughter"; Jehovah tells him that those who have plotted against him will die without remnant.

A DISCREDITED prophet, with his life in danger, Jeremiah asks the Lord why the wicked prosper, and how long the land is to suffer for their wickedness. The answer is a summons to more strenuous service:

> If thou hast run with the footmen, and they have wearied thee, then how canst thou contend with horses? and if in the land of peace, wherein thou trustedst, they wearied thee, then how wilt thou do in the swelling of Jordan?

Even his own family have been treacherous, and he must not trust their fair words.

A brief oracle (xii, 7-17) describes the devastation of Judah by neighbours, who are punished by exile; God will have compassion and restore them if they repent and declare their allegiance to Him.

Five brief fragments occupying Chapter xiii can be briefly described.

The Loin Cloth. Jeremiah is ordered to buy and wear a linen loin-cloth, which has not been in water, and then to hide it by Euphrates. When he fetches it afterwards it is spoilt and useless. Even so Israel and Judah, who had been close to Jehovah, will become good for nothing.

The Jars. As empty jars are filled with wine, even so the Lord is filling His people, including princes, priests, and prophets, with drunkenness, and they shall be destroyed.

The Darkness. Give glory to Him who causeth the darkness ere it overtake you on the mountains.

The King and the Queen Mother. Tell them of approaching humiliation. All Judah will be carried away into captivity. The king in question is Jehoiachin.

The Sin of Jerusalem. Those from the north come with punishment for sin. The Ethiopian will change his skin, the leopard his spots, ere the Jews cease to do evil. Because they have forgotten God they shall be scattered.

A harrowing description of a severe drought follows. The people confess their sin, and appeal to Jehovah to dwell with them and not be as a traveller through the land. He refuses to hear them or Jeremiah's prayer for them: He is determined to consume them. Jeremiah answers that prophets have assured them of immunity from sword and famine. Jehovah says they are lying prophets, who themselves shall fall by sword and famine; Jeremiah shall cry, Let me weep without ceasing for the slain, by the sword in the country, by famine in the city.

Again the people acknowledge their sins and the sins of their fathers, and appeal to the Lord not to break His covenant with them; the heathen gods cannot give rain; He alone can. The Lord replies that though Moses and Samuel intercede He will not be moved from His resolution; the people will be cast out, and their fate is described in a terrible passage:

> Such as are for death, to death; and such as are for the sword, to the sword; and such as are for the famine, to the famine; and such as are for the captivity, to the captivity.

The prophet bewails his lot, he is the object of such general hatred, though he has done nothing to deserve it. The Lord promises to strengthen him. He replies with words of dedication. His sufferings and loneliness have been for the sake of the Lord, Whose words have been his joy. But will his pain be perpetual, his wound incurable? The answer is not praise for the past, but implied rebuke. If he is willing to render absolute obedience, he shall be God's spokesman, protected against all enemies. He is forbidden to marry and have children, for the children born in Judah, and their parents, are doomed to grievous deaths; Jeremiah must not mourn nor lament them; nor must he go to the house of feasting, for "the voice of mirth and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride" is to cease. He must announce that this is because they and their fathers have been idolatrous and disobedient; therefore they will be cast into exile, and hunted from their hiding-places. In after days they will speak of the Lord not as bringing them forth from Egypt, but from the lands where they have been scattered. Double punishment will be theirs, but from the ends of the earth nations will recognize the folly of idolatry, and the Lord will show them His might.

'Blessed is the Man that Trusteth in the Lord'

THE sin of Judah is so deeply engraved upon hearts and altars that it has kindled an everlasting anger in God; their treasuries shall be scattered and they shall serve their enemies in a strange land. He who trusts in man is cursed, but:

> Blessed is the man that trusteth in the LORD, and whose hope the LORD is.
> For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit.

Man's heart is deceitful, but the Lord knows it, and rewards men according to their works.

Jeremiah asks for God's healing and help. He is taunted with the failure of his prophecies: God is his refuge and he asks that not he but his persecutors shall be confounded.

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JEREMIAH'S BIRTHPLACE VERGES "THE DESOLATE WILDERNESS"

North-east of Jerusalem is Anathoth, native town of the most poignantly poetical of all the Prophets—lonely, great-hearted Jeremiah. Growing up within sight of the Desert of Judea, he drew much of his imagery from its barren slopes stretching to the Dead Sea. He was familiar with the howling and haunts of wild beasts; with the scorching heat and the "dry wind of the high places in the wilderness" (Jeremiah iv, 11). The present village is chiefly inhabited by shepherds who take their flocks from pasture to pasture, but rest and water them, as shepherds have done from time immemorial, at the Ain Farah Gorge, traditional location of the twenty-third Psalm.

Photo. American Colony in Jerusalem

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VISION BY THE RIVER CHEBAR

The description of the vision which accompanied Ezekiel's call to the prophetic ministry is so elaborate in its symbolism that pictorial representation is beset with unusual difficulties. Very different from Raphael's definite conception and design (*see* page 673) is the treatment of the subject by the 19th-century painter Paul Falconer Poole. The latter does not attempt to delineate the apparition of the "four living creatures" with four wings apiece (Ezekiel i, 4-6) on the storm-riven sky.

In the foreground of the picture, to be seen in the National Gallery (Tate), Millbank, London, seven of the Prophet's fellow-exiles are grouped round him. He alone, entranced, is able steadfastly to face the approaching vision. "Behold, a whirlwind came out of the north, a great cloud, and a fire infolding itself, and a brightness was about it, and out of the midst thereof as the colour of amber, out of the midst of the fire." The English painter essayed a suggestion of that glory.

Paul Falconer Poole, 1807-1879

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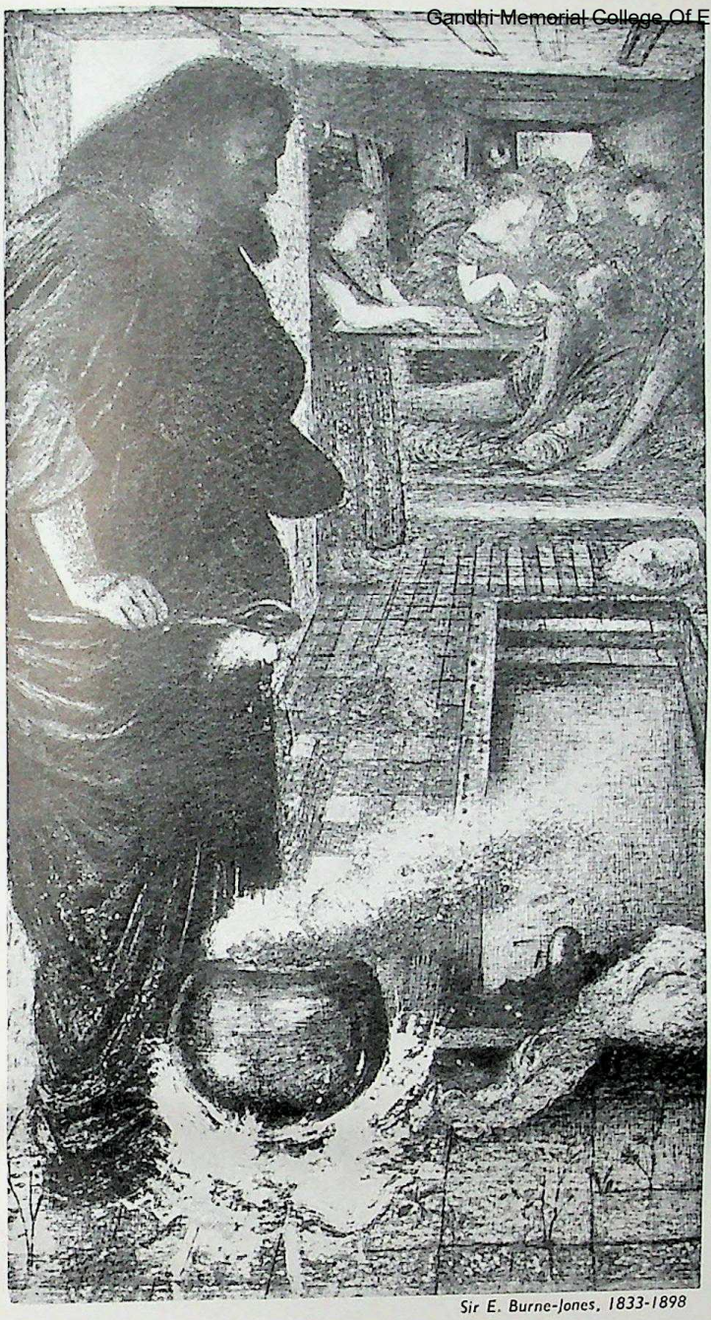

Sir E. Burne-Jones, 1833-1898

"SET ON A POT . . . MAKE IT BOIL WELL"

In his drawing Ezekiel and the Burning Pot, (National Gallery, Millbank, London), Sir Edward Burne-Jones depicts the Prophet in his house acting the parable which he was commanded to speak when the word of the Lord came to him: "The King of Babylon set himself against Jerusalem this same day" (Ezekiel, xxiv, 2). It was the final prophetic utterance before the destruction of the city—city and siege being typified by the rusty cauldron set on the crackling fire.

The widely-popular painter of Scriptural scenes, Frederic Shields, depicts a fervently-ecstatic Ezekiel with "the hand of the Lord," the trance of spiritual vision, upon him. The prophet holds a shophar, Hebrew national trumpet, made of a ram's horn. He is compared to the sentinel whose duty it was to blow the trumpet to warn the people when attack threatened (Ezekiel xxxiii, 2-7): "So thou, O son of man, I have set thee a watchman unto the house of Israel."

Frederic Shields

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"THE SMITH WITH THE TONGS WORKETH IN THE COALS"

Palestinian workers in metal were renowned in the days when Nebuchadnezzar carried away the " smiths from Jerusalem and had brought them to Babylon " (Jeremiah xxiv, 1). Still the same kind of tools and methods are in use by such native craftsmen as the tinker pictured. A goatskin connected with pipe embedded in the earth and coming up under the temporary hearth of stones, forms the bellows (Jeremiah vi, 29) into which air is taken by the worker's manipulation of the two pieces of wood. Tongs hold the copper cauldron—which has been cleaned with sand and water preparatory to tinning—over the fire just as described in Isaiah xliv, 12. When the metal is thoroughly heated, the tinker takes a wad of rags and rubs tin, previously melted, round the sides and bottom of the pot.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

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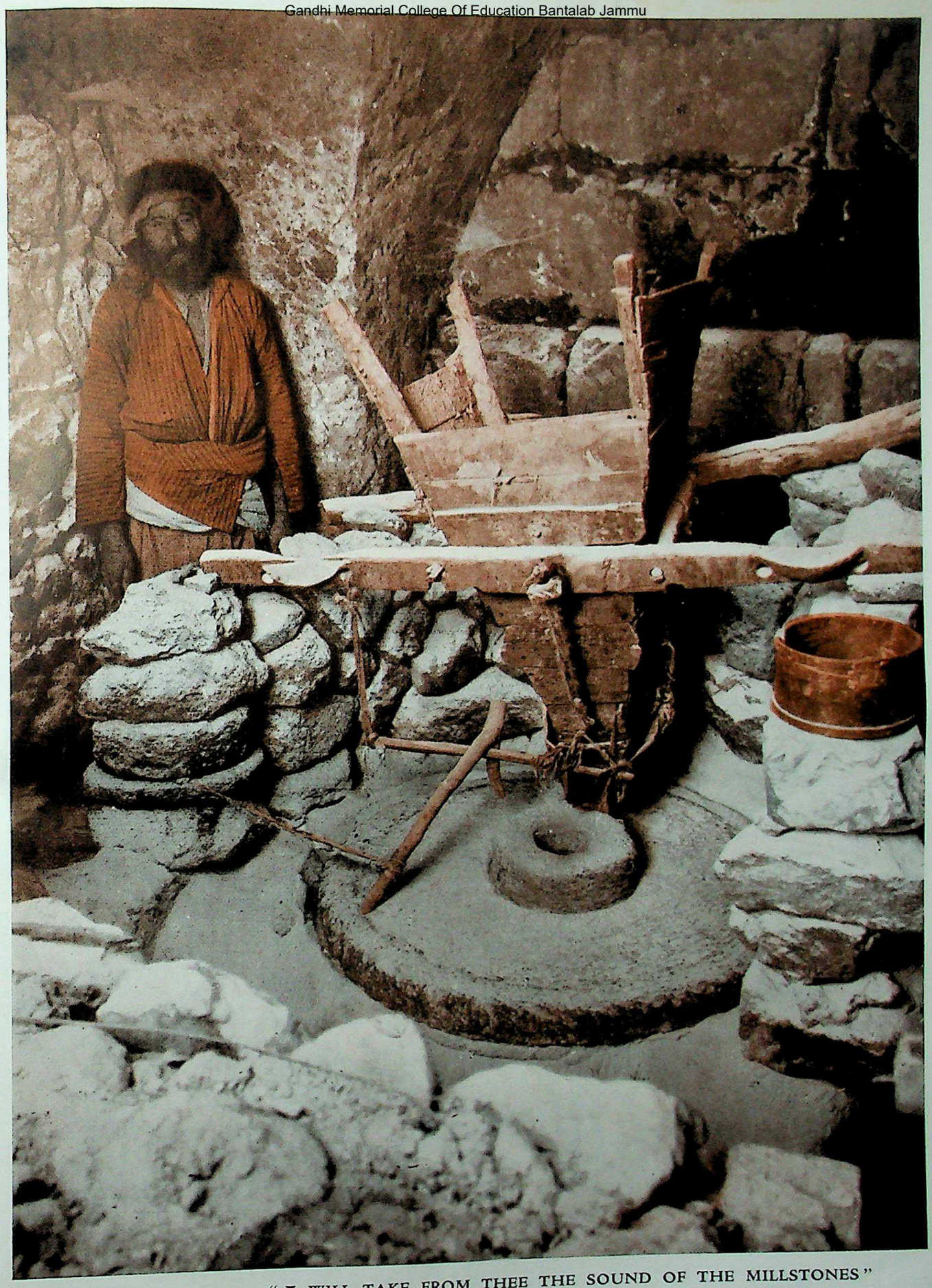

"I WILL TAKE FROM THEE THE SOUND OF THE MILLSTONES"

This primitive flour mill in Jerusalem is operated on the undershot principle. Running water turns a small wheel to which the crankshaft is fitted which sets the millstones revolving. The wheat is contained in the box seen above these. It has a trap connected with a rod on which rests another rod, trailing on the upper stone; this action continually shakes the trap and allows the wheat to percolate into the centre hole of the millstone—the box has been slightly pushed to one side so that the hole can be shown in the photograph. After the grain has been ground between the stones the meal is thrown out of the edges to be scooped up in the bin seen on the right. Bread being a symbol of life, Jeremiah's imagery of the silent millstones (xxv, 10) denotes utter desolation.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

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Signore D'Andrea

DANIEL REVEALS THE DREAM

Astrologers, soothsayers, sorcerers, and Chaldean wise men having failed to tell Nebuchadnezzar his forgotten dream and its meaning, the king in his wrath condemned them all to death. Daniel, receiving the interpretation in a vision, saved the magicians of Babylon from execution and correctly declared the dream to Nebuchadnezzar.

Daniel's interpretation explained the great image seen in the dream as a symbolic representation of four mighty empires. The stone that "was cut out of the mountain without hands" and broke in pieces the image was the Messianic Kingdom which "shall stand for ever" (Daniel ii, 45, 46). In the picture of Daniel before Nebuchadnezzar(Academy, Venice) by the Italian painter D'Andrea, the king is depicted acknowledging God as the "Lord of kings and a revealer of secrets."

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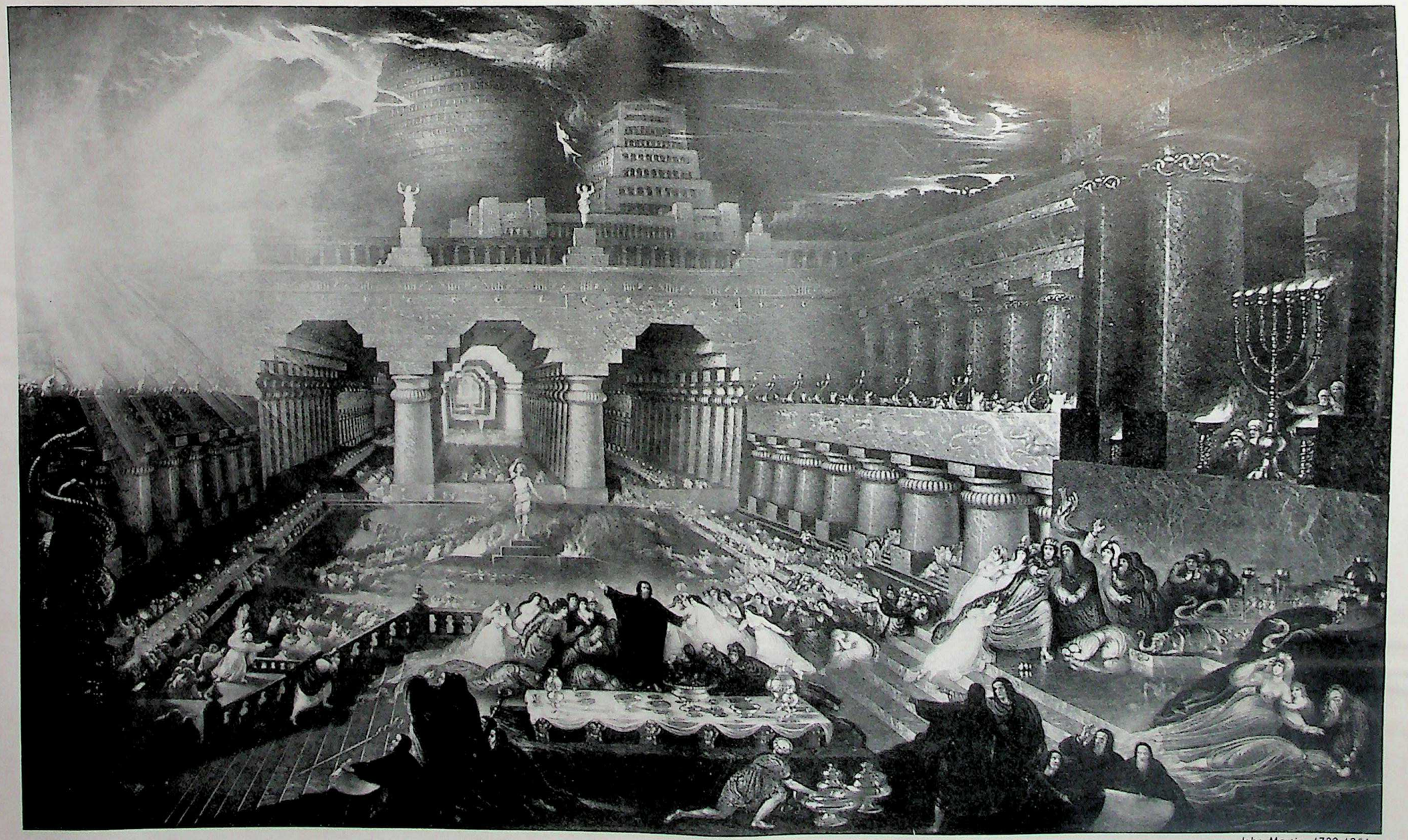

John Martin 1789-1854

"THOU ART WEIGHED IN THE BALANCES AND ART FOUND WANTING"

Belshazzar, feasting in the palace at Babylon, thought to do special honour to his gods by drinking with the assembled guests out of the golden cups which Nebuchadnezzar had brought from the Temple in Jerusalem and placed in the E-sagila, temple of Marduk. The banqueting-hall was brightly lit by candelabra, and where the light was most brilliant there suddenly appeared the writing upon the plaster wall. The king, seated on the dais of the throne niche, "saw the part of the hand that wrote" (Daniel v, 5, 25), and all the people facing him were dismayed to note his terrified collapse. John Martin's well-known picture of the scene shows Daniel, sent for at the Queen's suggestion, standing in the middle of the hall interpreting the tragic import of the written words, "Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin."

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"THE WILD ASSES DID STAND IN THE HIGH PLACES"

During a time of severe drought in Judah, when the cisterns and water-pits were empty, the streams had run dry, and all the people mourned on account of the dearth, Jeremiah, communing with God, noted the plight of the deer and the wild asses, "who snuffed up the wind" in the vain hope of moisture in the air. "Their eyes did fail, because there was no grass" (Jeremiah xiv, 6). Wild asses are not now to be found in Palestine, but they still inhabit the Arabian desert. Though similar in appearance to the domestic donkey they differ widely from it in nature. Love of freedom is their strongest characteristic. They dread the sight of men, and even when caught young cannot be broken into beasts of burden.

Photo Mondiale

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Jeremiah is ordered to stand in the gate of the city, and tell the people to keep the Sabbath according to the commandment. If they obey, the city shall abide for ever, and kings and princes ride through the gates. If not, a fire will be kindled in the gates, that will devour the palaces and never go out.

In one of the best-known passages of the book, Jehovah bids Jeremiah go to the potter's house, where he sees the potter making a marred vessel anew. Israel is as clay in God's hands, and could be remade. But blessing must be withheld because of sin, and Israel must be punished if she refuse to reform. She has done a thing horrible and unknown, and unparalleled in nature, even forsaken God for idols. Therefore calamity will fall upon her.

Another plot against the prophet comes to his knowledge. Men are taking counsel how they might destroy him, setting slanders afoot, and watching his words. He asks the Lord to defend him, and then follows (xviii, 21-23) a vindictive plea for vengeance which we can only hope is not Jeremiah's.

Jeremiah is told to bring an earthen bottle, and to take the elders of priests and people into Topheth, the Valley of Hinnom. There he proclaims judgement on Jerusalem for idolatry, child sacrifice, and the shedding of innocent blood. Again the valley is renamed Slaughter, and its grim future foretold. The city itself will be a ruin, an astonishment, and a hissing, after a siege when people will eat their children. The bottle is then broken; even so will the Lord break people and city, which shall be unclean like Topheth itself.

The Prophet Placed in the Stocks

JEREMIAH returns to the Temple, and repeats the doom there. Pashhur, the chief officer, hears him, strikes him, and puts him in the stocks, releasing him the next day. Jeremiah renames him "Terror on every side," to himself and to his friends; them he shall see fall by the sword; he and the people and the treasures of Judah shall be carried into Babylon, where he will die.

A passage (xx, 7-15) of the *journal intime* type follows, in which Jeremiah ponders on the nature of his prophetic mission and the suffering it involves. The Lord has deceived him, and made him a reproach and derision. Nevertheless he cannot refrain from speaking. The word is as a fire in his bones. He is slandered, and even his friends try to catch him in his speech. In words which Job was to use later he curses the day he was born and the man who announced his birth. Why was he born to see labour, sorrow, and shame?

Zedekiah, apparently not long before the fall of Jerusalem in 586, asks Jeremiah to inquire of the Lord about Nebuchadnezzar's attack, in the hope that He will deliver. God answers that defence is useless; He Himself will fight against the city in His fierce anger. Those that survive pestilence, famine, and sword will fall captive, and Nebuchadnezzar will slay them without pity. God sets before them the way of life and the way of death; those who stay in the city will die, those who give themselves up to the Chaldeans will save their lives, "yet so as by fire." The city will be taken and burnt.

Judgements Pronounced on the Kings of Judah

NEXT we have a series of Oracles on the Kings of Judah (xxii, 1—xxiii, 8). 1. If the King will do justly, Kings shall ride through the gates of the city; otherwise the King's house shall become a desolation. 2. Though Judah be as well-wooded as Gilead and Lebanon's crest, it shall become a wilderness. When the nations ask why the city has met this fate, the answer will be that they forsook Jehovah for other gods. 3. A lament for Jehoahaz (Shallum). He will never see his native land, but die in exile. 4. Jehoiakim's unlamented death predicted. Woe to one who builds a fine palace with forced labour, oppresses the people, and does not follow his father in righteous ways and regard for Jehovah, but lives for covetousness and oppression. He shall die unwept and be left unburied. 5. The people would not hear in prosperity, now they shall be forsaken. Though Jehoiachin (Coniah) were precious as a signet ring, the Lord will cast him off, and give him to the Chaldeans. He and his mother shall die in exile, and none of his children shall sit on David's throne. 6. Zedekiah (not mentioned by name). For the calamities of his reign the faithless shepherds, who will receive due punishment, are responsible. The Lord will gather the remnant of his flock from all countries, and give them faithful shepherds. The days will come when a righteous King, "The LORD is our Righteousness," shall reign over Judah and Israel. Then Jehovah will be known not as deliverer from Egypt, but as gatherer from the dispersion.

These are followed by the Oracle on the False Prophets (xxiii, 16-40). The prophets and priests profane the house of the Lord; the prophets of Samaria caused Israel to sin, those of Jerusalem encourage evildoers. For the profanation of all the land they will be punished. The Lord is against them and their lying dreams. If they continue to use the term, "the burden of the LORD," which they have perverted, the Lord will cast them away. These words overwhelm Jeremiah and break his heart.

Then comes the oracle concerning the baskets of figs (xxiv). The Jews left in Palestine after the first captivity began to give themselves airs and to claim that they had escaped because of their merits. The good figs are those in exile, who have the Lord's favour; He will bring them back, and they will serve Him. The uneatable figs are those left behind—Zedekiah, those in Palestine, and those in Egypt—they will be destroyed.

In the fourth year of Jehoiakim Jeremiah tells the people that for twenty-three years he has been delivering Jehovah's word to them and they have not hearkened. Therefore Nebuchadnezzar will come and destroy them, and Babylon shall be supreme for seventy years. Then Babylon will be punished in

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turn, and many nations will make the Chaldeans their servants.

God gives Jeremiah the wine-cup of His fury, to make the nations drink of it—Jerusalem and Judah, Egypt, and many other kingdoms. They shall drink and fall and rise no more. If they refuse, Jeremiah must insist, asking if God begins judgement with His own people, should others go unpunished? The Lord shall roar against Judah. His voice shall reach the ends of the earth, for He has a controversy with all nations; evil goes from nation to nation, and God's slain shall be everywhere. Let the rulers lament for their people, for the fierce anger of the Lord is upon them.

Jeremiah Saved from Priestly Fury

TO the relief of the historian, Baruch's biography, with welcome dates, begins in Chapter xxvi. Oracles already included are again mentioned, and can be fitted into their place. An excellent example of this is Chapter xxvi itself, the episode at the beginning of Jehoiakim's reign which contains Jeremiah's speech (vii). In the Temple Court Jeremiah announces that unless the people repent and hearken to Jehovah, He will treat the Temple like that of Shiloh, and make Jerusalem a curse to all nations. The priests and prophets threaten him with death, but when they accuse him to the princes and people Jeremiah maintains his ground; they may do to him as they will, but he must speak God's word—only if they amend their ways will the Temple be saved. The princes and people recognize his claim and agree he does not deserve death. The case of Micah is quoted: Hezekiah did not put him to death when he foretold the destruction of the Temple, but entreated Jehovah's favour, and the punishment was not inflicted.

Uriah prophesied on Jeremiah's lines. Jehoiakim sought to slay him, and did so, though he had fled to Egypt. Jeremiah, protected by Ahikam, escaped death.

At the beginning of Zedekiah's reign Jeremiah is ordered to put a yoke on his neck, and inform the kings of Edom, Moab, Ammon, Tyre and Zidon, who want Zedekiah to join them against Babylon, that Jehovah has given their lands to Nebuchadnezzar; they should serve him, and not listen to lying predictions. Nations that submit to Babylon will be left undisturbed, the others will be consumed. Zedekiah is advised to submit and so escape sword, pestilence and famine. False prophets were saying the Temple vessels would soon be brought back from Babylon. Jeremiah challenges them to pray that the vessels still left will not be taken, for Jehovah has declared they will follow the others.

Hananiah the prophet tells Jeremiah in the presence of priests and people that Jehovah has broken Babylon's yoke, and within two years Jehoiachin and the Temple vessels will be restored. Jeremiah wished it might be so: in the olden days those who prophesied peace were only recognized as genuine when their prophecies came true. Hananiah breaks the yoke on Jeremiah's neck; even so would Nebuchadnezzar's yoke be broken within two years. Jeremiah makes no reply, but later delivers to Hananiah Jehovah's word, that for the wooden yoke he had broken he must make a yoke of iron, Babylon's yoke on all nations. He was false, and he would die that year, which he did in the seventh month.

Jeremiah writes to the captives, advising them to settle down and raise families in Babylon; in seeking Babylon's peace they should have peace. After seventy years God would cause them to return: His thoughts towards them were of peace, and He would gather them from all nations; He will listen to their prayers:

> And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart.

On those left in Jerusalem—"vile figs"—He will send sword, pestilence, and famine, and make them a hissing among the nations. They must beware of false prophets. The exiles were boasting that in Ahab and Zedekiah, God had raised up prophets for them. They were lying prophets, whom Nebuchadnezzar would put to death for immorality and falsehood.

Shemaiah had written to Jerusalem, blaming Zephaniah, the Temple overseer, for not punishing Jeremiah, the madman, for his letter to the exiles. Zephaniah read this letter to Jeremiah, who foretold that Shemaiah would have no man to dwell among the people, and would not see the good Jehovah had in store for them.

The Future of Israel and Judah

IN view of the restoration, Jeremiah is ordered to write down all Jehovah's words. The day of God, the day of travail, shall issue in deliverance, when the yoke shall be broken, and Israel serve strangers no more. Though Zion has been an outcast, her incurable hurt shall be healed and her enemies shall suffer retribution. Jerusalem shall be rebuilt, and under a native ruler rejoicing and gladness shall be known—"Ye shall be my people, and I will be your god." God's fury is to burst on the wicked, on whom His purpose will be fulfilled, but He will be a God to all the families of Israel, for He has loved her with an everlasting love. There will be songs and gladness, with Ephraim going up to Zion. A great company from the ends of the earth will Jehovah lead back. The nations shall hear of Israel's restoration and rejoice.

Rachel, their ancestress, weeps for her lost children, the northern tribes in exile. The tears may be stayed, for Ephraim will return. Repentant, he will plead with Jehovah, Who will have mercy, for He yearns over him, even while chastising him. The Lord appeals to Israel to return without delay.

Judah, too, is to be restored, and Jehovah's blessing on the Temple invoked. The depleted land shall be filled; Jehovah will watch over it to build and to plant. No longer will children suffer for their fathers' sins, but now be responsible for their own.

Then comes the climax of the book, the peak of Old Testament religion (xxxi, 31-34), Jeremiah's prophecy of the New Covenant. (See quotation in page 718.)

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"I WENT DOWN TO THE POTTER'S HOUSE." In his cave this Palestinian potter moulds his clay into graceful vases. Shapes and methods have persisted that were old in the days of Jeremiah's craftsman who "wrought a work on the wheels" (Jeremiah xviii, 3), and whose control of fabric and pivoted disks the Prophet compared to Jehovah's treatment of nations. The potter puts the clay on the smaller wheel connected by a rod with the larger and heavier wheel. He strikes the latter with his foot. This turns the rod so that the upper wheel revolves till it whirls while he shapes the clay.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

The Old Covenant, made at the Exodus, had been inscribed on the tables of the law, or written in a book. The people had broken it and proved unequal to its demands. The New Covenant is written on men's hearts, warm, renewed, responsive. No one will need to teach concerning God, for all will know Him. He will forgive and forget.

In 587 Jeremiah is imprisoned by Zedekiah for prophesying that Jerusalem would fall and the king be taken to Babylon. Hanamel, his cousin, asks him to exercise his right to buy a field in Anathoth. This is a test of the prophet's belief in the message he has proclaimed; Jeremiah sees that God wishes him to show his confidence in a future beyond the exile. He buys the field, giving the deed to Baruch to preserve, for God said:

> Houses and fields and vineyards shall be possessed again in this land.

Then, doubting, he prays to the Lord (xxxii, 17-25), mighty and all-powerful, merciful and just, Who sees all and rewards accordingly, Who delivered Israel from Egypt and gave Canaan to a people who proved disobedient and so suffered evil. Jerusalem was on the point of falling to the Chaldeans, and yet the Lord said, "Buy the field." The Lord asks, "Is anything too wonderful for Me?" He declares He will give the polluted city to the Chaldeans, and recounts the evils of the people—idolatry, child sacrifice, and the rest. Nevertheless, He will bring His people back; they shall be His people and He will make an everlasting covenant with them, and then fields in land now desolate and given over to the Chaldeans shall be bought with all the formalities of law.

Jehovah tells Jeremiah, in the court of the guard, to call and He will answer and show him great things. Houses are being broken up for defences; they are filled with the dead bodies of men whom Jehovah has slain for wickedness; yet Jehovah will restore and heal and cleanse, and make Jerusalem glorious. Joy shall return to the desolate land, and normal life be resumed. A King, "The LORD is our Righteousness" shall reign. There shall never lack David's seed for the throne, or the sons of Levi to sacrifice, while there is day and night.

When the only cities uncaptured by Babylon were Jerusalem, Lachish, and Azekah, Jeremiah tells the King his fate and that of the city. He will die in peace, with royal honours, and not by the sword.

In the early days of the siege, Zedekiah induced his people to release their slaves, but princes and people went back on this. Jeremiah reminds them their fathers had disobeyed the law ordering release of slaves every seven years; they themselves had broken a solemn promise made in the Temple; therefore God sets them free to sword, pestilence and famine.

Jehovah bids Jeremiah offer the Rechabites wine in the Temple. They refuse, for Jonadab their

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ancestor had commanded them not to abandon the nomad life—not to drink wine or build houses, but to dwell in tents. They had come into Jerusalem only because of the armies of the Chaldeans and Syrians. The Rechabites obey these injunctions, but the Jews do not obey Jehovah's. Therefore the threatened evil will fall upon them, but the faithfulness of the Rechabites shall be rewarded; one of them shall always minister to Jehovah.

In 604 the Lord bids Jeremiah write all the words spoken to him; on hearing them Judah may repent. Jeremiah dictates them to Baruch, and tells him to read them to the people in the Temple on a fast day. Baruch obeys, and Micaiah informs the princes of the contents of the roll. They send for Baruch, who reads it to them and tells them he has written it at Jeremiah's dictation. They warn him and Jeremiah to go into hiding, and then tell the king about the roll. He asks Jehudi to read it to him, and cuts off and burns the columns as they are read, though they entreat him not to do so. The roll is completely burnt, and the arrest of Jeremiah and Baruch ordered, but they cannot be found. The Lord tells Jeremiah to rewrite the prophecies, and inform the king that he shall have none to succeed him, that his dead body shall lie unburied, and he, his seed and his servants all be punished, and that all written in the roll will come to pass. Baruch writes another roll, adding "many like words."

Zedekiah, who did not hearken to Jeremiah, sends to the prophet, not yet imprisoned, to ask his prayers. The Chaldeans had raised the siege of Jerusalem on the report of the coming of an Egyptian army. Jeremiah tells Zedekiah not to be deluded, the Chaldeans will return and take and burn Jerusalem.

Taking advantage of the raising of the siege, Jeremiah leaves the city. He is stopped, and accused of deserting to the enemy. Despite his denials, the princes beat him, and throw him into a dungeon. Brought before Zedekiah he reiterates Jehovah's message and protests against his imprisonment, pointing out that the Chaldeans have already returned as he had foretold. He asks not to be sent back to the dungeon, and is removed to the court of the guard, and supplied with bread.

From Prison Pit to Royal Chamber

FOUR of the princes urge the king to put Jeremiah to death for his treasonable prophecies about the fall of the city. Zedekiah gives him into their hands, though without leave to slay him; they cast him into the dungeon, where his feet sink in the mire. Ebed-melech, an Ethiopian eunuch, recognizing that this means Jeremiah's death, rushes to the king, who commands that he should be taken up. Ebed-melech throws down rags for Jeremiah to put under his arm-holes and draws him up with ropes. He is placed in the court of the guard. Zedekiah asks him if he has any counsel, and promises that, whatever he says, he shall not be betrayed to the princes. Jeremiah repeats Jehovah's word: only if Zedekiah surrenders will he and the city be spared. Zedekiah replies that the Chaldeans would hand him over to Jewish deserters. The prophet says this will not happen, and implores him to surrender; he has been misled by his friends, who now abandon him when *he* is sinking in the mire. Zedekiah tells Jeremiah to keep his counsel secret; if asked what his audience with the king has been about, he must say he has asked not to be thrown back into the dungeon.

When Zedekiah sees the city about to fall, he escapes by night, only to be overtaken in the plains of Jericho. His sons and his nobles are killed; his eyes are put out, and he is carried to Babylon. Jerusalem is destroyed, and only the poor of the people left. Nebuchadnezzar gives orders for Jeremiah's protection, and he is set at liberty. The Lord declares that Ebed-melech's life shall be spared because he trusted in Him.

Carried Captive into Egypt

NEBUZARADAN, the captain of the guard, tells Jeremiah, now in chains with the other prisoners, that it is Jehovah who has punished the people. He offers the prophet the choice of going to Babylon, or remaining with Gedaliah, who has been made governor. Jeremiah chooses to remain with Gedaliah at Mizpah, where the Jews, scattered among the neighbouring nations as well as from Judah, are gathering together. Gedaliah urges them to serve the Chaldeans faithfully. Johanan warns him that Baalis, King of Ammon, is sending Ishmael to assassinate him. When Gedaliah refuses to believe this, Johanan, aware of the confusion which would follow Gedaliah's death, offers to murder Ishmael secretly. Gedaliah is still trustful, and Ishmael kills him and the Jews and the Chaldeans with him. Next day eighty men from Shechem and Shiloh, coming in sorrow for the fate of the Temple, are deceived and slain by Ishmael, who spares ten because they know of hidden stores of food. The remaining people he is carrying off from Mizpah to Ammon, but Johanan pursues him, and catches him up at Gibeon. The captives escape and join Johanan, and Ishmael, with eight men, flees to Ammon. Johanan and the captains and their company, fearing the Chaldeans, plan to go to Egypt. They ask Jeremiah to ascertain Jehovah's will and promise to obey it. Jeremiah declares they should stay in Judah, where they will be unmolested; if they go to Egypt they will find not peace but sword and famine, and they shall die there, suffering the fate of the Jews in Jerusalem.

The captains reply that Jeremiah is not speaking in Jehovah's name, but at the instigation of Baruch: the Chaldeans will slay them if they stay, or take them into captivity. They therefore take the people, including Jeremiah and Baruch, to Daphne in Egypt.

Jeremiah is ordered to bury great stones at the entry of Pharaoh's house in Daphne, and tell the Jews that Jehovah will set over the stones the throne of His servant Nebuchadnezzar, who shall smite Egypt and burn its temples.

Jeremiah reminds the Jews that they have seen God's punishment on idolatry in Jerusalem. Why are they bringing ruin on themselves by the same sin? He will destroy the remnant in Egypt, and none shall return. The people reply that they will continue to

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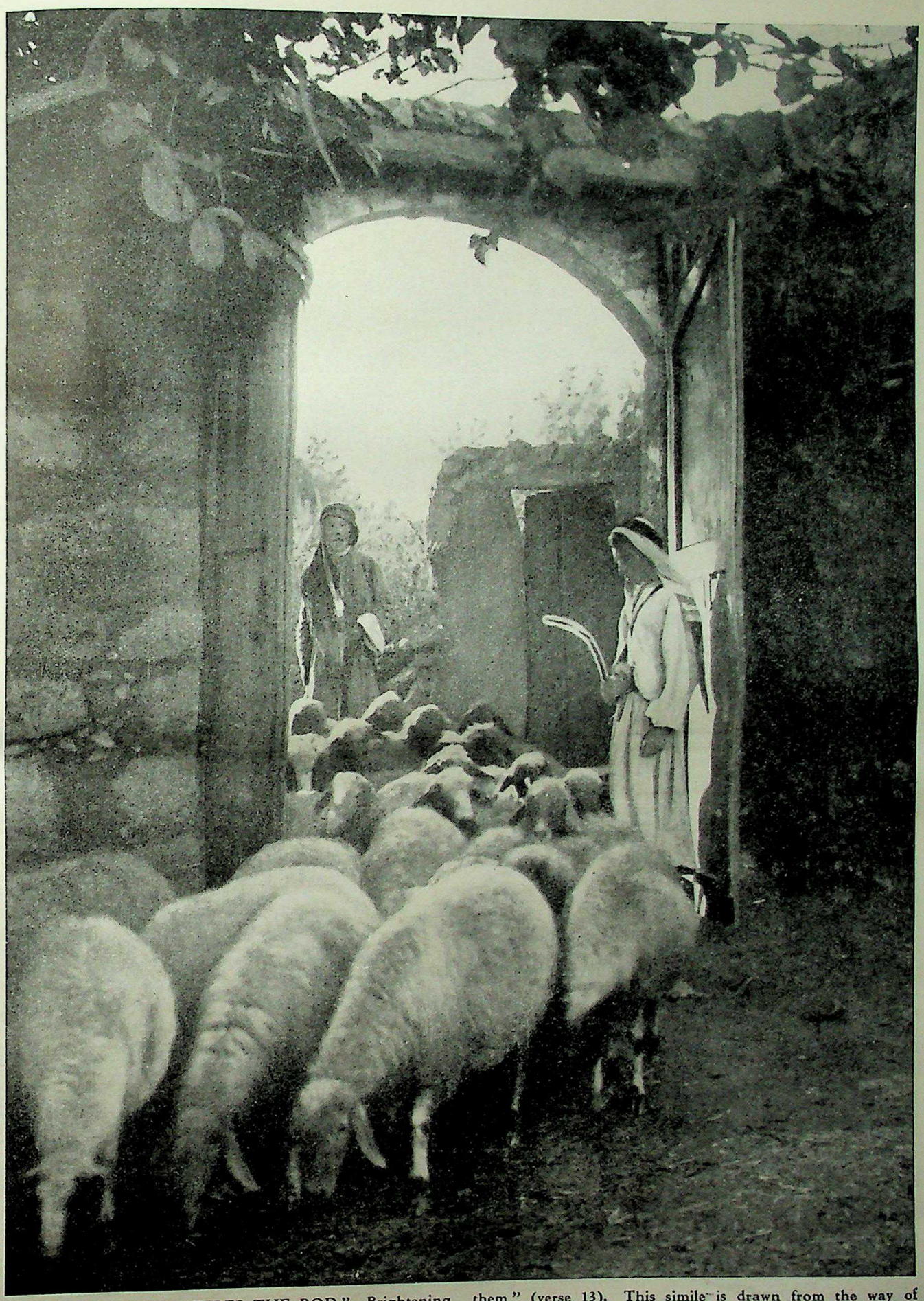

THE SHEEP "PASS UNDER THE ROD." Brightening Jeremiah's burden of prophecy, a beautiful passage containing promise of pastoral peace and happiness occurs in Chapter xxxiii. The restored remnant of the people are likened to flocks that pass securely "under the hands of him that telleth them" (verse 13). This simile is drawn from the way of counting sheep—a way used for the tithing of herds since the time of Moses. At the close of day, as the shepherd nears the fold he hastens ahead of his bleating charges to stand in the entrance and number them as they pass in beneath the rod.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

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MAKING CAGES OF CANE AS IN JEREMIAH'S DAY. The Prophet used the symbol of a cage full of birds dishonestly trapped by the fowler to illustrate his reproach against the criminals found among the people who filled their houses with stolen goods (Jeremiah v, 27). There is a great demand in Palestine for these cages or crates manufactured by basket makers from reeds as of old. Overcrowded with live chickens, they are a sad sight in most market-places. In Biblical times vendors of doves and pigeons for sacrifice kept the birds in such coops.

Photo, Newtonian Illustrated Press Service

worship the Queen of Heaven as they had done in Judah: all was well with them then, and disaster came when they ceased. Jeremiah answers that their land is desolate and they are suffering evil because God could bear their idolatrous worship no longer. When all the Jews in Egypt have been slain, they will know whose word stands, and a sign to them will be that Pharaoh will be given into the hands of his foes.

Next comes the Oracle to Baruch (xlv). When Baruch wrote the roll, God spoke to him. Baruch had complained that the Lord added sorrow to his pain and he found no rest. God replied that if Baruch is weighed down with sorrow, what must His sorrow be? Baruch must not seek great things for himself. Evil is coming on all flesh, but his life will be preserved.

In the chapters that follow (xlvi-li) there are various oracles against the surrounding nations. The first has to do with the conquest of Egypt by Nebuchadnezzar. The army of Egypt has been defeated at Carchemish by Nebuchadnezzar. Egypt rose up like the Nile, boasting she would cover the earth, but it was the Lord's day of vengeance, and for Egypt there is no healing. All the nations have heard of her shame. The Lord has overthrown the strong one. Pharaoh is but a noise, Egypt shall be desolate. Destruction has come from the north. Her warriors like cowardly calves flee before the enemy. She is like a serpent in a wood before an army of wood-cutters. But Jacob need not fear. He will be saved and restored to his land: the nations where he has been scattered shall be destroyed, but he will only be chastened.

Then there is a reference to the Philistines. The waters from the north will sweep over the land and cause panic. The Philistines shall be spoiled. How can Jehovah's sword be still, when it must perform the task He has given?

Moab shall be overthrown and spoiled. Chemosh, her god, and the people shall go into captivity together. Moab has been at ease from youth, and not disciplined; now he shall be driven forth, and shall be ashamed of Chemosh, in whom he has trusted. All his cities shall be laid waste, and the people take refuge in the rocks. As he made Israel a derision, even so shall he be a derision. The pride of Moab, who magnified himself against Jehovah, shall be brought low. None shall escape death or exile. But in later days Moab shall return.

Has Israel no sons that Ammon has seized Gad? But Ammon shall be driven forth, and Israel resume possession, though afterwards Ammon shall return.

Have the people of Edom lost their wisdom? Let them flee, for the Lord brings calamity. Edom will not be able to find hiding places; he will be wiped out, and his widows and children left to Jehovah's care. Bozrah and the cities shall be laid waste; all the nations will marvel at the fate of proud Edom, who dwells on high, a fate like that of Sodom and Gomorrah. Like a lion or an eagle the enemy shall come, and the mighty men of Edom shall be as women.

Hamath and Arpad are afraid; Damascus in terror tries to flee. But her warriors are helpless; fire shall devour Ben-hadad's palaces.

Of the Arab tribes, Kedar shall be spoiled. The people of Hazor must flee afar off to a nation secure from invasion, for Nebuchadnezzar plans against them. Their camels and cattle shall be booty, their land desolate, and they themselves shall be scattered.

Elam's bow shall be broken, and the people scattered to the four winds, to be restored in the latter days. Finally, there are oracles referring to Babylon. These are confused and contain much repetition;

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obviously they date from later than Jeremiah. Babylon herself shall be a prey to a foe from the North (the Medes). In that day Israel and Judah shall seek God, and He will make with them an everlasting covenant (l, 4-5). They have been lost sheep, and their foes have not offended in punishing them, for they have been God's instruments. The Jews should flee from Babylon, for Jehovah is raising great nations against her, and she shall be brought low by the vengeance of Jehovah. Babylon will be punished for her treatment of Israel, even as Assyria had been, and Israel shall be restored to Palestine. The Lord has opened His armoury against Babylon; the spoilers from all sides are invited to come and help in the destruction. Israel and Judah were held fast captive, but:

> Their redeemer is strong; the LORD of hosts is his name: he shall thoroughly plead their cause, that he may give rest to the earth, and disquiet the inhabitants of Babylon.

The thoroughness of Babylon's destruction is described in fierce invective. The king of Babylon is in terror at the fame of the foe Jehovah sends; and at the noise of her fall the earth trembles.

Israel and Judah are not forsaken by God. All should flee from Babylon, who has made all the earth drunken; it is the time of the Jehovah's vengeance.

Like a dragon Nebuchadnezzar devoured Israel, but God will plead Israel's cause and take vengeance, and Babylon shall become heaps. The heaven and earth and all in them shall sing for joy over Babylon's fall.

Jeremiah orders Seraiah, Zedekiah's chamberlain, taken to Babylon with Zedekiah, to read a scroll he gives him on arriving in Babylon, and then to sink the scroll in the Euphrates, saying "Thus shall Babylon sink and not rise again."

The narrative of the capture of Jerusalem (lii) is taken from II. Kings, and tells of the fall of the city and Zedekiah's fate. A list of the Temple vessels taken to Babylon follows, and the number of the people carried into exile is put at 4,600.

In the thirty-seventh year of his captivity the king of Babylon shows favour to Jehoiachin and releases him from prison. So this great book concludes with a picture of the unhappy captive, the last of the long line of Judah's sovereigns, living in Babylon amongst the other pensioner-kings of the mighty emperor

NATURAL HISTORY OF THE BIBLE. IV

'Every Thing that Creepeth'

PALESTINE has always had its share of creatures that creep and crawl; and the Jews of Biblical times, living for the most part out of doors, were naturally ever conscious of them. Hence such references as "a serpent by the way, an adder in the path."

Unfortunately it is often difficult to identify the actual animal mentioned, and this uncertainty is necessarily reflected in the list of reptiles and amphibia of the Holy Land given below. But in each instance the probable or possible species referred to in the Bible is indicated.

Reptile, etc.	*Scripture References*	*Notes*
Adder	Genesis xlix, 17; Numbers xxi, 6; Deuteronomy xxxii, 33; Job xx, 14; Psalms lviii, 4; Proverbs xxiii, 32; Isaiah xxx, 6; Micah vii, 17, Matthew iii, 7; vii, 10; Acts xxviii, 3; Romans iii, 13, etc.	The serpent tribe is denoted by 7 Hebrew and 3 Greek words. Four of the former are indiscriminately translated "adder" or "asp" and indicate (1) the horned *Cerastes*; (2) a viper, (3) the cobra; (4) *Daboia zanthina*. In the N.T the translation is "serpent," "viper," and "asp." St. Paul's viper (Acts xxviii, 3) was probably *Coronella laevis*
Asp; *see* under Adder		
Chameleon	Leviticus xi, 30	One word in this verse is translated "chameleon" in A.V. and "land crocodile" (possibly monitor lizard) in R.V. Another word, rendered "mole" in A.V., is "chameleon" in R.V.
Cockatrice	Isaiah xi, 8; xiv, 29; lix, 5; Jeremiah viii, 17	May be either a general name or a definite species of poisonous snake
Dragon	Isaiah li, 9; Jeremiah li, 34; Ezekiel xxix, 3, xxxii, 2; Micah i, 8; Revelation xii, 3, etc.	In the first three references given, the crocodile is denoted. Elsewhere it may be the jackal or a land-reptile
Frog	Exodus viii, 2, 7; Psalms lxxviii, 45; cv, 30; Revelation xvi, 13	One of the plagues of Egypt. Two species are found in the Holy Land: *Rana esculenta*, the edible frog; and the little green tree-frog
Leviathan	Job xli, 1; Psalms lxxiv, 14; civ, 26; Isaiah xxvii, 1	Almost certainly the crocodile, except in Psalm civ, where the word simply means "sea-monster." Some authorities think the great python is referred to in Isaiah xxvii, 1
Lizard	Leviticus xi, 30	Over 40 species of lizard are found in Palestine, the most common being the green lizard and the gecko
Serpent	Genesis xlix, 7; Exodus vii, 9, 10; Numbers xxi, 6-8; Job xx, 16; Psalms lviii, 4; cxl, 3; Proverbs xxiii, 32; xxx, 19; Isaiah xi, 8, etc.	Used sometimes generically, sometimes to indicate various venomous snakes (*see* under Adder), and sometimes for any land or sea monster. In Numbers xxi, 6-8, the term "fiery serpents" is probably with reference to the fever caused by snake-bite
Tortoise	Leviticus xi, 29	Probably some kind of lizard is intended, but there are many kinds of land and water tortoises in Palestine
Viper	Job xx, 16; Isaiah xxx, 6; lix, 5	A small species of poisonous serpent. *See also* under Adder

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Reproach and Comfort from Jeremiah

JEREMIAH was the last of the prophets before the exile. In a nation corrupted by commercial prosperity and by contact with other peoples he preached the old strict morality, and with increasing severity depicted the wrath in store for the wayward.

There is none braver than he in the whole heroic story of the Old Testament. In spite of punishment, imprisonment, and mortal danger, he persisted in giving his message to the Jews, and in prophesying according to the light that had been vouchsafed him.

Something of Jeremiah's nobility and courage can be felt in his words, as he exhorted his people to seek the Lord, and promised His comfort and help.

The Book of Lamentations, though not now attributed by Biblical scholars to Jeremiah, is still widely associated with his name, and two extracts from it are given below.

A LAMENT FOR ISRAEL

Jeremiah viii, 18—22

WHEN I would comfort myself against sorrow, my heart is faint in me. Behold the voice of the cry of the daughter of my people because of them that dwell in a far country: Is not the LORD in Zion? Is not her king in her? Why have they provoked me to anger with their graven images, and with strange vanities? The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved. For the hurt of the daughter of my people am I hurt; I am black; astonishment hath taken hold on me. Is there no balm in Gilead? Is there no physician there? Why then is not the health of the daughter of my people recovered?

THE RESTORATION OF ISRAEL

xxxi, 1—17

AT the same time, saith the LORD, will I be the God of all the families of Israel, and they shall be my people. Thus saith the LORD, The people which were left of the sword found grace in the wilderness; even Israel, when I went to cause him to rest. The LORD hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee. Again I will build thee, and thou shalt be built, O virgin of Israel: thou shalt again be adorned with thy tabrets, and shalt go forth in the dances of them that make merry. Thou shalt yet plant vines upon the mountains of Samaria: the planters shall plant, and shall eat them as common things. For there shall be a day, that the watchmen upon the mount Ephraim shall cry, Arise ye, and let us go up to Zion unto the LORD our God. For thus saith the LORD; Sing with gladness for Jacob, and shout among the chief of the nations; publish ye, praise ye, and say, O LORD, save thy people, the remnant of Israel. Behold, I will bring them from the north country, and gather them from the coasts of the earth, and with them the blind and the lame, the woman with child and her that travaileth with child together: a great company shall return thither. They shall come with weeping, and with supplications will I lead them: I will cause them to walk by the rivers of waters in a straight way, wherein they shall not stumble: for I am a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my firstborn.

Hear the word of the LORD, O ye nations, and declare it in the isles afar off, and say, He that scattered Israel will gather him, and keep him, as a shepherd doth his flock. For the LORD hath redeemed Jacob, and ransomed him from the hand of him that was stronger than he. Therefore they shall come and sing in the height of Zion, and shall flow together to the goodness of the Lord, for wheat, and for wine, and for oil, and for the young of the flock and of the herd: and their soul shall be as a watered garden; and they shall not sorrow any more at all. Then shall the virgin rejoice in the dance, both young men and old together: for I will turn their mourning into joy and will comfort them, and make them rejoice from their sorrow. And I will satiate the soul of the priests with fatness, and my people shall be satisfied with my goodness, saith the LORD.

Thus saith the LORD; A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation, and bitter weeping; Rachel weeping for her children refused to be comforted for her children, because they were not. Thus saith the LORD; Refrain thy voice from weeping, and thine eyes from tears: for thy work shall be rewarded, saith the LORD; and they shall come again from the land of the enemy. And there is hope in thine end, saith the LORD, that thy children shall come again to their own border.

A NEW COVENANT

xxxi, 31—34

BEHOLD, the days come, saith the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD: but this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; after those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people.

And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.

DESOLATION OF ZION

Lamentations i, 1—2

HOW doth the city sit solitary,
that was full of people!
How is she become as a widow!
She that was great among the nations, and princess among the provinces,
How is she become tributary!

She weepeth sore in the night, and her tears are on her cheeks;
Among all her lovers she hath none to comfort her:
All her friends have dealt treacherously with her,
They are become her enemies.

GOD'S MERCIES

iii, 22—33

IT is of the LORD's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not.
They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness.
The LORD is my portion, saith my soul; therefore will I hope in him.

The LORD is good unto them that wait for him, to the soul that seeketh him.
It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the LORD.
It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth.

He sitteth alone and keepeth silence, because he hath borne it upon him.
He putteth his mouth in the dust; if so be there may be hope.
He giveth his cheek to him that smiteth him: he is filled full with reproach.

For the LORD will not cast off for ever:
But though he cause grief, yet will he have compassion according to the multitude of his mercies.
For he doth not afflict willingly nor grieve the children of men.

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Jeremiah

II

The Story of the Book

Jeremiah's Contribution to Old Testament Thought

by PROF. T. H. ROBINSON, Litt. D., D.D.

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JEREMIAH lived through one of the great critical periods in world history. He was born, probably, between 650 and 640 B.C., when the Assyrian empire, under the last of its great kings, Ashurbanipal, was still at its zenith. True, its latest acquisition, the Egyptian Delta, had been lost by 651 B.C., but, to all appearance, the rest of the empire stood as firm as ever. Babylon, always the most turbulent of Assyrian subjects, had revolted under the king's brother, Shamash-shum-ukin, but the movement had come to an end with the capture of Babylon in 649 B.C., and Ashurbanipal had no further trouble in the south. To the east, the Elamites had suffered a crushing defeat in 655 B.C., and though some help was given to the Babylonian rebels, the internal divisions of the Elamites made their hostility to Assyria ineffective. The northern and north-eastern barriers in the mountains were well maintained, and Assyria was on friendly terms with the great kingdom of Urartu.

Palestine and Syria had long been under complete Assyrian domination. The conquest of the country had been slow but continuous since 734 B.C., and the greater part of the land was ruled directly by the Assyrians, governors being appointed by the court of Nineveh. The last districts to be reduced to this complete subjection were Ammon, Moab and Edom (690 B.C.) and the Phoenician coastlands (680 B.C.). In 645 B.C., apart from Judah, the only places which maintained even the appearance of native rule were a few cities on the coast to the extreme south-west, Gaza being the chief. No one could have suspected that the great empire of Assyria was near its end, and Nineveh was still the unrivalled mistress of the world.

Babylon Regains Her Ancient Power

JEREMIAH'S life work was not yet at an end when Jerusalem fell in 586 B.C., and by that time the face of the world had changed. Assyria had not merely been deposed from her high place, but had for ever ceased to exist as an independent state, and Nineveh lay a mass of ruins, already passing into that oblivion from which the site was rescued only a century ago. Under the young and energetic Necho, son of the "liberator," Psammetichus I, Egypt had for a moment recovered something of her ancient vigour, and had made one more bid for the hegemony of civilization. Her attempt had failed, she had gone down with Assyria, and, though she retained her independence, her fate was settled; she was never again to take the first place among the nations of the world. A new power had arisen, and Babylon, under her Chaldean rulers, had regained, with even greater power and brilliance, the position she had held in the days of Abraham.

We have no state record from the reign of Ashurbanipal after the year 639, though he remained on the throne till 626. It seems that in this interval the whole of western Asia was shaken by the inroads of wild peoples from the north, to whom the Greeks gave the names Scythian and Cimmerian. Our knowledge of their doings is vague, and we have few details, but it is clear that they gave the Assyrian empire a shock from which it never recovered. In 626 B.C. the Chaldean Nebopolassar revolted in Babylon, and made himself an independent king. It was not long before he was at war with Assyria, and he was able to count on the help of the Medes. Curiously enough, Necho took the Assyrian side, and, year after year, led an Egyptian army to the help of his failing ally.

Egypt's Last Bid for World Dominion

THE war was desperately fought, and more than once the Assyrians inflicted a severe defeat on the Chaldeans. But the patience of Nebopolassar was inexhaustible, and in 614 B.C. the Median army took the old capital of Assyria, Asshur, the Chaldeans coming up immediately afterwards and fraternizing with the victors. In 612 B.C. Nineveh itself fell, but some kind of resistance was maintained farther west until the new capital, Haran, fell in 610 B.C. Details after this date are lacking, but we know that Necho continued his expeditions (that which we know best took place in 608 B.C.) until his final overthrow under the walls of Carchemish in 605 B.C.

This last is one of the decisive dates of history. We may assume that Necho was not fighting alone; he must have had the last remnants of the Assyrian armies with him. Not only, then, was it the last battle in which the troops of that once mighty kingdom ever engaged, it put an end to Egyptian hopes of world dominion. Once or twice Egyptian armies crossed the frontier into Palestine, but they went no farther, and even there were singularly ineffective. Two of the old world powers had vanished from the stage, and Babylon was left supreme. The victor of Carchemish was not Nebopolassar himself, but his greater son, Nebuchadrezzar (Nebuchadnezzar), who came to the throne a few months later, on the death of his father.

These great events naturally did not leave Judah untouched. The Scythian raids appear to have reached the country in 626 B.C., and were probably the occasion on which both Jeremiah and his contemporary Zephaniah received their call to the prophetic ministry. Five years later it was clear that the power of Assyria over Judah had ceased, and the noble young king, Josiah, was free to undertake a complete religious reform. While its actual character was determined, and its course directed, by a Book of the Law found during repairs to the Temple, it is clear that it could not have been carried out if the Assyrians had still been masters of Palestine, for Josiah's measures included the sweeping away of all foreign cults, necessarily including that which was imposed by Assyria on all her subject and tributary states and provinces. The Book of the Law is usually identified with Deuteronomy, and it is clear that Josiah did make a determined attempt to put the precepts of that code into practice. He himself was almost the ideal king, from the eastern point of view, and seems to have made much the same

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kind of impression on his contemporaries as David had done three hundred years earlier.

Any hopes Jeremiah and his friends may have had were dashed to the ground by the events of the year 608 B.C. Necho, on his northward march to Mesopotamia, met and killed Josiah. Details are obscure; Chronicles speaks of a pitched battle; the language of Kings is incompatible with such an event, and implies that Josiah was put to death by Necho, possibly as a traitor. The people had good reason to distrust Josiah's eldest son, and placed the second son, Jehoahaz, on the throne. Three months later, Necho, presumably on his return from Mesopotamia, deposed Jehoahaz and substituted his elder brother, Jehoiakim. The new king was the antithesis of his father in every way except in his strength of character. Proud, cruel, ostentatious and vain, he seemed desirous of emulating Solomon in the splendour of his court and in the magnificence of his buildings. Like Solomon, too, he made free use of the system of forced labour, so hated by all Israelites as contrary to the fundamental rights of man. He went far to restore the old cults, and to undo much of the work that his father had done; in particular the old worship of the "Queen of heaven" was revived, and practices were permitted which the prophetic spirit regarded as abominations. Internally, Judah was in a worse state than she had ever been, for even Solomon's tyranny had exempted the south from the system of forced labour and compulsory contributions.

Jehoiakim was maintained, doubtless, by Egyptian power, and it was probably the combination of domestic and foreign oppression which gave rise to Habakkuk's great questions. Till 605 B.C. he was faithful to Necho, but after Carchemish Judah inevitably passed into the dominions of Babylon. Jehoiakim, however, could not quite shake himself free from Egyptian influence and the African power, no longer able to make direct attacks on her conqueror, took every opportunity of stirring up trouble in the border state. Matters came to a head in 597 B.C., when Jehoiakim openly revolted against Nebuchadrezzar. A Chaldean army was soon in the land, but Jehoiakim died before Jerusalem was captured. His young son, Jehoiachin, saw that resistance was hopeless, and surrendered to the Chaldeans after a nominal reign of three months. He himself was taken captive to Babylon, together with many of the best people in the land.

THE new king was a third son of Josiah, named Zedekiah. He was as weak as his father and brother had been strong and the nobles left in place of the deportees were comparatively worthless men. Judah was constantly on the verge of revolt against Babylon, and it seems that in 591 B.C. Zedekiah was summoned to Babylon to defend himself. The warning went unheeded; in 588 B.C. he broke into open revolt. The inevitable Chaldean invasion followed, and, though the Egyptians made a futile demonstration which raised the siege of Jerusalem for a time, the enemy returned, and in 586 B.C. the city itself was taken. Zedekiah was captured, his sons killed, and his eyes put out, before he was carried off to Babylon. Jerusalem was left a heap of ruins, with its Temple burned and its walls destroyed. The Hebrew kingdoms had come to an end, and the nation was never again to have an independent native government in a land of its own.

Some attempt was made to keep the people together, and Nebuchadrezzar appointed Gedaliah, a member of one of the old noble houses, as the Babylonian governor.

"THE PLACE OF TOPHET." In Jeremiah's time the Valley of Hinnom, below the south wall of Jerusalem, was a place of defilement "filled with the blood" of innocent children, "burnt offerings unto Baal" (Jeremiah xix, 4, 5). The Prophet was bidden to proclaim there the slaughter that would desolate Judah. The photograph shows the view down the Valley to the junction—site of Tophet—with the Kidron valley and the ridge of the Mount of Olives in the background. Breaking the skyline on the left is the Russian Tower and in the centre the Benedictine Convent above Siloam village.

Photo. W. L. Emmerson

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He made his headquarters at Mizpah, and, for a time, it seemed as if the old national life might be resumed. But Gedaliah's position roused the envy of his neighbours, and, with the help of Ammon, a certain Ishmael, a member of the royal house, made and carried out a plot for the assassination of the governor. There was still some kind of armed force, led by Johanan, and they pursued the murderer and recovered his spoil. But they dreaded the possible vengeance of the Chaldeans, and with some reason, for Nebuchadrezzar did make a third deportation of Jews, five years after the fall of Jerusalem.

They made up their minds to escape to Egypt, and, in spite of the advice of Jeremiah, took with them such people as were still able to form a community. It is in Egypt that we hear the last of the prophet, still uttering his old protest against the cult of strange deities, and telling his fellow-countrymen that if they insisted on worshipping the Queen of heaven, then they must be cut off from the old covenant with Jahweh (Jehovah); He would cease to be their God, and they would cease to be His people And it was in Egypt that the prophet died—tradition says stoned to death by his people. But a man who loved his nation and his God as Jeremiah loved Israel and Jahweh, could have found no peace in life when once these two had been finally sundered one from another.

"PLANT GARDENS AND EAT THE FRUIT OF THEM." Writing to the captive Hebrews in Babylon a letter full of inspiring confidence in God's protection, Jeremiah impresses on his people that they should make good use of their captors' kindly treatment and build houses, plant gardens, marry and live prosperously in the far country "for in the peace thereof shall ye have peace" (Jeremiah xxix, 5-7). The Arab cultivator seen above hoes his melon patch in a palm-fringed Mesopotamian garden irrigated by a canal from the waters of Babylon.

The period which saw the end of the Assyrian nation, the last failure of Egypt to achieve world dominion, and the rise of the Babylonian empire, was an age of great men. Above all others tower the figures of Nebopolassar and of his yet greater son, Nebuchadrezzar, but Necho was no weakling, and the desperate resistance of the dying Assyrian state attests the presence of strong men there also. Such people do not choose the feeble and insignificant as their instruments and servants, and they must have had about them men of ability and of force, like Nebuzaradan, who was entrusted with the settlement of affairs in Judah after 586 B.C. Yet the very names of most of them have perished, and those of whom we know are remembered today for their relation to the little hill state of Judah, one of the most insignificant items in the whole world process. And among the men of Judah there is one, neither king nor soldier nor statesman, who stands out supreme above all his age for the contribution he made to man's knowledge of God. For us, the rest may have an archaeological or even an historical interest; Jeremiah speaks with a living voice, and has a message to give us which is just as valid today as it was when he first gave it utterance. For he was a prophet, and the prophetic word was a statement of an eternal truth. Though it might be couched in language suited to the comprehension of his contemporaries, and though the shape in which the thought was cast may be that of a distant age, the heart and essence of his teaching is timeless, to endure as long as man has need of divine revelation.

Every stage in human development has its own characteristics, and God's methods in revelation are always adapted first to the age in which the revelation first was given. To the modern mind an ancient prophet might make little or no appeal, and his message would pass unheeded. He was a man possessed by the Spirit, and that possession showed itself in strange ways. The Divine Power would come upon the prophet suddenly, and his behaviour while under its influence was strange and startling. It was not only the Spirit of God that could possess men; there were other forces also in the world, and the gods of other nations had their prophets. It is enough to think of the prophets of Baal overcome by Elijah on Mount Carmel.

To the outward eye it was often impossible to distinguish the false prophet from the true, and men allowed

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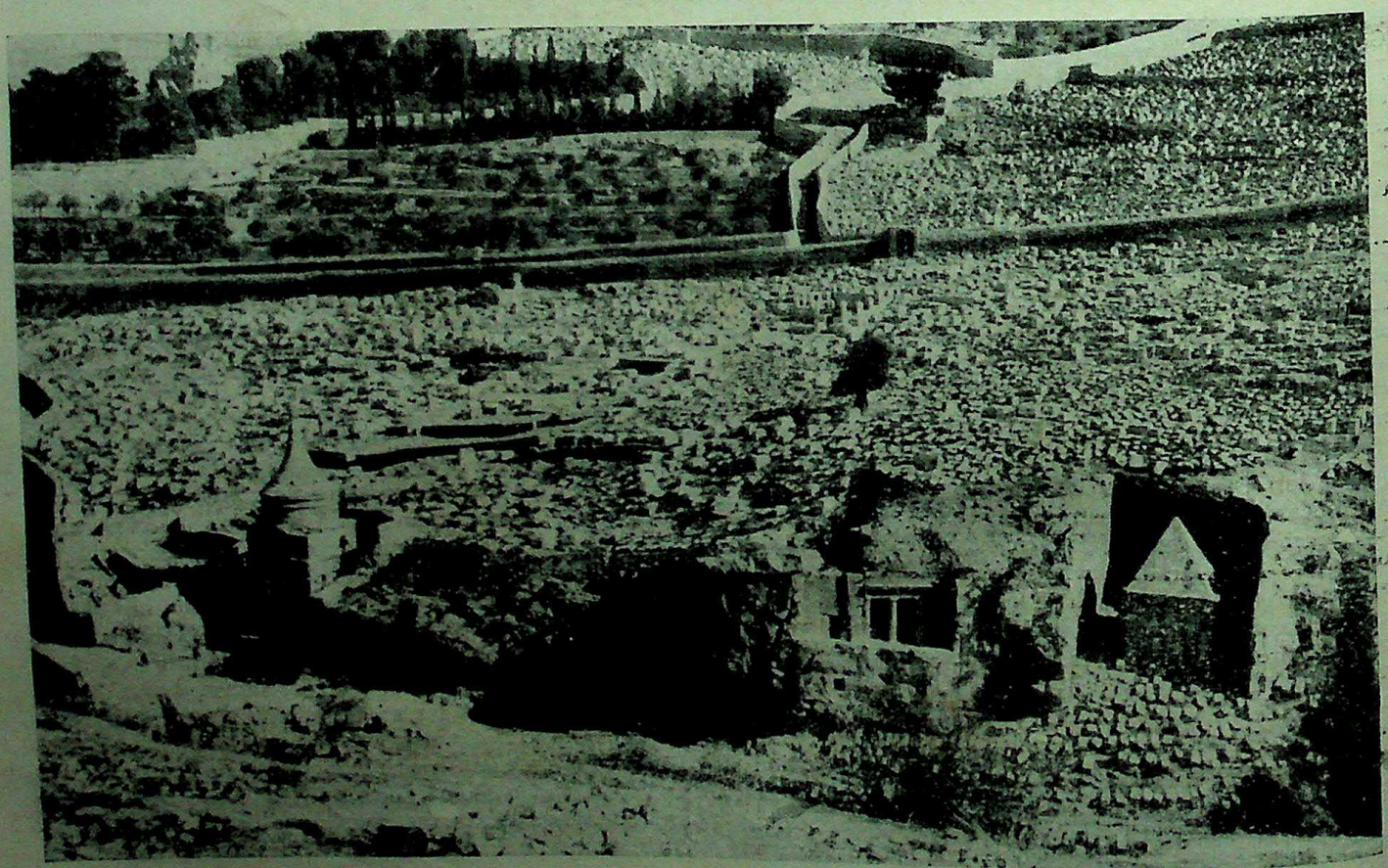
themselves to believe that even God could entrap and betray His servants through a deceitful message. But, when a prophet fell into the transports of divine possession, everyone about him knew that he was under the control of some superhuman power; whatever he said and did his person was sacred, and his experience was the result of direct and unmistakable contact between himself and God. With the outward manifestation, certifying the authenticity of the message to the watching people, there came also an inward experience of a remarkable kind. The prophet became conscious of a world which was normally strange to him, and which was hidden from the rest of mankind. He did not cease to be aware altogether of the usual things about him, but upon these there was superimposed another grade of experience, having as much objective reality for the prophet as that to which all men are accustomed. He saw and heard things which none other could see and hear. He himself could talk with One who was hidden from the rest of men, and often there was played before his eyes a drama of which he was the only human spectator. The voices and the visions which made up that second grade of experience were recognized by him, and by those about him, as the direct communication of God.

The unique prophetic experience was seldom of long duration; soon the vision faded and the voices were stilled, as the prophet returned to the normal conditions of his daily life. It then became his duty to transmit to others what he had seen and heard. The message was sometimes for himself alone (this is true of Jeremiah more than of any other prophet, as far as we know), but far more often it was intended for the people as a whole, or, perhaps, for some individual among them, king, priest or statesman. To judge from what has been handed down to us, the prophet usually gave his message in the form of poetry, the proper medium for the expression of "emotion remembered in tranquillity." Most of the revelations which we know were short, but carried tremendous power, since they were an account of the very words the prophet had heard God utter. When he began his speech with the words "Thus said the Lord" ("saith" hardly brings out the force of the phrase) he knew that it was the divine message that he was handing on, for he had himself just heard the very voice of God speaking it to him. And others knew it, too, for they had seen him in the throes of divine possession, and had watched the inner fire of his soul blazing through him to the outer world.

So it was natural that men should remember and repeat the words which had thus come to them from God. The short poetic form made this easy for them, and when, at last, the event finally attested the accuracy and authenticity of the message, the words of a prophet thus proved true became doubly precious. Men wrote them down, in order that they might not rest solely on a fallacious memory. Sometimes more than one person thus committed the same revelation to writing, and there are several instances in which a prophetic utterance has come down to us in two, slightly varying, forms.

The sense of a priceless treasure in the living words of God led men to take a further step. They began to make small collections of the revelations, and, as a rule, tried to keep together those which, as they believed, came through the same prophet. These written collections were preserved for generations, and from time to time new revelations were added to them, revelations in which



"VALLEY OF THE DEAD BODIES." After Jerusalem had fallen Jeremiah prophesied of the redemption of Israel. The city was to be rebuilt and the valleys of Hinnom and Kidron—places of idolatrous practices, refuse and burial—were to "be holy unto the Lord" (Jeremiah xxxi, 40). On the slope of the Mount of Olives in the Kidron Valley is the Jewish cemetery. Pictured is the ancient section below the Jericho Road. The so-called Tomb of Absalom (*see* illustration in page 341) with its noticeable cupola is shown on the left and the so-called Tomb of Zechariah, the prophet, right.

Photo, E.N.A.

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"A GREEN OLIVE TREE FAIR AND OF GOODLY FRUIT"

Jeremiah used a telling symbol when he likened his beloved land and its coming destruction to a beautiful olive tree killed by a stroke of lightning (Jeremiah xi, 16). Olives have been called "meat and butter" of Palestine, the oil and brine-pickled berries eaten with wholemeal bread often sufficing the peasant for a meal. A prosperous farm near Bethlehem is the home of the charming girl portrayed. Over her dress of soft silk she wears a "tobe," a loose tunic held in place with a gaily striped sash into which she has tucked the hem of her long skirt to keep it out of the dust. Her embroidered veil, weighted by the usual crescent of coins, makes a neat and decorative headdress twisted and coiled round her long hair.

Photo American Colony in Jerusalem

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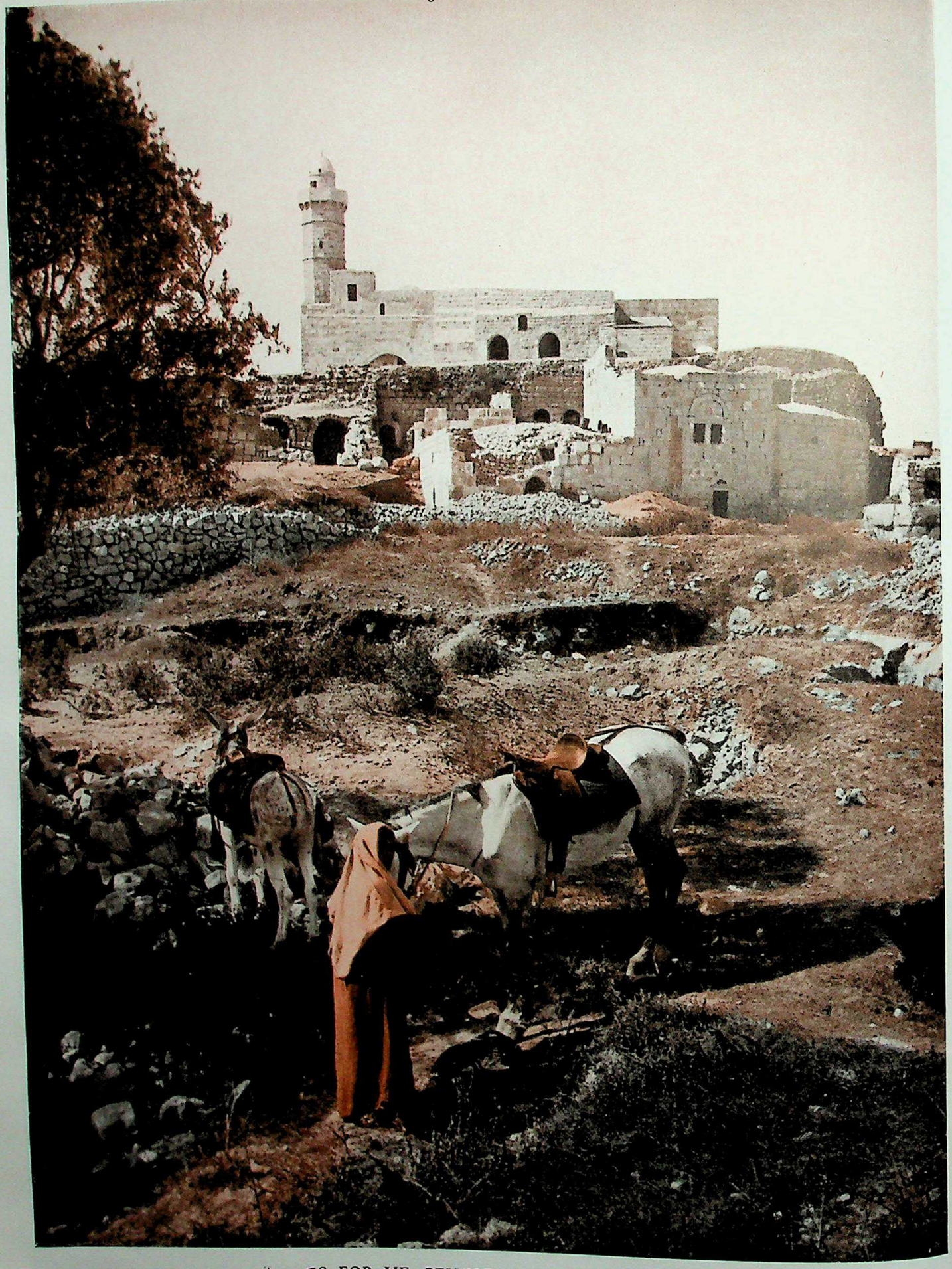

"AS FOR ME, BEHOLD, I WILL DWELL AT MIZPAH"

When Jerusalem had fallen in 586 B.C., Gedaliah, "whom the king of Babylon (Nebuchadnezzar) had made governor of the land" of Judah (Jeremiah xli, 2), took up residence at Mizpah, associated many centuries earlier with the judgeship of Samuel. There Jeremiah, released from captivity, joined Gedaliah in the hope that together they might effect the restoration of peace and order—a hope disappointed when the governor was murdered by the fanatical Hebrew prince, Ishmael. Mizpah has been identified with Nebi Samwil, village on a height 2,935 feet above sea-level and a few miles north-west of Jerusalem, occupying a commanding position. The minaret of the mosque on the summit is a conspicuous landmark. Inside the building is the so-called Tomb of Samuel, a shrine held in reverence by Moslems.

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Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

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"IS IT NOTHING TO YOU, ALL YE THAT PASS BY?"

Jerusalem personified in the First Song of Lamentations as an afflicted beggar appeals to the passers-by to witness her anguish: "Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me." Reproachfully familiar in the streets is the sight of the city's blind, beseeching charity as they stand or sit on the stones in the dust "desolate and faint all the day" (Lamentations i, 12, 13). Morning and evening, from and to the miserable hovels where they sleep, they grope their way by the walls and tap with staff or cane on the ground so that they may not stumble at the frequent steps. Of recent years fewer pathetic children like those pictured are seen. Christian and Jewish welfare centres are doing much to fight superstition and dirt, teaching mothers among the poor to cleanse flies and dust from their infants' eyes.

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"THEY TRADED IN THY FAIRS WITH HORSES, AND HORSEMEN, AND MULES"

Of old there were commercial agreements between the lands of the Bible during times of peace with regard to the interchange of products, manufactures and livestock. Ezekiel prophesying the fall of Tyre, "inhabited by seafaring men, the renowned city," enumerates the mighty traffic in mercantile enterprises of the port of nations. Trading in horses and mules from Togarmah —identified with Armenia—is included in the list (Ezekiel xxvii, 14). Large numbers of Arabian horses were later imported and were the foundation stock of the Palestinian breed. This is now deteriorated, but improvement is hoped for by again bringing in thoroughbred Arab stallions. The photograph shows farmers and horse-dealers arriving for the market at Bethlehem.

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the "collectors" recognized the inspired word of God, though sometimes they were not the work of the prophet through whom most of the revelations in the collection had come. The collectors often had definite methods, which are most interesting to study. They liked to put together revelations which dealt with the same or with similar subjects. Often they would note a word or phrase at the end of one revelation which occurred again at the beginning of another, and put the two side by side. They were particularly fond, as patriotic Israelites, of getting together revelations about foreign peoples; one might have a number which dealt with Edom, another as far as possible kept his group to Babylon.

Prophetic Revelations in Collected Form

THERE seem to be even cases where a revelation was slightly altered to make it fit another people, for instance, in Jeremiah vi, 22-26 and l, 41-43 we have the same revelation, though in the one case it is directed against Judah and in the other against Babylon. Very often it happened that the revelation as it came into a collector's hands was incomplete; a bit had gone from the top or the bottom. The parallel passages just quoted offer an admirable illustration, for while the "Judah" form is a complete whole, the "Babylon" form lacks the last two verses. Sometimes only a single line or short snatch of verse was left, but the collector, holding the least of the authentic words of God to be worth preserving, took it and put it in with the rest, though its condition might make its meaning obscure. So detached are some of these little bits that some scholars have been tempted to believe that they were accidentally inserted into the book after it was complete, but it is far more likely, in view of the facts as we know them, that they were in their present state when the collector found them.

The next step was the putting together of these small collections into larger groups. We have in the Book of Jeremiah one such fairly large section, Chapters xlvi-li, which deals entirely with foreign nations, each having a separate little collection to itself. It is worth noting that two pieces of revelation in the Edom section of this group were also taken up by the collector who put together the Book of Obadiah, and others on Moab are similarly common to Jeremiah and Isaiah. We cannot say that these revelations came either through Jeremiah or the other prophet, but at least we know that they came from God, and were transmitted by one or other of His servants, though the name of the human medium may be for ever lost to us. The main "collections" in the Book of Jeremiah are: i, 15—iii, 5; iii, 19—vi, 30; viii, 4—x, 25; xi, 15—xii, 17; xiii, 15-27; xiv, 1-10; xiv, 17—xvii, 18; xviii, 13-23; xx, 7-18; xxii, 6—xxiii, 40; xxv, 30-38; xxx, 4—xxxi, 22; xlvi, 1—li, 58.

These collections, however, are very far from comprising all that has come to us through Jeremiah himself. Earlier prophets had, on occasion, either themselves written accounts of some of their experiences or dictated them to professional scribes. We know that Isaiah did write something down, though we do not know how much it was. But in several of the prophetic books, particularly in Hosea, Amos, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Zechariah, we have accounts of greater or less length describing the inner experiences of the prophets, and written in prose, not poetry. Normally these are in the first person; it is the prophet himself who tells us what he has seen and heard. In this respect these passages closely resemble the poetic portions, but their language is much less crisp and direct, as a rule. Sometimes, it is true, we have a piece of extraordinary dignity and impressiveness, as in Isaiah vi. In an interesting little passage we have the same revelation given twice over, once in poetry and once in prose (Jeremiah xxii, 10-12), and the resemblances and differences between the two make it clear that the prose is an expansion of the poetry, probably made for literary purposes. There are long sections of material like this in the Book of Jeremiah, and it is clear that they, like the poetic revelations, were collected together. It seems probable that each little collection of the prose in the first person, or "I-prose," had a kind of heading or title, often giving the date at which the revelation described was given. The main sections of "I-prose" are; i, 3-14; iii, 6-18; vii, 1—viii, 3; xi, 1-14; xiii, 1-14; xiv, 11-16; xvii, 19—xviii, 12; xxii, 1-5 (the "I-form" is probable, but not certain, here); xxv, 15-29; xxxi, 23-40 (probable); xxxii; xxxv.

It will be noticed that these sections, together with the collections of poetic revelations already mentioned, include the whole of the first eighteen chapters of the book and a good deal of the later material. Most of them, as far as we can see, are earlier than the time of Zedekiah, though one or two of them must be placed in that king's reign. Now in Chapter xxxvi we read that in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, *i.e.*, in 605 or 604 B.C. —and, in any case, shortly after the battle of Carchemish —Jeremiah dictated to a scribe named Baruch all the prophecies that he had uttered up to that date. The roll on which they were written was burnt by the king, but a fresh one was written, and many other words were added to those first dictated. In other words, Baruch and Jeremiah kept the roll by them, and added new revelations from time to time. Now all these "I-prose" passages are written in a style which corresponds with what we know to have been that current in the latter part of the 7th century and the beginning of the 6th century B.C., and it is at least possible that the "I-prose" revelations now included in the Book of Jeremiah formed a part, perhaps the larger part, of that collection.

Baruch's Memoirs of Jeremiah

STILL, however, a large part of the book is to be considered. This consists almost entirely (Chapter lii is the only exception of any length) of narratives about the prophet, describing events in his life, some of them being highly exciting and dramatic stories. These seldom give any detailed utterance by the prophet, though they sometimes contain a summary of what he said on various occasions. Generally such a résumé is necessary in order to explain the events which are being described. The prophet is always mentioned, naturally, in the third person, and so, over against the "I-form" we have here a "He-form." One very interesting story is closely linked with an "I-form" passage, and the two passages taken together admirably illustrate the essential differences between the forms. In Chapter vii we have a message delivered by Jeremiah in the Temple, in "I-form"; it is fairly full and is probably an expansion of what the prophet actually said, to judge from the poetic utterances which have been preserved in the book. In Chapter xxvi we have another account of the same address. Only a few sentences from the actual words of Jeremiah are given to us, but these are sufficient to enable us to identify the two occasions. The greater part of this passage—in "He-form"—is taken up with describing the results of Jeremiah's speech, the danger into which he fell from the religious leaders of the people and the way in which he was rescued by the lay officers.

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This last-mentioned passage, Chapter xxvi, is the earliest "He-form" passage for which we have anything like an exact date; the events which it describes are placed early in the reign of Jehoiakim. The next date (Chapters xxv and xxxvi) is the fourth year of Jehoiakim, *i.e.*, 605 or 604 B.C., immediately after the battle of Carchemish, and dates are then fairly frequent until after the flight of Johanan with the remnant into Egypt. The conclusion is that the person who was thus interested in the events of Jeremiah's life knew that the prophet had himself arranged for the writing down of much of what had been said and done before the beginning of Jehoiakim's reign, and that from that time onwards the prophet and the biographer were in fairly close contact with one another. It is thus natural to conjecture that the writer of these "He-form" passages was Baruch the scribe. We first hear of him as linked to Jeremiah in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, very near the time of the earliest "He-form" passage, and we know that he was associated with the prophet even after the fall of Jerusalem, and was supposed to have great influence over him (xliii, 3). Chapter xlv, moreover, is a private message given to Baruch in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, when he first began to work with Jeremiah. There is thus brought before us the picture of the learned scribe, who, though himself without the prophetic inspiration, knew how to recognize the man whom God had called, and who devoted himself to his master with a loving and enduring fidelity which no unpopularity and no disaster could shake. To him we owe no small part of our knowledge of the most lovable character in the Old Testament.

"PHARAOH-HOPHRA KING OF EGYPT." This tablet from Abydos shows Apries, Hophra of the Bible, offering libation to a god. Jeremiah, warning his compatriots in Egypt that their idolatry would bring catastrophe, says that as a sign of Jehovah's anger the Pharaoh will be given "into the hand of his enemies" (Jeremiah xliv, 30). Hophra fostered a revolt against Nebuchadnezzar. In 569 B.C. he was deposed by his successor Amasis.

British Museum

A point was thus reached at which there were three kinds of material for the construction of a complete book of Jeremiah—a "Memoir and Remains," as the old phrase used to run. First there were collections of Jeremiah's prophetic utterances, written down and preserved by others, secondly there was the great collection made by Jeremiah himself and dictated to Baruch, and thirdly the accounts given by Baruch of events in the prophet's life. The last step in the construction of the book was to put all these together, and the person to whom we owe this we call the final compiler. We have no clue as to his identity, and little as to the age in which he lived; all we are sure of is that his work was not done till at least thirty years after the fall of Jerusalem, for the book records (lii, 31-34) the release of Jehoiachin in 560 B.C. We must be content to accept him as one of the countless unnamed but faithful servants whom God has used in handing on His message to us.

Poetry and Prose in the Prophecies

THIS final compiler was not content to take his material and throw it together haphazard. He took his little collections of poetic revelations, and at the head of each, serving as a kind of introduction, he placed a section from one or other of the prose collections which he had before him. He probably had reason to suppose that some, at least, of the revelations in a collection came from the period in Jeremiah's life to which a certain prose passage referred. Thus i, 15—iii, 5 contains a good deal of material which seems to have been earlier than the reform of Josiah, and this would naturally have come at the beginning of the prophet's ministry. So it is placed immediately after the "I-form" account of Jeremiah's call.

Internal evidence suggests that the whole of Chapter xiii, prose and poetry alike, may have come from the reign of the ill-fated Jehoiachin. Sometimes the subject matter of a collection, or of a part of it, had affinities with a message given in a prose section. Thus in part of the "I-form" prose section, iii, 6-18, we find the metaphor of wedlock, in which Jeremiah is the successor of Hosea and the forerunner of Ezekiel. The collection of poetic revelations which follows contains more than one piece in which this idea recurs. The compiler's preference was clearly for the "I-form" passages, for he made no use of a "He-form" passage till Chapter xix, when most of his poetic material had already been used.

Two collections he kept somewhat apart from the rest. One was a group of revelations which, though including some very sad pieces, yet had others of a brighter tone (xxx-xxxi), and this he linked with one of the most optimistic passages in the Old Testament, the story of Jeremiah's purchase of his ancestral land. The other was the long collection of revelations concerning foreign peoples, which now appears in Chapters xlvi-li. We are not quite sure whether this was its original position,

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"AS A GRAPEGATHERER INTO THE BASKETS." Judah, the remnant of Israel, is symbolized as a vine which the foe, figured as a gatherer of grapes, will thoroughly glean (Jeremiah vi, 9, 13). That the doom to fall upon the Judeans was brought about by their own wickedness, "from the least of them even unto the greatest of them," Jeremiah makes clear. The harvest-scene pictured is in a vineyard near El Bireh, the ancient Beeroth, some miles north of Jerusalem on the road to Nablus. The ripe clusters collected in baskets will eventually be taken in cart-loads to the local winepress.

Photo, E.N.A.

because the Egyptian Jews placed it in the middle of our present Chapter xxv, between verses 13 and 15. Apart from this, when all the poetic revelation material was used up, the compiler added what was left of his two prose sources, and finally appended an historical chapter which certainly did not come from Jeremiah himself. It very closely resembles the last chapter of II. Kings, but the differences are great enough for us to suppose that it was not actually copied from that book, but that both compilers drew upon a common narrative. So, at last, the Book of Jeremiah was complete.

Jeremiah's Presentation of Jehovah

NO group of men has ever made a greater contribution to man's knowledge of God than did the prophets of the Old Testament. Through all the history of the monarchy there had been handed down certain traditional principles in social and religious life from the time of Moses himself. It was only in narrow circles, however, that the original Israelite conception of God and of the demands He makes on man were fully recognized, and even there the attempt was seldom made to apply those principles to the conditions of a settled community. For the most part, the people had adopted the culture of their predecessors in Palestine including their theories and methods in religion, and, even when they offered their worship to their national God, they approached Him just as the Canaanites approached their Baals. It was but seldom that worship was confined to Jahweh (Jehovah); in most cities there seems to have been at least one other cult, though it may have been subordinate. But the cult of Jahweh itself was Canaanized, and contaminated with many of the grosser forms of the Baal nature-worship.

It was in Amos and his successors that the first protest was made against the corrupt worship of monarchical Israel, and Jeremiah was, through the prophets of the 8th century B.C. (and especially Hosea), the direct heir of the true Mosaic spirit. Like his predecessors he believed in Jahweh as a God of principle, and not a God of caprice; the whole teaching of the prophets is based on the conviction that the will of God can be known, and that His nature does not change. Like them, too, Jeremiah held that Jahweh was the Creator of the Universe, and the Lord of Nature, that He was the Master of History, controlling the destinies of nations, and using each to carry out His will. Above all, Jeremiah shared with the rest the profound belief that He was the Lord of universal morality. This was the greatest of all the prophetic contributions to human knowledge of God, and its consequence was that Israel, alone among the nations of the ancient world, succeeded in resolving the age-long antagonism between religion and morality. Closely connected with this doctrine was the prophetic insistence on the fact that God has no desire for sacrifice; Jeremiah went so far as to deny that it had been instituted at all by divine command (vii, 22). Justice, love, holiness—these are the three pillars of religion, and Amos, Hosea, and Isaiah, each in his own way, had laid stress on each one of them, while admitting the others. All this Jeremiah inherited and assumed in his teaching.

The task, then, of Jeremiah was to reinforce, and to bring home to his own day, the message common to his great predecessors of an earlier age. In this sense he had little that was new to add to their work. But there are two directions in which he broke fresh ground, and made an original and permanent contribution to human faith.

The first of these lay in the very nature of religion. Among all early peoples, religion is not a matter for a

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single man, but for the whole community. There are always two units in religion, the human and the divine, and the first view of the matter makes the community and not the individual the human unit. This was as much true of Israel as of any other people. We know that the patriarchs could and did approach God by themselves, but they were granted their experience as representatives of the race which was to spring from them. The individual, too, was at all times free of access to God, but he enjoyed this privilege in virtue of his membership of the Israelite community. The whole nation was summed up, at times, in one man; when Achan broke the "ban" and took the consecrated thing, it could be said "Israel has sinned." To cut a man off from his people was to cut him off from his God; David's bitterest accusation against his enemies was "they have driven me out from joining myself in the inheritance of the Lord, saying, Go, serve other gods." Compelled to take refuge outside the Israelite community, David had felt himself cut off also from his share in the Israelite God.

When the Prophet Stood Face to Face with God

THERE is much truth in this position, but it is not the whole truth. Jeremiah's experience was unique, even among the prophets, and it was through that experience that he made it possible for man to take a further step, and realize that God could deal with individuals, apart altogether from the human group to which they belonged. He had become a prophet almost against his will. His shy, nervous, shrinking temperament revolted against the publicity and the responsibility which his task imposed on him. It was only when he had the assurance that he would be upheld in the face of man that he yielded to the pressure. The promise given to him on the day of his call was fulfilled to the uttermost; as far as we know, he never had to shrink or quail in the face of man, though his life was often in danger. But it was otherwise in his dealings with God. The burden of his task was too great for him He loved his country with an absorbing passion, and yet, for forty years, he had to announce her doom. The conditions of the prophetic inspiration meant, too, that he actually had to undergo the experience which he foretold. The horrors which he had to describe to the people had been an actual part of his experience, and all his life he was living through the appalling scenes of pillage and bloodshed in the midst of which the Jewish state ultimately perished.

The long delay brought with it a yet deeper level of spiritual suffering. Men judged a prophet by the extent to which his utterances were fulfilled. Again and again Jeremiah had predicted the ruin of Jerusalem, again and again it had seemed imminent, and again and again it had been postponed. There is only too much evidence for the belief (to which allusion has already been made) that God might use the prophetic inspiration to mislead and ruin either one to whom the prophecy was addressed or even the prophet himself. I. Kings xxii, 19-23 furnishes one example, and another is to be found in Ezekiel xiv, 9. But the most terrible of all is in Jeremiah xx, 7, where the prophet breaks out: "Thou didst seduce me, O Lord, and I let myself be seduced; thou wast too strong for me and didst prevail," and the following verses give us a vivid picture of the mockery to which he, as a "seduced" prophet, had been exposed, and of his fruitless struggles to rid himself of the burden. In all history, save on the Cross itself, no keener agony has ever been recorded of a suffering spirit.

Other passages, terrible enough, though less so than that just cited, tell the same story (*e.g.*, xii, 1-6; xv, 15-21; xvi, 1-9). Here Jeremiah was not dealing with Jahweh as the national deity of Israel, but as his own personal God. The rest of the world was shut out; he stood face to face with God, and was alone in His presence. While he had to share in the fortunes of his people, in a deeper sense he must stand or fall by his own immediate relation to his God. Thus he was led to realize the significance of the individual in religion, and formulated his new conviction in one of the most striking of his short utterances (xxxi, 29 f., R.V.), later taken up and expanded by Ezekiel: "In those days they shall say no more, The fathers have eaten sour grapes and the children's teeth are set on edge. But every one shall die for his own iniquity, every man that eateth the sour grapes, his teeth shall be set on edge." It is impossible to exaggerate the importance of this discovery for religion. From Jeremiah's torture of spirit has come all that rich harvest of individual experience of God, which has counted for so much, both in Judaism and in Christianity He is in a very real sense the father of all the saints.

The other great contribution which Jeremiah made to our knowledge of God was in his conception of the New Covenant (xxxi, 31-34). "Covenant" is the key-word for the religion of Israel; unlike the faith of every other people in ancient times, it was based on the deliberate choice of God and the deliberate acceptance of the people —upon stated terms. It was a partnership, ratified through Moses at Sinai; if its terms were broken, the offended party had the right to dissolve it, and the last utterance we have from Jeremiah is the announcement that, since Israel would worship other gods, the bond between God and people was finally and for ever broken (xliv, 26-29). In his early days the discovery of the Law Book by Hilkiah (probably to be identified with Deuteronomy) had fired the imagination of the young prophet, and he had thrown himself with enthusiasm into the movement for reform (xi, 1-8). But the years brought disillusionment, and he had reason to believe that the very words of God were being twisted and distorted by the scribes (viii, 8). The reign of Jehoiakim shattered his hopes, and led him to the profound conviction that an externally imposed covenant, whose terms were merely written on stone, clay, or some feebler material, could never be anything more than a "scrap of paper." But God's purposes were not so to be defeated. There must be, there would be, a new covenant, not dictated from without, but placed in men's inward parts and written on their hearts. Only so could man and God be made effectively and eternally one.

'This Shall be the Covenant that I will Make'

JEREMIAH'S vision, keen as it was, had its limitations. For ratification a covenant required a victim, that its life might be liberated for the use of both parties. Entering into it, they entered into one another, and found through it a bond which meant not merely contiguity but continuity of life. A slaughtered calf had served Abraham; the blood of bulls had embraced into a single whole God and Israel at Sinai. Jeremiah did not and could not foresee in detail a Victim whose freely given life could for ever bind man and God into one, and his greatest prediction had to wait six centuries for its fulfilment, till that night when Jesus "took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new covenant in my blood."

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Lamentations

The Book and Its Story

Hebrew Elegies Inspired by the Desolation of Zion

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THIS little collection of poems has suffered from the neglect both of the specialist and of the general reader. In part this neglect is doubtless due to its unfortunate position in the English Bible, where it appears as an insignificant appendix to one of the noblest and most impressive works in the Old Testament, the Book of Jeremiah. Its position in the Hebrew Canon, in which it stands altogether apart from the Prophets, is better, both because it is not there overshadowed by its more famous neighbour, and also because natural but mistaken views of its authorship are not so likely to arise.

A second and more forcible reason for its avoidance by the ordinary reader is probably his dislike of being depressed; and the title "Lamentations" has a dirge-like sound. But an elegy is not necessarily a dirge. We have only to think of Milton's "Lycidas" or Shelley's "Adonais," or to listen to the haunting lament of the Scottish ballad "The Flowers of the Forest," to see how beneath the silver pencil of the poet sorrow can be turned into sweetness, and beauty arise from ashes.

These elegies, for such they are, were born in anguish. The capture of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans in 586 B.C., and the long captivity in Babylon which followed, ended Israel's existence as an independent nation, and left its mark upon all subsequent Hebrew literature. It is not too much to say that this appalling catastrophe was the most significant single event in the whole of Jewish national history of the pre-Christian era, and, like some other similar events, though it was the death of much, proved also to be the beginning of a new, and in some ways a better, life. It is the sorrow inspired by this incredible disaster, as it appeared to the pious and patriotic Jew, which is reflected in the pages now before us.

Similarities in Structure and Content

IT will perhaps be convenient, before considering at greater length the value of the Book to the modern reader, to examine the nature of its contents in some detail. Each of the five chapters consists of a poem which is complete in itself. They are, as we have seen, alike in subject-matter. They are also, as we shall shortly see, for the most part very similar in rhythm and in general structure. But there are convincing reasons for believing that they are not all by the same author, and do not all belong to the same period. The evidence for this will be given in due course. Now let us turn to the songs themselves.

The First Song, though not the finest of the five, is written with some power. The opening phrases bring before us vividly and with real pathos the empty streets and grass-grown ruins of what had once been a busy, bustling, crowded capital. "How doth the city sit solitary, that was full of people! How is she become as a widow!" Line by line the piteous picture is built up, the deserted gates, the captive children, the defiled sanctuary, the hungry people who sigh for bread and then, with dramatic suddenness, in words whose heart-breaking music has become familiar to all, the shattered City herself is personified and made to address us: "Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me, wherewith the LORD hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger."

The rest of the elegy, except for a striking phrase here and there, is disappointing. It looks as though, for a reason which will shortly appear, the author felt it incumbent upon him to complete his necessary quota of twenty-two verses, but had nothing to add to what he had already said; and, consequently, like preachers as well as poets in similar case, loses himself in vague generalities and otiose repetitions. The poem would have gained greatly by compression.

Jerusalem's Fate in Vivid Detail

IN the opinion of most scholars, the *Second Song* shares with the fourth the distinction of being the noblest and most moving of the five. These two elegies appear to have a common author, and their high literary merit is in part due to the quivering sensitiveness with which the crushing catastrophe of Jerusalem's destruction is felt, and the vividness with which the dreadful details of the siege are described. As A. S. Peake has said, "they were written, we may reasonably suppose, by one who had witnessed the horrors of Judah's last agony, since they bear all the marks of composition by an eye-witness."

On the other hand, great though the descriptive power of these two poems is, their content is an almost unbroken darkness of lamentation scarcely relieved by an occasional feeble spark of hope or faint ray of promise. Some readers will feel that, touching though these elegies are, their devotional value is less than that of the others, especially the third, in which the cries of pain common to them all pass again and again into supplication and tremulous hope.

We have, then, in this second poem a most graphic description of the completeness of the disaster which had befallen Jerusalem. The farms ("habitations") around the city are consumed; the strongholds are thrown down; the very Temple destroyed. "Solemn

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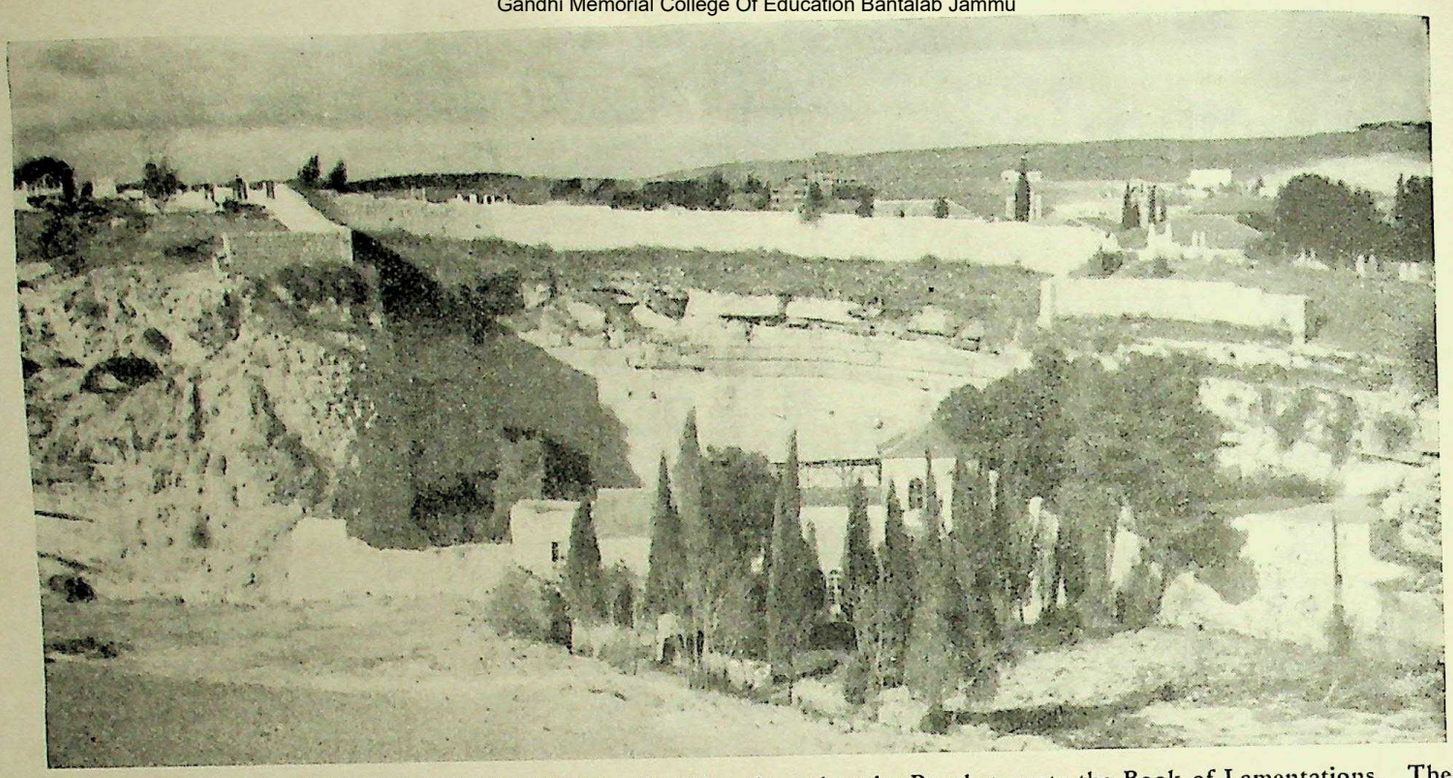

CAVERN KNOWN AS JEREMIAH'S GROTTO. Outside the northern wall of Jerusalem and near Herod's Gate is the ancient natural cave seen under the rocky escarpment in this photograph. A 14th-century legend associates the grotto with Jeremiah's burial place. According to tradition it was there that the Prophet wrote the Book of Lamentations. The tradition is without foundation since Jeremiah was not the author of this Book. The mistake of connecting it with his name has inflicted on him the title of "the weeping prophet," a title which belittles the grandeur and beauty of his character.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

assembly and sabbath" are no more. Even the children faint with hunger, babes die of starvation in their mothers' arms, and women, mad with famine, slay and devour their own offspring; while the bodies of father and husband and brother lie unburied in the streets. It is a terrible picture, over which we will not linger, but there is only too little reason to doubt that it was a true picture.

The Third Song differs from the others in its considerably greater length, in being written in the first person, and in containing no explicit reference to the calamities of 586 B.C. A careful reading of it will convince most students that its inclusion with the other four is the result either of accident or of misinterpretation. Like Job, it describes the misfortunes, and the stubborn and persistent faith, not of the nation, but of a single individual.

It is difficult to understand why some distinguished scholars and interpreters have regarded this third poem as definitely below the level of its companions. It may be granted that in mere technical facility and literary craftsmanship it is not equal either to that which precedes or to that which immediately follows it. But, unless we are to regard Browning as immeasurably inferior to, let us say, Swinburne, it takes more than aptitude for verbal carpentry, or for verbal photography, to make a poet. In that quality which, whatever the moderns may say, the great poets share with the great saints, in vision, in the ability to see and the capacity to explain the things of the spirit, the author of this poem stands high.

But let him speak for himself. Like the others, he too has been pierced by the arrows of adversity and tasted the wormwood of despair. In clear, simple images, many of them evidently borrowed from the Book of Job, which he must have read with care and pondered long, he illustrates his grief. But unlike his fellow-poets, who never seem altogether to escape from the mists of their own misery, again and again beyond the moving clouds he sees like the fulfilment of a promise the sun-lit, snow-white peaks of the Everlasting Mercy. Listen to him:

> It is of the LORD's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not.
> They are new every morning; great is thy faithfulness.
> The LORD is my portion, saith my soul; therefore will I hope in him.

And again, in a verse the full force of which is a little obscured in our version, since each line in the Hebrew begins with the key-note of God's goodness—

> Good is the LORD unto them that wait for him, to the soul that seeketh him.
> Good it is that a man should hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the LORD.
> Good it is for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth.

The Fourth Song appears to come from the same pen as the second, and presents the same characteristics of intense but bitter emotion, and powerful description. We have again the tragic details of the siege, related it would seem by one who had himself beheld or experienced the miseries which he records—the babes for whom there was no milk, the mothers who, naturally pitiful, have yet "sodden their own children," the "pursuers swifter than the eagles of heaven." As in the second elegy, there is a sinister beauty in the picture, but it is the stern and dreadful loveliness of death.

The Fifth Song is different from all the others, in metre, in arrangement, in subject, and in the attitude of the author. It is, strictly speaking, not a song but a prayer, and appears to have been written not at the

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time of the siege but many years afterwards, by one of the wretched remnant of a once thriving community who still eked out a miserable existence among the wreckage and the ruins of their native land.

The writer's description of the plight of himself and his friends, though sad, is pointed and graphic. Their homes are sold to strangers; their fathers are slain in battle; their mothers are widows; simple necessities, such as water and wood, once obtained with ease from their own lands, now have to be bought with money; their women are treated with indignity; their princes are tortured; their elders no longer honoured; their young men forced to carry the heavy millstones; even the children stagger under their loads of firewood. The sacred Temple mount itself is polluted by wild beasts.

Then, with a swift change of mood, the poet flings himself upon the compassion of God (v, 19-21 R.V.):

Thou, O LORD, abidest for ever;
Thy throne is from generation to generation.
Wherefore dost thou forget us for ever,
And forsake us so long time?
Turn thou us unto thee, O LORD, and we shall be turned;
Renew our days as of old.

Literary Problems of 'Lamentations'

WE have already seen that the brief collection of five short poems which has been named "The Lamentations of Jeremiah" was probably, for reasons which will now be given, not the work of the great prophet. In the Hebrew original it is not ascribed to him. The mistake seems to have arisen as the result of a misunderstanding of II. Chronicles xxxv, 25, in which it is said that "Jeremiah lamented for Josiah: and all the singing men and singing women spake of Josiah in their lamentations, unto this day; and they made them an ordinance in Israel: and, behold, they are written in the lamentations" (R.V.).

There is no reason to doubt the historicity of this account. Jeremiah may well have written an elegy on the tragic death of his king, from wounds received at the battle of Megiddo. But a very superficial acquaintance with our book is sufficient to show that it has nothing to do with Josiah, and is in no sense a lament over the death of a king. When we examine it we see at once that, of the series of five songs of which the book is composed, at least four refer to the epoch-making and disastrous event of 586 B.C., when Jerusalem was besieged and taken by the Chaldeans, and the greater part of the Jewish people carried away into captivity.

When we add to this the evidence of competent specialists that certain marked differences both of style and of theological outlook exist between the contents of this book and the undoubted work of the prophet, we can have little hesitation in rejecting the Jeremianic authorship. By so doing we are enabled to do justice both to the man and to the book. We shall no longer speak of "weeping Jeremiah." It is a scandalous injustice that the name of one of the most courageous and incorrigible optimists in the whole of human history should be blackened by so vile a libel; and the source of the libel is undoubtedly to be found in the almost ineradicable connexion in the mind of the ordinary man between the prophet and a book he had never seen! But we are also enabled to do better justice to the book.

LET the reader treat these five songs on their own merits, instead of regarding them as a part of his Bible never to be opened except by accident, and he will rapidly discover that, like a neglected corner of the garden cultivated at last and proved unexpectedly fertile, it will fully repay his attention. If he be a student of literature, he will find in the second and fourth of these poems descriptions of a city once beloved and prosperous, now besieged, captured, sacked, and deserted, as tremendous in their unrelieved tragedy as some passages of Thucydides himself. If history be his chief interest, he will find that his imaginative reconstruction of the events of the early 6th century—and without such efforts of the imagination the most scientific of histories is but a rattling of very dry bones—is greatly assisted by these voices from the very time and place of which he reads.

And if he be merely an ordinary man, sometimes bewildered and sometimes weary, searching in the greatest of all books for guidance and refreshment, he will find here (especially in the third and fifth of the songs) a faith, primitive and crude it is true, often blind, faint, twisted into strange, queer, tortured forms and adulterated with alien ideas, yet how miraculous in its unending search, in the midst of fear and gloom, for the face of the Living God! It is like a flower in a cellar, which gently but persistently turns towards the only chink through which a ray of light appears. Surely it was a true instinct which gave rise to the Jewish custom, when this book was read in the worship of the synagogue, of refusing to end with the ill-omened wail with which the book closes, and of returning a second time to the last verse but one, with its prayer of hope: "Turn thou us unto thee, O LORD, and we shall be turned; renew our days as of old."

Who then were the actual authors of these five poems? Their names in all probability we shall never know, but by the exercise of a little ingenuity we can discover one or two illuminating facts about them.

Poems Devised in Acrostic Form

HERE arise two very interesting technical points. Each of the first four poems is (in Hebrew) in the form of an alphabetical acrostic. That is to say, each verse of the poem begins with a letter of the Hebrew alphabet. This was no uncommon practice. The reader can see this for himself in the case of the hundred-and-nineteenth psalm, which, as usually printed even in our English versions, makes the alphabetical sequence very plain. This accounts for the fact that each of the poems in Lamentations is exactly twenty-two verses or stanzas long. In the third elegy, in which in our translation three verses go to the stanza, making a total of sixty-six, the difficulty of composition is increased by making *each* of these three verses begin with the same letter. It is a curious point which has not yet been explained that though there is no trace of this alphabetical arrangement in the last poem, the author nevertheless adheres to the same length.

A second point of equal interest is that the order of the alphabet adopted in the second, third and fourth elegies is not quite the same as the more usual order that is observed in the first.

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The metre is also worthy of note. It has a "plaintive, melancholy cadence," as J. R. Selbie puts it, which was especially reserved for poems of the mournful or elegiac type.

"That strain again! It had a dying fall," says the Duke in "Twelfth Night," and it would be difficult to describe more aptly this *Qinah* or "lamenting" measure. It consisted of three beats or accents followed by two, a sequence which gave it a peculiar limping effect, and can sometimes still be traced even in translation, as in the very first verse of the book:

How doth the city sit solitary
That was full of people.

Or again:

All her gates are desolate,
Her priests do sigh.

The fifth poem, however, differs from the others in metre, as well as in the other points already noted.

We must not detain the reader longer on these questions of prosody, which, interesting though they are, are of minor importance, except to say that they form valuable additional evidence of the differences in authorship which had already seemed probable. We may summarize the generally accepted results on this head as follows: The second and fourth poems appear to be by a common author, who had himself in all probability been an eye-witness of the lamentable suffering and defeat of his countrymen, had accompanied them into captivity, and possibly wrote these songs of sadness in Babylon itself. The first poem seems to have been written in Palestine at a somewhat later date. The third poem is very considerably later, owes much to its author's study of the Book of Job, and, like its great prototype, deals with the problem of individual suffering rather than with that of national calamity. The fifth and last, like the first, seems to have been written in Palestine, but the memories of the siege now belong to a previous generation, and the subject is rather the precarious and melancholy position of the miserable remnant of Jews still left in their own land. In that case the Return from exile must have already been on the horizon.

It may well be that, at the very time of writing, the author's prayer, spasmodic and feeble though it is, was in the providence of God already in process of being answered—which is itself a commentary, and a sermon.

IN the nature of the case a book so brief, and covering so narrow a field, needs but little special knowledge either archaeological or topographical for its appreciation. But what little knowledge is needed is important. Three main facts cast their shadow over every page, and almost over every line, of this little work.

The first of these is historical, and has been mentioned so often in this article and elsewhere as to need no very elaborate treatment now. The crash of Jerusalem's fall before the conquering army of Nebuchadnezzar shook the Jewish nation to its centre; the long, dragging weariness of fifty years and more of exile tested the fineness of its spirit in a new way, and demanded a new kind of fortitude. In Lamentations we see this quality in the making.

A Lonely Singer in an Alien Land

THE second fact is geographical. Sir George Adam Smith estimates that the dispirited captives had to travel on foot a distance of some seven hundred miles from Jerusalem to Babylon—a journey which in the circumstances cannot have taken less than three months. It is this which gives to the homesickness and vain regret of the second and fourth songs, as of many another writing of the time of the Exile, their peculiar poignancy. The singer was removed from the place dearest to him on earth by the width of half the known world. He was surrounded, not by his native hills, but by the endless plains of a flat and featureless land. He belonged to a nation that was no longer a nation. He worshipped a God whose Temple was in ruins. He was surrounded by an alien and sometimes hostile civilization. He and his were slaves, or little better. The very language to which he had to train his tongue was strange. Can we wonder that he wept for his country? "Her king and her princes are among the nations where the law is not," he cried; "yea, her prophets find no vision from the LORD. . . Mine eyes do fail with tears" (ii, 9-11 R.V.).

The third fact is one of the miracles of history. For nearly sixty years this exiled tribe preserved its native traditions, not only preserved but increased and deepened its native Faith, added more than one classic work to its literature, suffered and longed, hoped and prayed for its Return. Seldom can prayers for an event so improbable have received so complete an answer.

Like the gladiator who, having received a mortal blow, smiled above his shield at his bewildered adversary, so on the face of this crucified nation begins to appear the sweetness which is born of pain. It was a renewed people which returned to take up their old life in Jerusalem—the same, yet not the same; a people purified by fire, and strengthened by their ordeal. Israel found by the waters of Babylon, in humiliation and in tears, a treasure she had never before possessed, a knowledge of God and of His mercy for which the world will ever be the richer.

TRIBUTES TO THE PROPHETS

Matthew Arnold (1822-1888). Instead of remaining literature and philosophy, isolated voices of sublime poets and reforming free-thinkers, these glorifications of righteousness became Jewish religion, matters to be read in the synagogue every Sabbath Day.

T. H. Huxley (1825-1895). In the eighth century before Christ, in the heart of a world of idolatrous polytheists, the Hebrew prophet put forth a conception of religion which appears to me as wonderful an inspiration of genius as the art of Phidias or the science of Aristotle.

Professor S. A. Cook (b. 1873). The prophets emphasize ethical and spiritual truths which must realize themselves in the course of history; and, what is particularly important, they, more than others, helped to shape that history, and make it work out for their purposes.

Canon S. R. Driver (1846-1914). Isaiah realized in anticipation the noble ideal of a single-hearted statesman sketched four centuries afterwards by the Athenian patriot Demosthenes.

Dr. H. E. Fosdick (b. 1878). There is no character in the Old Testament who in my estimation towers so high as Jeremiah. His was the richest experience of personal religion, I think, known on earth before our Lord . . . A braver, gentler, more exquisite, or more courageous soul has not often walked the earth.

Prof. R. G. Moulton (1849-1924). Deliverance from one of these empires (Egypt) formed the starting-point of Israel's history, and into the other (Assyria) she was destined to be absorbed; meanwhile the ceaseless fluctuations of power and of mutual relations between all these nations and empires imposed a continual foreign policy on the kingdoms of Israel and Judah. The prophets exercised influence in this foreign policy, as well as in domestic questions. And, over and above questions of temporary policy, there was the perpetual function of Israel as a nation to uphold the worship of the true God amidst nations of idolaters; and the constant witnesses to this were the prophets.

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Ezekiel

I

The Book and Its Story

'The Heavens were Opened—and I saw Visions of God'

by REV. W. F. LOFTHOUSE, D.D.

Principal of Handsworth Methodist Theological College, Birmingham. Author of "The Bible: Its Origin and Authority," "The Making of the Old Testament"; Editor of "Ezekiel" (Century Bible).

THE Hebrew Bible—what we call the Old Testament—is divided into three sections, of which the second, "the Prophets," includes the historical books of Joshua, Judges, Samuel, and Kings. The four prophetic books proper, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the "twelve"—the so-called "minor" prophets—immediately follow. The first three, the "major" or greater prophets, are placed in chronological order, and may be said to cover a century and a half, from about 740 B.C., the call of Isaiah, to 575 or thereabouts, the date of the last prophecies of Ezekiel. For the history of religion, this is as important a period as any, since it contains the downfall of the two kingdoms of Israel and Judah. These indeed, when put together were no larger than Wales, and yet had committed to them a conception of God hidden from all the other nations of the world; and it leads on to the birth, out of these two tiny nations, of the Jewish church, from whose midst, humanly speaking, rose the edifice of Christianity.

The prophetic period is then an age of transition. We are watching the disappearance of the old, the birth of the new. Each of the three greater prophets has his special significance in these fateful years; Ezekiel, it may well be, even more than his two predecessors. But rightly to appreciate the significance of Ezekiel or of his brethren, we must bear in mind what is meant when we talk of the "books" of the prophets.

As regards either Isaiah or Jeremiah, we ought rather to talk of a collection or an anthology, or even a library. The second half of Isaiah (xl-lxvi) is much later than a great deal of the first half; later, indeed, than the whole of the writings of Ezekiel; and the last chapters (lvi-lxvi), "third Isaiah" as they are more generally called, follow the "second Isaiah" (xl-lv) after an interval of a century or more.

On the other hand, the first half of this book contains prophecies which are certainly not by Isaiah (xxiv-xxvii), as well as some historical memoirs (xxxvi-xxxix) which appear also in the second Book of Kings (xviii, 13ff.). Evidently, the book is a compilation or collection, of which the editing, to a modern reader, leaves a good deal to be desired.

WHEN we turn to the Book of Jeremiah, we see a different state of things. Most of the contents of the book called by his name date quite clearly from his own life-time. A considerable portion of them is in poetical form, and claims to reproduce or contain his own inspired utterances (*e.g.*, ii-vi), delivered at various times in his long life. Other parts are written in prose (*e.g.*, Chapters xix, xxii, xxiv), and read exactly like his own journals or more or less full notes and accounts of his addresses. In addition to these, we have, first, certain narratives of episodes in his life, written in the third person, which are perhaps the work of his amanuensis or "secretary," Baruch (*e.g.*, xxxviff.); and, second, a number of prophecies relating to foreign countries (xlvi-li, lviii), the bulk of which must have proceeded from another hand and period.

Thus, the composition of the Book of Jeremiah is very different from that of Isaiah. The Book of Isaiah is an anthology, with specimens (whose importance and beauty cannot be exaggerated) of prophecy selected from the writings of three centuries; as if one were to make a selection of English lyrical poetry and call it "Spenser" or "Sidney." Jeremiah is really three books bound up in one; his poetical works, as we may call them; his prose remains; and the recollections or memoirs of a friend, with an appendix containing a collection of poems from other hands. It is as if in a volume labelled "William Blake," we found not only his prose and his poetry, but various contributions of a contemporary, and some other poems dealing with the destinies of England, but inspired by convictions which Blake himself did not share. The parallel would be still closer if in no case were we told anything about the editor or compiler or the age in which he lived.

Distinctive Features of the Book of Ezekiel

BY the side of the Books of Isaiah and Jeremiah, that of Ezekiel offers a marked contrast. In the first place, all the prophetic work of Ezekiel was done in exile; at the first capture of the city, Ezekiel was carried off with the first batch of captives; and he never returned. Isaiah lived while Jerusalem was still secure; and Jeremiah was never taken out of Palestine. In the second place, every section of the book claims to be the work of Ezekiel himself; there is nothing which is in the third person, and nothing which is anonymous.

Even if any discourse does not actually contain this claim in so many words, it is clearly made in every one of the main and even the shorter sections of the book, and the writer describes not only the coming of the message which he is reproducing, but the manner in which he carried out the various commands which he received at the time (*e.g.*, Chapter iv).

Moreover, the whole book is arranged on an orderly and even symmetrical plan. There are, for instance, 48 chapters in the book; and the book as a whole, like the prophetic career of the author, is divided into two halves by the fall of Jerusalem, the event

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which is described in Chapter xxiv. It is not possible to cut up the first half of the work into sub-sections, for the simple reason that if we take them as they stand, they appear to contain the addresses in the order in which they were delivered, and they were sermons, reflecting the experiences or the needs of the hour, rather than courses of lectures. On the other hand, the second half is seen at once to fall into three definitely marked sub-sections; a series of visions relating to the surrounding nations (xxv-xxxii); the prediction of the restoration of Israel from exile (xxxiii-xxxix); and the plan or sketch of the religious and social dispositions to be carried out in Palestine when the return has taken place. One is left with the impression, either that Ezekiel was his own editor, or that the editor, whoever he was, did his work in a much more business-like way than the editors of the other two prophets. The task may have been easier; the effect is certainly much more satisfactory.

Such a view of the book, however, has been vigorously challenged; and this on three main grounds. The first argument against the homogeneity and indeed the authenticity of the book may be called psychological. Every reader of the book in the English translation will notice a striking contrast in the treatment and the language of the subject-matter. In Jeremiah we find now prose and now poetry; but in Ezekiel we find prose of the most prosaic and pedestrian character, and poetry that under the stress of sheer excitement passes at times beyond the limits of literary composition. It is far from impossible for a poet to write prose. Some critics of Milton would hold that parts of his prose writings are as fine as his poetry. The difficulty is to see how anyone who wrote Ezekiel's poetry, much of it so excited and so unbalanced, could also have written Ezekiel's prose, so methodical and even tame. More than that, there are signs in the poems that their author was psychically unstable; carried away by his visions and trances. Some have called him a cataleptic. How could such a man have been content to draw up other documents in the style of a "clerk of the works"?

The second argument may be called historical. Many of the discourses in the first half of the book purport to be actual descriptions of what was actually taking place in Jerusalem, as if the author possessed the gift of second sight. But not only are these so vivid that they suggest an eye-witness within the city; the state of things they reveal, and the particularly degraded forms of worship, would appear to belong to a generation earlier than Ezekiel's; and, in any case, they would presumably be of little interest to the exiles with whom Ezekiel was living, to whom he was speaking his message, and who were cut off from Jerusalem altogether.

The third argument can be labelled stylistic. Quite apart from the gulf between the prose and the poetry, the prose itself is full of redundancies and repetitions, which suggest the marginal annotations and additions of a commentator who thought very little of his readers' intelligence or very much of his own; and the arrangement or rather the disarrangement in the poetical passages is so confused and confusing, that it can only be due to an editor who wavered between over-confidence and absolute despair as to his ability to present the prophet's work to his readers.

On the strength of these considerations it has been urged that there were two Ezekiels; the first poetic, passionate, liable to be carried off his feet and even to grow hysterical; the second grave and self-controlled, something of the lawyer with his indentures and the legislator with his proposals; that while the second may well have lived in exile, the first lived in Judah before the city fell; and that the remains of both were combined by an editor who, like many editors, real and hypothetical, made rather a sad mess of his work. The theory has a good many difficulties of its own, and those who have upheld it in different forms have been far from agreeing with one another. The readers of these pages will not wish to be wearied by a detailed discussion of the various points involved. It will be enough to say that the difficulties on which they are founded are not insuperable. St. Paul himself furnishes a parallel to the combination of the visionary, the preacher, the administrator and the

EZEKIEL: A SYNOPSIS

	Chapters
The Prophet's Call (July, 592) ...	i-iii
First Cycle of Threats	iv-vii
Second Cycle of Threats (Aug., 591)	viii-xix
Third Cycle of Threats (Aug., 590)	xx-xxiii
The End at Hand (Jan., 587) ...	xxiv
The Fall of the Nations	
Oracles against Ammon, etc., and Tyre	xxv-xxviii
Oracles against Egypt (Jan., 586-Feb., 584)	xxix-xxxii
The Purification of Israel	
Individual Responsibility: Doom and Restoration	xxxiii-xxxvi
From Death to Life and Re-union	xxxvii
The Destruction of Gog	xxxviii-xxxix
The Ordering of the Restored Nation	
The New Temple and the New Altar (Sept., 572)	xl-xliii
The Priests, the People, the Prince and Their Offerings ...	xliv-xlvi
The River of Life, the Nation's Frontiers	xlvii
The Tribal Territories and the Boundaries of the City and its Demesne	xlviii

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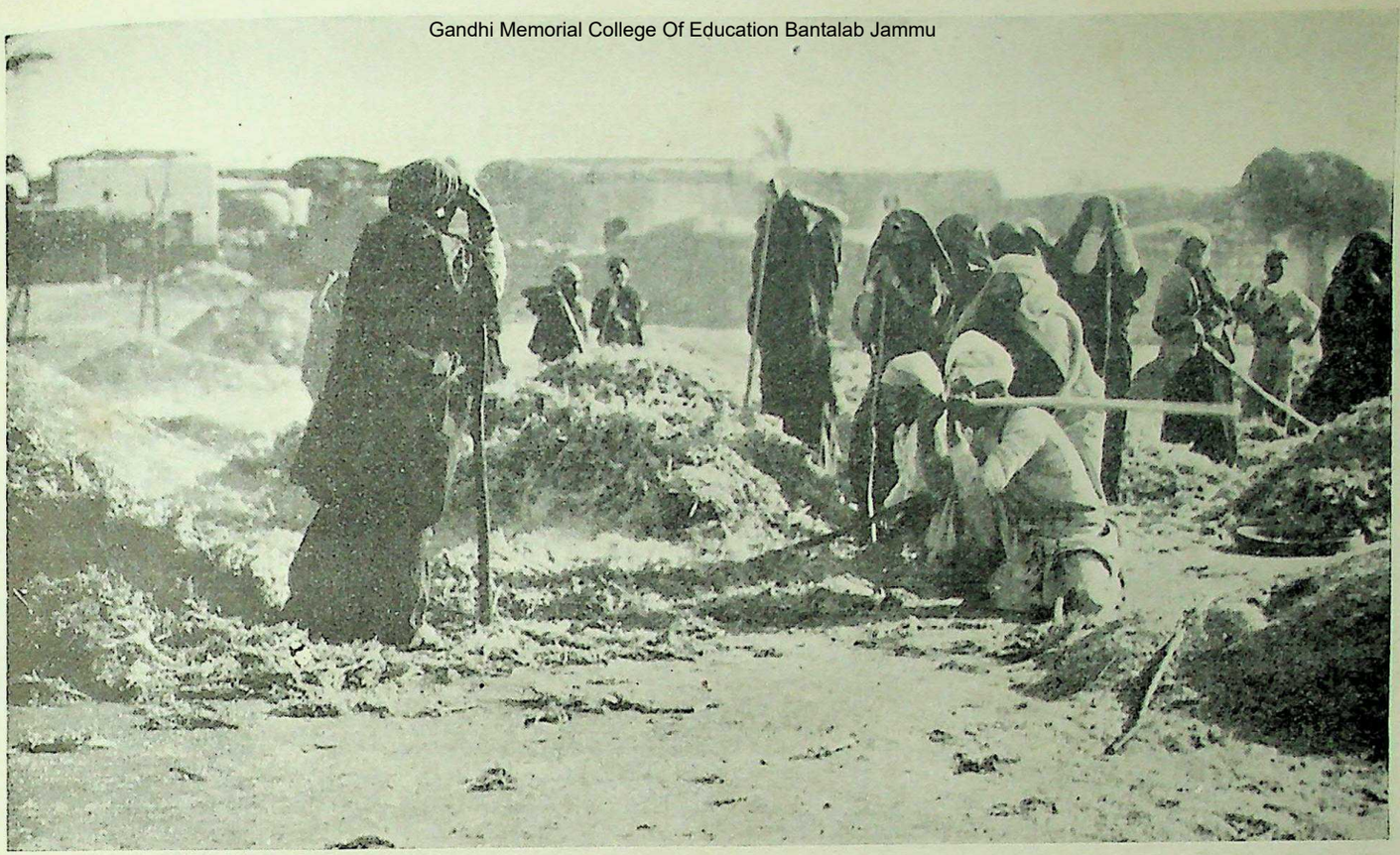

"MAKE THEE BREAD THEREOF." Millet, or durrah as it is called in Palestine, is the most important of the summer crops. Cut in wisps with a sickle, as in olden days, the durrah is heaped on the threshing-floor and the grain is beaten out with flails or staves, as seen in this photograph taken at Kakun on the plain of Sharon. The only Biblical mention of millet is in Ezekiel iv, 9, as an ingredient for making the Prophet's bread. The context is symbolical of the hardships of siege.

"A PLACE FOR THE SPREADING OF NETS." Tyre, "the bestower of crowns," has fallen from her ancient prosperous estate; and, as Ezekiel predicted, her coast has become "a place for the spreading of nets in the midst of the sea" (Ezekiel xxvi, 5). Local fishermen are here seen early in the morning hauling in a seine or drag-net, used sometimes from the shore but more frequently from their boat at night. The net has weights below and is provided with floats at the top. In the distance can be seen Cape Carmel and the new harbour of Haifa, the latter, opened in 1933, makes the town a main port.

Photos, American Colony in Jerusalem

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legislator. The interest of the exiles in the home from which they had just been dragged would certainly be strong enough to make them listen with painful eagerness to all that Ezekiel had to say about Jerusalem; and the redundancy and verbosity which has been noticed, and which, by the way, is very much less marked in the Greek version, the translation, perhaps of an earlier edition of the Hebrew book now lost, is not without its parallels in Hebrew and other literature.

Without intending therefore to force a dogmatic conclusion upon the reader, it will be convenient to bear in mind, in the following pages, that the necessity for cutting the book, or the author, into two cannot be said to have been proved; and to take the book as it stands, asking what can be learnt from it, in its present form, about the mind and teaching of him who is claimed as its author. If indeed the claim cannot be fully substantiated, no other method could better reveal the grounds for its surrender.

Ezekiel's Biography in the Bible

LET us attempt then to form some picture of Ezekiel. The main facts about his life and work are quickly told. He was born into an ecclesiastical or priestly family in Jerusalem, in the second half of the 7th century; a younger contemporary of Jeremiah, but, unlike Jeremiah, who was himself also of a priestly though disestablished family, possessed an intense feeling for ritual and all that ritual could be held to denote. He had witnessed the political and social reaction under Jehoiakim to the wiser measures of Josiah; and when the power of Babylon, provoked by Jehoiakim's wanton challenge (so both Jeremiah and Ezekiel regarded it) closed round Jerusalem, the cream of the conquered city was deported to the Euphrates.

Jeremiah, a man of little social standing, but looked on as a stout champion of Babylon, was left behind with an undistinguished crowd; while Ezekiel was among the deportees (597 B.C.). After four years, during which his thoughts would naturally be dwelling in the old home rather than the new, longing for the restoration and a new piety, but, good aristocrat that he was, heartily despising the "rump" that remained in the city, he experienced his "call" in a vision of such sublimity (i-iii) that his best efforts could not enable him to give a clear description of it; and for the next five years he poured out a series of denunciations of the folly and wickedness of the survivors in Jerusalem, typical, indeed, of the whole deplorable history of the nation. The Jewish king, Zedekiah, had allowed himself to be dragged into the policy of his elder brother; assistance from the rival of Babylon, Egypt, had been looked for, as usual, in vain; and after a long and ruthless siege of eighteen months, Jerusalem fell for the second time in 586.

This shattering event brought Ezekiel's denunciations of his own countrymen to an end. He began a new ministry of which the key-note was construction. In a series of weird and powerful dirges or funeral odes (xxv-xxxii) over the wicked and tyrannous nations that surrounded Palestine, he passed on to predict the complete removal of Israel's rivals and enemies. Then he turned to the restoration and purification of Israel itself (xxxiii-xxxix); and apparently after a long period of silence, fourteen years after the fall of the city, he received another set of visions, in which he saw and described, in impressive and surprising detail, the Temple rebuilt and its services restored, and the whole country re-organized and distributed on a new plan among the tribes, with the presence of Jehovah fixed in inviolable holiness at its centre. That done, his work was finished (save for one brief addition in Chapter xxix), nor do we know how much longer he lived.

It is now time to look a little more closely at the man himself and his message. He was a *Hebrew*, and like nearly every Hebrew whose writings have come down to us, he was a man of intense and passionate nature, in whom religion, patriotism and austere morality were inseparable. Jehovah had given to Israel all that the nation possessed, and he demanded its entire devotion and obedience. In comparison with the chosen nation, all other nations were sinners, and as such were doomed; their hostility to Israel was hostility to Israel's God. On the other hand, Jehovah's choice of Israel, and His gift to it of His law made Israel's sin the more flagrant. The nation was regarded as at once doomed to punishment, and, since Jehovah's choice could not be ultimately revoked, destined to forgiveness and political and moral reinstatement.

Secondly, Ezekiel was a *priest*. This meant that to him the outstanding characteristic of Jehovah was His holiness. Holiness, to the Hebrew, was much more than moral goodness. It stood for a quality or influence which had a side that was almost physical.

Only the Holy May Enter Jehovah's Courts

NO one could safely approach the spot in which Jehovah was held to be present without special preparation and precaution. For this preparation, the law laid down certain rules, both of ritual and conduct. Unless these rules were obeyed, Jehovah's holiness would be profaned or outraged, just as the dignity of a monarch would be outraged if a courtier were to appear in filthy or unseemly clothing, or to behave in the presence with indecency or levity. To preserve the holiness of Jehovah from such outrage, with all its dreadful consequences, was the special duty of the priests; it was theirs to enforce the "taboos," to supervise the various religious dues and offerings, to see to the due observance of the ritual of the altar, and to protect the purity of the Temple, which was above all others the place of holiness. The youthful Ezekiel, like the somewhat older Jeremiah, felt that in each sphere of holiness the priests had forgotten their duties, and allowed the people to forget theirs. Where such disobedience was concerned, the slightest lapse was as offensive as the high-handed deed of defiance. The unclean garment and the ribald act were alike punishable. What distinguishes Ezekiel is the horror with which uncleanness is regarded, and the ruthless-

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"THY RAIMENT WAS OF FINE LINEN AND BROIDERED WORK"

This Palestinian Arab bride is adorned by a long veil of linen crash, embroidered with symmetrical designs in silk stitchery of brilliant colours. Beneath this is a close-fitting bonnet with its ornament of heavy coins held in place by a chain under the chin from which is suspended a specially valuable gold piece, coins and jewelry forming part of her dowry. The dress is also heavily embroidered. Patterns are traditional, stylized and manipulated with slightly varying characteristics in different districts. The symbolism of marriage is much used in the Prophetic writings to signify the close relationship between Jehovah and His people. Ezekiel gathers imagery from a bride's beautiful raiment (xvi, 10-13) to compose a picture of God's loving care for Jerusalem.

Photo by Pending Collection, Jerusalem

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"THE RAM WHICH THOU SAWEST"

In the third year of Belshazzar's reign, Daniel, living in Babylon, had the vision of the downfall of the vast empire of Persia. Entranced, he saw himself at Shushan, the royal city, by the banks of "the river (canal) of Ulai" (Daniel viii, 1-3, 20). "And, behold, there stood before the river a ram which had two horns . . . . but one was higher than the other, and the higher came up last."

Rembrandt van Rijn painted his imaginative picture, Daniel's Vision (Berlin Gallery) about 1650. He shows the angel Gabriel expounding the meaning of the prophetic dream to the young seer. "The ram which thou sawest having two horns are the kings of Media and Persia." The great Dutch painter does not depict the Grecian he-goat, whose victory over the ram typified Alexander's conquest of Persia.

Rembrandt. 1606-1669

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"DANIEL, A MAN GREATLY BELOVED"

Leading character of the Biblical Book which bears his name, Daniel is referred to by Ezekiel as a man renowned for his righteousness and wisdom (Ezekiel xiv, 14; xxviii, 3). Frederic Shields in his pictorial series of the Prophets represents Daniel receiving the Messianic Vision concerning which the angel was commissioned to inform him (Daniel x, 21). At the feet of the seer a lion typifies past dangers overcome.

Frederic Shields

Frederic Shields

"CAME THIS WORD UNTO JEREMIAH"

The great prophet-patriot Jeremiah is depicted by Frederic Shields wearing the symbolic yoke, emblem of the seer's warning to Zedekiah, king of Judah, willingly to submit to Babylon. The yoke was broken by Hananiah, the false prophet, who declared that thus the yoke of Nebuchadnezzar would be broken "from the neck of all nations within the space of two full years" (Jer. xxviii, 10, 11). Subsequent events proved the inspired wisdom of Jeremiah's advice. Had the king willingly accepted the yoke of Babylon Judah would have been spared overthrow and desolation.

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"YE EAT THE FAT AND YE CLOTHE YOU WITH THE WOOL"

Near Mosul wool-washing progresses by the banks of the river Tigris—river well known to Ezekiel. Fleeces of skin-wool—wool obtained from the sheep after killing—are piled high in bales. The water removes surface impurities but not the wool-fat or lanoline which gives softness and elasticity to the fibre. Shorn wool rather than skin-wool was approved by the Hebrews. Meat was a luxury food; the good shepherd disliked having his animals killed, and the time of sheep-shearing was a high festival of the countryside. In his reproof to the "shepherds of Israel" (Ezekiel xxxiv, 2, 3), alluding to the bad governors of the people, Ezekiel complains that instead of increasing the welfare of the flocks they have consumed or appropriated their substance.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

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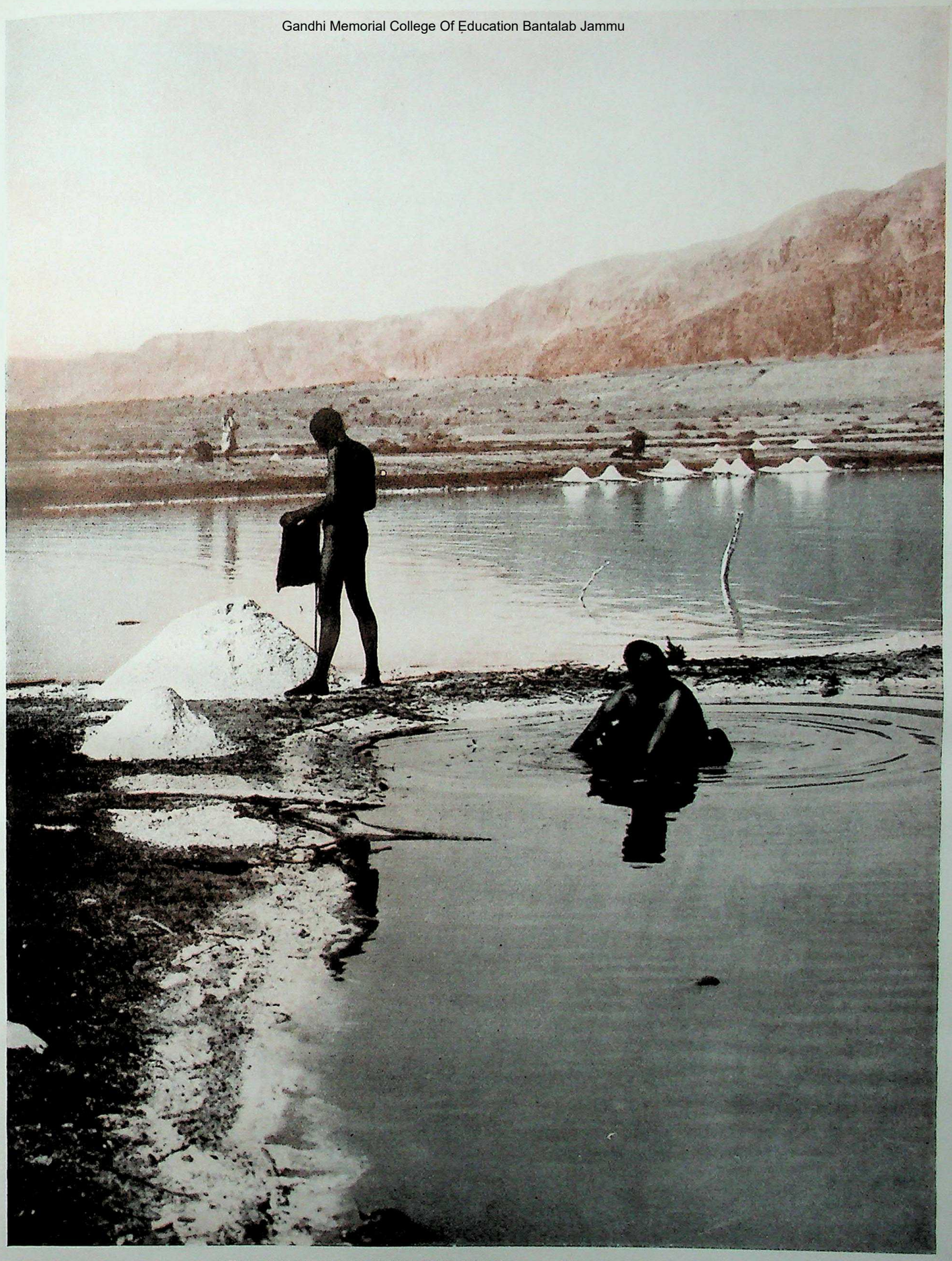

"THE MARISHES THEREOF . . . SHALL BE GIVEN UP TO SALT"

Natives are collecting salt from a lagoon on a briny marsh by the Dead Sea. Beyond them there is a stretch of ground, barren but for thorn bushes and rank weeds, and in the distance the limestone hills south of Engedi. The water of the lagoon and sea is brilliantly blue and transparent, but so saline that as it dries on the bare legs and hands of these workers it leaves a white deposit. Ezekiel, picturing the future fertility of Palestine, excludes the miry swamps and "marishes" by the Dead Sea from the general "healing" (Ezekiel xlvii, 9). They are to remain unchanged so that a supply of salt, the essential seasoning, shall be available. Today about 8,000 tons of it are produced annually from the quarries at Jebel Usdum and local salt-pans.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

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Briton Riviere, 1840-1920

"MY GOD HATH SENT HIS ANGEL, AND HATH SHUT THE LIONS' MOUTHS"

The dramatic moment illustrated by the English painter of Huguenot descent, Briton Riviere, in his well-known picture Daniel's Answer to the King, affords opportunity for effective lighting. The prophet's face upturned to greet Darius is radiant in the early morning light admitted by the removal of the sealed stone from the den's mouth. After a sleepless night of agitation the King has just made enquiry as to David's safety from the lions "with a lamentable voice," hope of reply faint in his heart. Then comes the assurance: "They have not hurt me: forasmuch as before him (God) innocency was found in me" (Daniel vi, 22).

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H Vernet

"DANIEL CAST INTO THE LIONS' DEN"

One of the most familiar of all Biblical stories is that of Daniel thrown into the lions' den, as the result of the conspiracy against him by the turbulent princes of Babylon, and remaining unscathed throughout the ordeal. The French painter, H. Vernet, has depicted the righteous servant of God serenely unmindful of danger, one of the lions in friendly companionship snuggled at his feet. This story is told to promote absolute reliance on the omnipotence of God. Pattern of faithful piety, Daniel is one of those included in the angelic saying (Daniel xii, 3): "And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever."

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"SO WILL I SEEK OUT MY SHEEP . . . IN THE CLOUDY AND DARK DAY"

By a road through the desolate pastures of the Wilderness of Tekoa—desolate indeed on a grey autumn day—this shepherd has just assembled his flock. He is sharing his durrah (millet) bread with the ewes, so tame that they run expectantly to his hands when he calls them. Symbol of prophet and psalmist, used in the Scriptures to denote leaders of the people and God Himself, the figure of the Shepherd is always impressive. Ezekiel employs pastoral imagery throughout the thirty-fourth chapter of the book, in which he prophesies that his people dispersed by bad government, despondent in exile, will be brought back to their own country: "For thus saith the Lord God; Behold I, even I, will both search my sheep, and seek them out . . . and feed them upon the mountains of Israel by the rivers."

Photo. "Daily Mirror"

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ness of Jehovah's condemnation. But when forgiveness and cleansing had been vouchsafed, the continuance of His presence, with all its resulting blessings, would be ensured by scrupulous ritual obedience and by dispositions in city and Temple which reduced the danger of a further breach of taboo to a minimum.

Ezekiel's Unique Place in the Prophetic Chain

THIRDLY, Ezekiel was a *prophet*. The prophets were the guardians of morality; but they were far more than that. Morality was not merely observance of a moral code. Before Jehovah had given the nation its code, He had delivered it from Egypt. He had revealed therein His gracious and abiding purpose. The heart of this was that each member of the nation should be bound in mutual loyalty to all the rest, and to Jehovah Himself. As long as this "covenant" was carried out, Jehovah would protect Israel in the land which He had given it. If it was broken, the nation would be punished by exile; but as the actual fulfilment of the threat drew nearer and nearer, the prophets saw more clearly that there was something else in Jehovah's mind—His grace and mercy; and that disobedience and exile would be followed by repentance, restoration, and pardon. Ezekiel stands at the turning-point of the nation's fortunes. He alone prophesied both before the final blow to Jerusalem and after it. Thus, the first half of his prophecies, till 586 (xxiv) is almost entirely minatory; but in the second (especially in xxxiii-xxxix) he becomes the prophet of forgiveness and cleansing. Moreover, Israel's repentance is not to come before the return to Palestine, as if restoration were to be the reward of penitence; but restoration itself and the subsequent prosperity are to induce a new and deep loathing for the sin which had caused Israel's previous disasters. To all the prophets, Jehovah is the one supreme power among the nations and in the world. Ezekiel expresses this even more strongly than the rest. But the very fact that all that Jehovah does, in Ezekiel's eyes, is "for his own name's sake," makes the representation of His mercy the more striking.

Fourthly, Ezekiel was a *reformer*. This follows from the combination in him of the prophetic and the priestly characteristics. The earlier priestly codes contain a scheme of social morality as well as of ritual. The prophets regard the general duty of social morality as the fruit of obedience to Jehovah. Ezekiel sees the two ideals in one. The prophet views the nation as re-united to Jehovah; the priest works out the implication of this view in practical and daily life. Unique as is the constitution of the new-born nation in Chapters xl-xlviii, it is the natural outcome of Ezekiel's special and unique position; and although it is mainly occupied by provisions to make ritual unholiness impossible, it is equally emphatic on the subject of justice and scrupulous honesty between man and man.

Lastly, we must look at Ezekiel *the man and the writer*. That there was more than a touch of psychical instability in him has already become clear. The experience of his call (Chapter i, half repeated in Chapter x) reads more like a trance than a vision. He appears to have possessed powers of second sight (Chapters viii, xi, xviii, xxi, etc.); and his predictions of the various details of the siege and fall of the city (Chapters iv, ix) were accompanied by forms of dramatic expression which would inevitably strike the onlookers as bizarre and unbalanced and even demented. The "song of the sword" (xxi) suggests ecstasy and hysteria. It must be confessed that even with Ezekiel the spirit of the prophet was subject to the prophet (xviii); but apart from all this, Ezekiel shows an unequalled power of realistic and vivid description. The picture of Aholah and Aholibah (xxiii), the fall of Tyre (xxvi, xxvii), the concourse of the fallen nations in Sheol (xxxii), the vision of the valley of dried-up bones (xxxvii), stand out in the Old Testament and in all ancient literature in their uncanny and terrible imaginative penetration. At times Ezekiel is overwhelmed by his excitement, and becomes, as he expresses it, "dumb" (iii, 26). Yet at other times he is the calm exponent of a moral or theological thesis (xviii). He obviously held the position of a religious adviser or director to the exiled community (viii, xiv); and he even complains that they felt for him the aesthetic admiration which might be aroused by a popular preacher (xxxiii, 32).

A bundle of contradictions! Prophet and priest, teacher, actor, madman almost, in one. Yet modern psychology is far from considering such contradictions impossible. Once conceive of an eager and impetuous soul who looks at all sin as so much filth or ordure, and is overwhelmed by the horror of its corruption; join to this the profound and unshakable consciousness of an exalted power who can be satisfied by nothing less than the renewal and the preservation of the clean heart and the right spirit, and the obscure becomes the intelligible. Ezekiel had no vision of Calvary. To none of the prophets was this vouchsafed, though a younger contemporary of Ezekiel's in exile almost attained it (Isaiah liii). Nor did his certainty of the coming restoration teach him the softer accents of tenderness or pity. He was the austere moralist to the end. But he who watched the downfall of the whole social structure in which he had been reared, and out of the dust of its ruin lifted his cry of hope and revivial, has assuredly earned the title of the prophet of the gospel.

Dazzling Visions Charged with Deep Import

IT is now time to turn to the contents of this remarkable book; and we shall best serve the reader's interests if we point out the main features of each section, spending a little more time on the more important sections than on the rest.

Out of a great fiery cloud are seen four living creatures, each with four faces and wings; partly human in appearance, partly animal, in unison with these move mysterious wheels, and above their interlacing pinions a platform on which is placed a throne, and above the throne, veiled in dazzling radiance, the form of a man, girt with fire. The whole

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now rushes tempestuously forward, and now stands still, at once lurid and clear with all the colours of the rainbow. The whole account reads like an overwhelmingly powerful vision, in whose description the prophet's language struggles in vain to be intelligible; but, if obscure, the more strangely impressive. Other prophets, notably Isaiah (vi) and Jeremiah (i), had experienced their calls, or like Micaiah the son of Imlah (I. Kings xxii, 14ff.), their visions. It may be that recollections of these helped to shape what Ezekiel saw in the land of his exile; but this surpasses them all in weird sublimity. It was "the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the LORD" (i, 28).

Then follows the message, reminding us once more of Jeremiah; a message to a nation of rebels; warning, doom, destruction; and at its close a mysterious hand holds out a roll to the prophet, which he must devour, finding it to taste as sweet as honey (iii, 3). The commission is continued. It is to the exiles that Ezekiel is to go; as unyielding and adamant in his attack as they will be in their reception of his words. Then the chariot moves on, and he finds himself at his home at Tel-Abib by the river Chebar. He sits there for a whole week as if stupefied. At its end comes another message; he is to be a watchman or sentinel; so long as they hear the warning, the responsibility is theirs. Close on the heels of this comes the vision once more, and the glory. Then the spirit or breath of Jehovah, of which he has been conscious all along, lifts him on his feet, and bids him speak when he receives a word; otherwise, he is to be dumb.

Words of Doom for the City of Zion

WHATEVER was the burden of the commission, Ezekiel understood it as foretelling the speedy and terrible fall of Jerusalem; a catastrophe which he did not only foresee, but actually saw. To impress his clairvoyance on his neighbours, he makes a model of the siege, and then lies down on the ground for weeks at a time (in each instance, he says, he is doing what he is commanded) eating only repellent and disgusting food, in order to act before them the desolation of the coming misery of the capital. He takes a razor and cuts off his hair and scatters it to the winds—the text of a trenchant discourse, the language growing more excited and more mysterious as he proceeds. "The time is come; the day draweth near . . . the sword is without, and the pestilence and the famine within" (vii, 12, 15); and after each passionate strophe of denunciation roll the solemn and knell-like words "they shall know that I am Jehovah."

But the prophet is to come nearer still to the scene of doom (viii). A fire-clad figure seizes him where he sits with his neighbours (so he describes his experience) and transports him to the city, where he sees a monstrous idol within the Temple. He is told to dig through the wall. Within are seventy of the most distinguished men left in Jerusalem, offering idolatrous incense in the gloom of the chamber. Then, by the gate, he sees a group of women carrying out the Babylonian rite of lamentation for Tammuz, the young god of vegetation; and close by the altar itself there are some twenty-five men worshipping the Babylonian solar deity. Was anything else needed to rouse the fury of Jehovah? Swiftly comes another vision (ix); a band of men (or are they guardian angels?) pass through the Temple sword in hand; in their midst a scribe, clothed like a priest, with an ink-horn in his hand; he is bidden to mark those who deplore these outrages; all the rest are to be slain without pity, men, maidens, infants, by the sword-bearers. Ezekiel himself is appalled; but Jehovah is ruthless; and when the city is filled with the corpses, the fire-girt sapphire throne, which he had seen at his call, appears again (x); the scribe approaches, and from the midst of the chariot takes burning coals, which he flings over the city.

Hope Cheers the Exiles' Way

EZEKIEL then describes the chariot again with its living creatures (now called "cherubs") and its wheels, though with slight differences of detail which suggest, but hardly guarantee, a definite transcript of what he was gazing at. That it is what he had seen before, he is careful to note. Then once more he is back in the Temple (xi), watching a company of the "princes," two of whom he recognizes and names. This time they are holding a council, concerting measures for prolonging resistance to Babylon. He is told to take part in the discussion, announcing the futility of their plans. As he does so, one of the two falls dead (xi, 13). And now the chariot prepares to depart; but before the fatal moment arrives, a different note is sounded. Destruction is not the last act of the great drama. Despised by the reckless fanatics in the city, the exiles are to be gathered and restored, and a new spirit will be given them; but for the rest, "I will bring their way upon their own heads" (xi, 21 R.V.). Then the chariot rises and leaves the city and comes to rest on the Mount of Olives; and Ezekiel finds himself back by the Chebar.

Now begins a second cycle; like the first (iv), it is introduced with a weird piece of acting (xii). The exiles have apparently been asking whether anything will really come of these predictions (xii, 22). The prophet thereupon acts the part of a fugitive, leaving his house by night, taking his meal with trembling haste; and he then turns to denounce the false and deceiving prophets and the women who pretend to read the future for payment, making victims of those who consult them. But he is now not only thinking of Jerusalem; he is back by the Chebar, warning the exiles themselves against the equally deep damnation of those who "have taken their idols into their heart" (xiv, 3 R.V.), and bidding them remember that each man must stand or fall by himself; not even the saint can save the sinner.

Thus the way is prepared for a terrible and quite unique picture of the nation's wickedness. Jerusalem is described as an exposed child which Jehovah found in the desert, brought home and prepared to be His bride. Jeremiah had used the same figure, but with far more restraint. In the full bloom of her woman-

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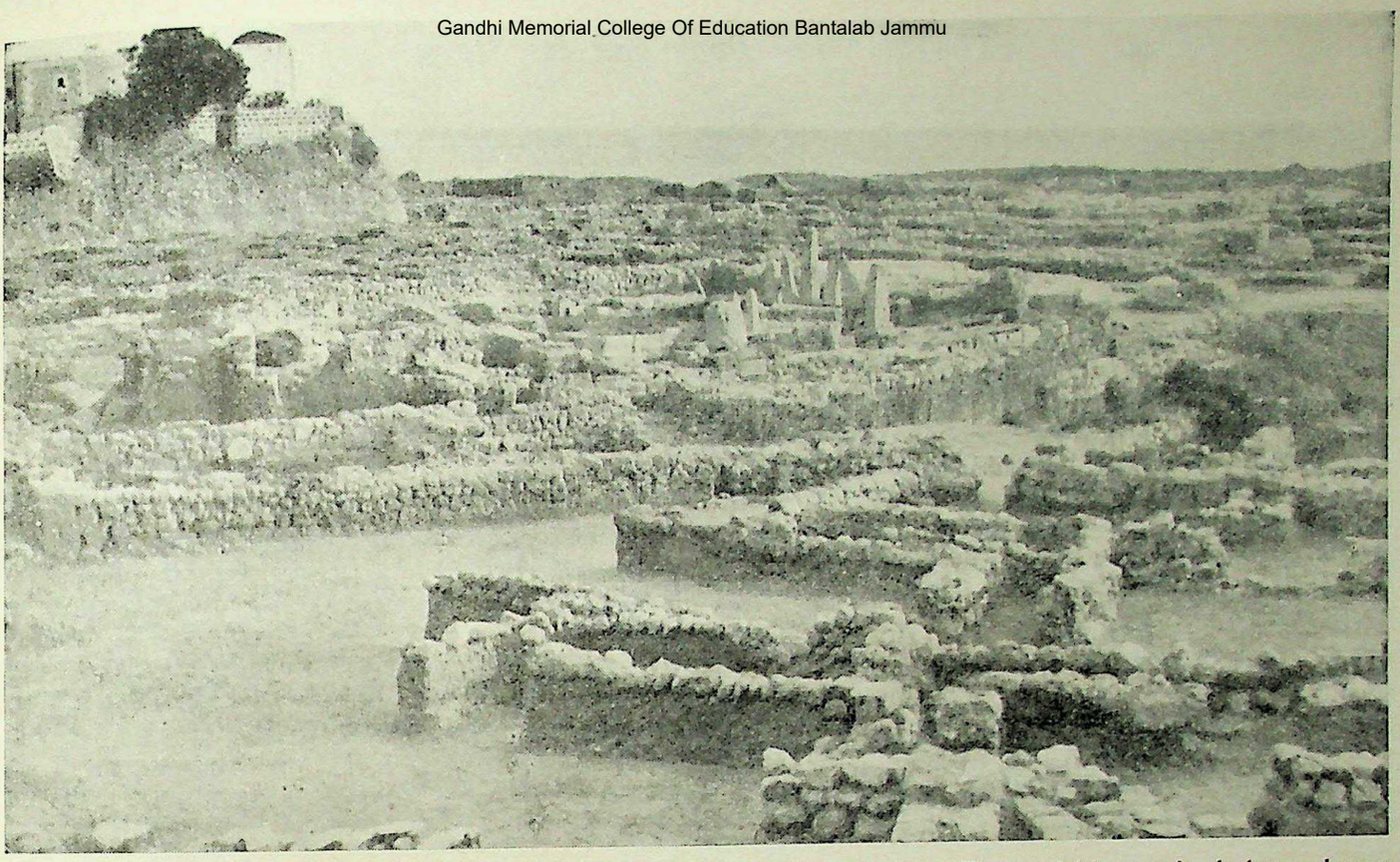

HERE DWELT "THE ANCIENTS OF GEBAL." Among the expert Phoenician craftsmen of Gebal—the excavated ruins of which are pictured above—were the stone-squarers provided for Solomon's Temple and the ships' caulkers for Tyre (Ezekiel xxvii, 9). Today the place is known as Jebeil, and under the Greeks it was Byblos. The special interest in the latter change of name is that it gave us the word "Bible," owing to the renown of Byblos for manufactures of papyrus writing material. The obelisks seen in the photograph are remains of a temple in which were found offerings from Egyptian kings dating to 3000 B.C.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

hood, she began to cast wanton eyes on her alluring neighbours; and in language in which metaphor and literal truth are curiously blended, her idolatries and her adulteries are pictured in realistic and scathing detail; she is worse than Sodom and Samaria. Yet, after all her iniquities have been visited on her, she will repent at the last, to find mercy; the "covenant," the bond between bridegroom and bride, will be restored The figure of adultery to represent national unfaithfulness is constant in the prophets. Hosea had worked out (perhaps with his own domestic history in mind) the story of the unfaithful wife, sought and at last brought home. Ezekiel turns the simple sketch into an unforgettable cartoon.

The same verdict reappears, in a calmer mood, in the form of an allegory, or "riddle" of an eagle and a cedar (xvii). After this, passing from the nation again to the individual, Ezekiel takes up the thought of Chapter xiv. His prophecies have aroused the objection "Jehovah is unjust." "No," he replies, "it is only the wicked man who suffers; nor does it please Jehovah that he should; as soon as he turns, he will be saved; but however upright a man has been, if he sins, he will suffer. What fault can be found with this?" This chapter is, in fact, one of the most important in Ezekiel's prophecies; perhaps in the whole of the Old Testament. It is the first elaborated and reasoned assertion of the worth of the individual. The law was given to the nation as a whole; and it was also to the nation as a whole that the prophets for the most part addressed themselves. They were not concerned with individuals. It was the nation's sin which was to be followed by the nation's punishment. Indeed, the very imminence of the horror of exile showed that the men of one age could be punished for the sins of their fathers. "The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge." The saying became a catchword in Jerusalem. Jeremiah noted it (Jeremiah xxxi, 29f. R.V.). "Yes," he said, "it is true; but it will not be true always." Ezekiel notes it; and he meets it with a flat denial. "No," he says; "it is for their own sins that men suffer." In Chapter xviii he makes his point of view perfectly clear. However evil the father's life may have been, an honest son will reap the reward of his virtue. But if the individual is vicious, no merits of his father can avail for him. "The soul that sins, *it* shall die" Indeed, a man's own virtues in the past cannot save him, if he turns to evil, nor will his past evil life prevent his conversion and its reward. Such is Ezekiel's teaching here. Like many a truth, it can easily be over-stated. No man lives to himself We are influenced by the conditions around us, and by none more forcibly than those of our own homes. We are influenced by our past lives. Ezekiel himself is the prophet of the doom of the whole nation. But he is right. We do not know how the power of choice is limited in this man or that. In some it seems all but squeezed out. But it is on a man's own choice that his fate depends. He stands himself before God's judgement seat; and Jehovah desires not the death of a sinner

Next, as if, for the time, having "supped full of horrors," his spirit had broken, he gives utterance to a lamentation or dirge (xix), written in careful poetic form, over the two "princes" of Judah, Jehoahaz and Jehoiachin, both of them dragged into exile, the

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one to Egypt, the other to Babylon, after a bare three months on the throne.

These are dated two years after the prophet's call, and four years before the fall of the city. Ezekiel begins the series with another résumé of the history of the nation (xx); but this time the figure is dropped and the different periods in the history are clearly marked. The second half of the chapter is sheer preaching; first, convincing his hearers of their sin, and then foretelling, as before, the restoration that is to come when the lessons of suffering (as with Hosea's wife) have been learnt (xx, 33ff). Chapter xxi reads like an excited transcript of some utterance during a trance, in which the prophet is flourishing a naked sword, as if himself bringing destruction; while in the middle of it all (second sight again?) Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon is seen on the march to Jerusalem. In xxii the tone grows calmer; there is no exultation in the coming ruin. Jehovah seems to ask, "after all this wickedness, how can I spare you?" There runs, too, through the address the recollection of a gibe or boast, referred to also in xi and xxiv, uttered in Jerusalem. "This city is the caldron, and we are the meat, or the metal which is being refined."

The series is concluded in xxiii by a dreadful echo of xvi. The two cities, Samaria and Jerusalem, are compared to two harlots, Aholah and Aholibah; and their voluptuous licentiousness, described with revolting fullness, ends with their miserable destruction by their paramours. And so we come to the actual downfall (xxiv). On the very day on which the siege of the city is begun (the date is also given in II. Kings xxv, 1), the prophet utters his final denunciation, with the grim figure of the caldron still in his mind. Jehovah's resolve is irrevocable. On the same day it is revealed to him that his wife (had she previously been ill?) is to die; but there must be none of the usual signs of mourning.

EZEKIEL'S own grief is to be an acted parable to his neighbours; they are to see in his bereavement the prediction of their own paralysing grief when the siege had reached its only possible end. That very evening his wife dies. On the following morning the lesson is pressed home on his hearers. No further message is given to Ezekiel during the next tense eighteen months; but the sequel is related in xxxiii, where, six months after the city has fallen (such is the probable interpretation of xxxiii, 21), the night, it would seem, is passed in a dumb ecstasy of misery; probably the exiles had refused to give up hope, and Ezekiel himself would feel the blow no less than they. In the morning, speech returns, and further denunciation becomes a dirge, which, even at that moment of anguish, the listeners refuse to take to heart. They were on the threshold of a new epoch. But only the prophet understood its significance.

Now that the city is fallen the prophet's landscape changes and the sky clears. Denunciations of Israel cease, for there is no nation left to denounce. The way is open for reconstruction; and to the task of reconstruction Ezekiel applies himself with an enthusiasm and an eye for detail seen in no other prophet. To Jeremiah and the prophets whose work is collected in the Book of Isaiah, the picture is discerned through a golden haze of hope and uncertainty. Ezekiel can see the road mapped out clearly, and even knows how the rough places are to be made smooth and the crooked ways straight. But before this can be, there is still much grim work to be done. If Israel is to live in peace, there must be a peaceful world to live in. At present, as the prophet gazes at Palestine, he sees the land ringed round with coarse and warlike powers.

"TAKE THEE A BARBER'S RAZOR." There is little privacy in the East except for women of the sheltered classes. Life is carried on in the open, and the street barber is a busy individual. The one pictured plies his trade in a by-way of Baghdad. In Ezekiel's time in Mesopotamia men wore their hair long, and full beards were the fashion. The prophet was commanded to shave off both hair and beard (Ezekiel v, 1) as a symbol of the sweeping destruction of the people of Jerusalem during and after the siege of the city.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

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These (for he is still ruthless) must be destroyed. His first task, therefore, is to announce their doom. Other prophets had done the like; Amos, the first of them, in the most business-like fashion of all. There is, however, one great difference between Ezekiel and his predecessors. They are patriots. He has the foresight of the statesman, and the vision of the poet. They see, now this people, and now that, with the sword hanging over it. He sees the whole of his world in a comprehensive view. First the smaller nations fall into the abyss; then, in a series of magnificent poems, the great powers of Tyre and Egypt; and lastly, with a weird imagination that is almost Dantesque, he beholds all the armed forces of his world, already passing away and soon to be no more, gathered in the mists and desolation of the land of the dead. Unless the careful arrangement of the various visions is to go for a mere accident, that is Ezekiel's prediction for the future, and that is what happened. Within just over two centuries from Amos and half a century from Ezekiel, the whole turbulent near East had been over-run and trampled down by the rising might of a young and hitherto unknown people.

MARKETING THE YIELD OF THE GROUND. Vegetable sellers are pictured with their "increase of the field" (Ezekiel xxxvi, 30) in a corner of one of the Jerusalem food-markets off David Street. Their stock consists chiefly of cauliflowers, which are successfully cultivated in the city's neighbourhood and even on plots within its walls. This staple produce is supplemented by artichokes and pot herbs. The women carry their baskets on their heads from the fields. Perfect poise is acquired by beginning to bear burdens in this manner from the age of five, when children, like the three seen in the photograph, usefully accompany their elders to well or market.
Photo, E.N.A.

ON two points, however, Ezekiel is silent. He says nothing about Babylon. Logically, he was bound to do so; for Babylon was soon to be the only political power that mattered. Egypt, though actually unconquered, had lost all initiative. But like Jeremiah, Ezekiel had been wont to regard Babylon as the sword in Jehovah's hand; and this, coupled doubtless, even if unconsciously, with the fear of Babylonian reaction to an invective like that against Egypt, turned his thoughts from the all-important question of her fate. Of Persia, too, he knows nothing. It was not till a generation after that men began to talk in the bazaars of this new and formidable enemy in the North-East. Second-Isaiah was to name Cyrus without hesitation. But both prophets obeyed the law of their order and their inspiration; they would speak in detail of what was at hand, of possibilities which were on all men's lips; of what was, as the Duke of Wellington said, "on the other side of the hill," they were impressive but vague. Prediction always came second in importance to the abiding laws which were not for an age but for all time. Yet the element of prediction is not entirely absent, nor indeed does it prove entirely reliable. These prophecies of Ezekiel's were delivered, apart from the four brief oracles in Chapter xx, which are undated, just before or just after Jerusalem's capture, when Tyre and Egypt were still unconquered; and the fate of these two powers was by no means so dramatic as the prophet suggests.

Only a few verses of Chapter xxv are devoted to each of the four smaller neighbours of Israel; Ammon, Moab, Edom, the Philistines. The prophet's thought moves in a circle, from central Transjordania, as we should call it now, to the South and South-East. The guilt of each is traced to its *Schadenfreude*, its delight at the fate of Jerusalem (compare Amos i, 11)—not perhaps an unnatural feeling, in view of the ceaseless rivalries between the little kingdoms. The political code of the Hebrews had been no higher than theirs. But it is another matter when Ezekiel's eye travels up the coast to Tyre and the North. Amos (Chapter i) had coupled Tyre with Edom and the rest; but Ezekiel sees in Tyre the very spirit of profane and

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impious commercialism. To those who find the importance of history simply in the movements of armies and navies, Tyre would attract little notice. But ancient politics, like those of today, depended on trade and finance. To Ezekiel, Tyre was the centre of the world's trade, as it was to the great captains and statesmen, Nebuchadnezzar and Alexander. They could never leave unprovided-for that little rock-fortress on the Mediterranean coast, the Venice of the old world, which was wont to display the most unexpected powers of resistance and recovery.

But there was another reason which drew the thoughts of Ezekiel to Tyre. What moved him was not so much the political as the moral aspects of wealth and commerce. We must not look to the Hebrew prophets, or to any writers of antiquity, for an appreciation of economic laws. For this we have had to wait till the Renaissance or even Adam Smith. But it is a curious circumstance that the Jews, the great international financiers of the modern world, went originally in profound dread of wealth. Palestine, their home, was bound to remain a poor country; the desert which they looked on as their spiritual birthplace, poorer still. They could rejoice in the half-legendary glories of Solomon; but their social ideal was always that of the small farmer, the well-to-do peasant, dwelling under his own vine and fig-tree, with his ox and his ass close by him. The luxury and display of great cities would horrify him, as a young Briton might have been horrified by Rome in the days of Julius Caesar, or a young Gael from a Highland croft by the streets of London or Paris. Such is the feeling, too, that breathes through our Lord's words in Galilee as they are reported to us in the Synoptic Gospels; and the passion of Ezekiel's description of the downfall of Tyre is echoed, though not surpassed, in the great triumph song over Babylon, the very embodiment of Anti-Christ, in the Apocalypse.

Tyre's Fearful Desolation Foretold in Burning Words

THE section on Tyre begins (xxvi) with a comparatively matter-of-fact account of the forthcoming siege of Tyre by Nebuchadnezzar; its fortifications are to fall; its gay, luxurious life is to come to an end; it will be left a bare rock, and its desolation will strike terror into the surrounding nations. As a matter of history, Tyre held out against her mighty enemy, as Ezekiel himself naïvely acknowledged fifteen years later (xxix, 17, dated 570). At this spectacle of ruin however, the imagination of the prophet catches fire, and in a sustained passage of fierce emotion (xxvii), he pictures Tyre as a great galleon, manned by all the sailors of the world, and fitted (like another "Queen Mary") with all the wealth that the gorgeous East could produce; rowed out to sea, and then broken by a tempest; the horror and derision of mankind.

Yet this is not all. The ruler of Tyre, thought of, like the various "Pharaohs," as a political entity, not as an individual, is rebuked for his pride (xxviii, 1-10), and in the following verses (11-19) is compared to the mythological and semi-divine dweller in Paradise, "the anointed cherub walking in the midst of the stones of fire," rivalling the very wisdom of God, only to be hurled from his high estate like another Lucifer. Here, it may be noticed in passing, Ezekiel seems to be alluding to another version of the story of the Garden of Eden. Finally, he turns to the sister city of Sidon, whose brief rise to power on the exhaustion of Tyre cannot deliver her from the fate of all who would be a "pricking brier" to Israel; and with these towering oppressors removed, Israel will dwell in peace.

Egypt Fated to Join the Empires of Yesterday

NOW (xxix-xxxii, 16) we turn to the greatest foe of all, Egypt. While Jerusalem was still standing, to torture his emotions with affection and loathing, he had little attention to spare for the powers in whose fierce game of ambition it was but a pawn. But Egypt, once the house of bondage and the fiery furnace, and later the seductive and dangerous ally of Solomon, had never a good word from the prophets. To Isaiah's contemptuous view its strength lay only in its inactivity; and Jeremiah was never tired of pointing out that every promise of help it made would be broken. In a series of three odes, Ezekiel describes its coming fate at the hands of Babylon—"the swords of the mighty"; and though after forty years it is to begin a second and enfeebled existence, its pride is to be cast down to the underworld. In the first ode (xxix, 1-16) followed by a series of short "doom-songs," Egypt is compared to one of her own crocodiles, to be hooked and drawn to the land; in the second, five months later (xxxi), the comparison is to a lofty world-shadowing cedar, whose ruin is to change envy to derision; in the third, two years after (xxxii, 1-16) to a great dragon of the seas, the terror of whose fall will shake the world. No such calamity actually took place. Egypt lived on, to be the granary of Rome; but she was never truer to her ancient character than at the sea-fight off Actium (31 B.C.); and every traveller by the Nile today thinks but of the grandeur that is for ever departed.

Ezekiel's imagination is not yet exhausted. Indeed, it reaches a height hitherto unscaled. A fortnight after the dirge in xxxii, 1-16, he pictures in detail the descent of Pharaoh and his host into the world of the dead, at which he had previously glanced. As the slain warriors descend, they are greeted by the fallen nations already there; Assyria, Elam, Meshech, Tubal, Sidon, Edom; "Have you also come to join us here?" "They lie with the uncircumcised, slain with the sword;" the words recur all through the passage like a funeral motif. The fallen armies take some miserable comfort, each in the thought of the ruin of the rest, none of them able any longer to terrify the world in the empty companionship of death.

The scene is now cleared for the salvation of Israel. Its destiny can be accomplished, without the complication of international warfare and entangling alliances. But the news of the city's fall has not actually arrived, however confidently Ezekiel expected it. While he is still waiting, his thoughts return, on the threshold of his

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new task, to the old problem of responsibility, his own, and the people's (xxxiii; *cf.* iii, 16-21 and xiv, 9-11). If the prophet does not warn, the guilt of the sinful people will rest on his head. To the people, pining in their transgressions, he repeats the promise (and in a more hopeful tone) that repentance will always be followed by life. And now at last comes the news of the city's capture. Ezekiel's first reaction to it, after a night of silence, is a repetition of the stern and inevitable sequence of desolation and sin, and a rebuke of the confidence of the little band of survivors still left in Judah. But a change is on its way. Echoing a prophecy of Jeremiah, which perhaps he had heard before he left Palestine (Jeremiah xxiii, 8), he turns to the evil "shepherds" of the nation, rulers and nobles, and tells them that their oppression is at an end; and there emerges the figure of Jehovah Himself, as the good shepherd who gathers the scattered flock, makes it lie down in green pastures on the mountains of Israel, sets over it His servant David, and protects it from all fear of oppression and famine (xxxiv). The prophet has given us flashes or glimpses of comfort before. Now, for the first time, he is allowed to elaborate the picture, linking Psalm xxiii with John x.

It is interesting to note that in these chapters Ezekiel's thoughts take flight from the level plains of Babylon to dwell on the mountains of Israel, now to be covered by sheep. But before he can himself rest there in peace, he sees the other mountains, the hills of Edom. He has already uttered his doom on Edom (xxxiii); but he goes further in Chapter xxxv, as if Edom were the last and fiercest enemy of all. Its coming desolation would be all the more satisfying to Ezekiel's rugged mind, now that the ruin of Israel was a thing of the past. And so he breaks (xxxvi, 1-15) into a long and beautiful apostrophe to the hills of Palestine, barren and forbidding to the modern traveller, but the very heart of the promised land to the Hebrew. They are to be clothed with fertility and luxuriate in a teeming population; for not only are they to cease to "devour" their peasantry, but the nation itself is to be re-born. In the following verses Ezekiel unfolds his "plan of salvation." Scattered abroad as they are, Jehovah is said, characteristically, to have pity, not on them, but on His own reputation, inevitably damaged as it would be by the disgrace of His worshippers; He will therefore bring them back, first, to their own land; there He will inspire them with a new desire for obedience and holiness; next, He will surround them with a new prosperity, of which, lastly, the consequence will be a settled loathing and hatred for all the old bad ways. Here also Ezekiel is elaborating Jeremiah; but striking as was Jeremiah's prophecy of the new covenant (Jeremiah xxxi, 31), Ezekiel joins it to a prediction of repentance, as if positive goodness must always go with a "godly sorrow" for the past. In this way he points forward, as few Old Testament seers have done, to St. Paul's great phrase, that it is the goodness of God that leads to repentance (Romans ii, 4); and finally (St. Paul again; Romans xi, 12) the restoration of Israel will be the illumination of the Gentiles.

WAS all this enough to convince his hearers? Apparently not. With his hand, as always, on their pulses, he is still conscious of their despair Another attempt must be made. And now he finds himself (xxxvii) in a valley full of dried-up bones, eloquent of the hopelessness in which the exiles were still plunged. As he gazes at them, Jehovah bids him "prophesy" to them; they are to come to life. Accordingly, he prophesies. There is the roar of an earthquake, and the bones become bodies, clothed with flesh. Once more he prophesies at Jehovah's word; this time to

"ENGINES OF WAR AGAINST THY WALLS." This marble slab from the palace of Tiglath-Pileser III (745-727 B.C.) at Calah depicts Assyrian methods of warfare still in use by Nebuchadnezzar's armies more than a century and a half later. It shows impaled prisoners from a besieged town which is being attacked by archers and battering rams. In the prophecies against Jerusalem and Tyre, Ezekiel refers to these "engines of war" which Nebuchadnezzar would set against the walls (Ezekiel xxi, 22; xxvi, 9). The king laid siege to the latter city for thirteen years before the Tyrians capitulated.

British Museum

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the wind; the wind enters into the bodies, and a great army stands alive before him. The subtlety of the Hebrew of this surprising passage is difficult to render into English, since in Hebrew one and the same word does duty for mind and breath and spirit. It is the all-pervading air in the world around, which Jehovah uses to fill the bodies with His breath. Such is the sign that Israel will be called forth from the grave of its exile. It will be understood that there is here no promise of an individual resurrection, nor any thought of the life beyond the grave. That was hidden from Ezekiel, as, save in glimpses, from all the Old Testament seers. But to the nation this was a commanding word of hope and assurance. After this, only one other word was needed, that the two halves of the nation, Ephraim and Judah, so long divided politically, and in their subsequent fate, should be reunited under one king, on the "mountains of Israel," with David as their prince for ever. They were to rejoice in an everlasting covenant, and in words that the writer of the Apocalypse could do no more than quote, the tabernacle of God will be with men. So the gracious purpose of the Most High is accomplished at last.

And yet it seems that another word remains to be spoken. The last two chapters of this section (xxxviii, xxxix) contain an account of the gathering of savage hordes from the far North, who sweep over the now redeemed and settled land like a whirlwind, like the Scythian barbarians of whom Jeremiah had prophesied, but magnified into a nightmare of horror. Once in Palestine, however, an even more terrible destruction awaits them; and all that is left for Israel will be the vast labour of burning the weapons and burying the bodies. The language reminds one of the later Apocalyptic writing, and it is echoed in the Book of Revelation. Most scholars regard the two chapters as not by Ezekiel himself; but they fit in with the general scheme; they represent the downfall of the last possible enemy of Israel's peace and Jehovah's plan; and the chapter closes with another promise of unalterable good will.

Through Jerusalem's Streets with an Angel Guide

As far as the dates go, Ezekiel was silent from 584, two years after the crash, till 572. We can only guess what was the subject of his thoughts; but not without good ground, for when next he speaks, it is to describe a series of visions of the city of the future. He finds himself "on a very high mountain, whereon was as it were the frame of a city" (R.V.). By him stands an angelic companion, who reveals to him first the Temple within the city, its situation and its furniture, in astonishing detail; and in it he beholds a glory like the glory which, twenty years before, he had seen departing. Then he sees the altar and is instructed in the complicated ritual of its sacrifices, the necessity for keeping clear of all the old ungodliness, and the various directions for the priests. Then follow the measurements for the consecrated portion of the land around the holy city, the offerings to be made by the people, and the special sacrifices that are to usher in each half year, with further detailed rubrics for worship, particularly for the worship offered by the "prince" (xlv, xlvi). Lastly, (xlvii), the rise of a miraculous river is described, which flows from beneath the altar in the Temple, and finally reaches the Dead Sea, making its waters sweet and fresh (save for the marshes, where salt will yet be found and the salt industry can be continued). The frontiers of the whole territory are then plotted out, involving within them the new arrangement of the tribes, and the central portion of the land, devoted to the priests and Levites. The book closes with a description of the gates of the city, whose new name is, "The Lord is there."

The Temple as Seen in Ezekiel's Vision

The significance of this remarkable vision will be clear if we pay attention to some separate aspects of it. The contrast between its matter-of-fact and legislative atmosphere and the excitement of the preceding prophecies is striking; but we must remember the difference in the atmosphere in Ezekiel's inner life. The tension and horror of the last crowded years of the city's independent existence is gone. The past is buried beneath its ruins. It remains to prepare for the future. Construction calls for deliberate planning and leisurely forethought. But unless, on the strength of the contrast, we are to assume a difference of authorship, we shall find that the conceptions underlying his earlier writings are also those which underlie Ezekiel's scheme of "Utopia."

In the first place, the whole plan of the Temple and its arrangements, and of the country and its distribution among the restored population, is developed from the prophet's conception of holiness. To Ezekiel, as we have already seen, holiness is something partly moral, partly physical. The contamination or filth which destroys it and outrages Jehovah, the holy God, may result from the moral corruption of adultery or oppression or violence, or from the ritual uncleanness of eating forbidden food or breaking one of the recognized "taboos," or from the idolatry in which moral and ritual sin are combined. What is holy or consecrated to Jehovah must be kept as far as possible from the risk of pollution by every-day use. Hence the surrounding of the city by a "neutral zone," as it were; and it will be found that all the arrangements of the sacred precincts, capricious as they may seem to us, serve this one supreme end. The profanations of the past are to be for ever impossible.

This becomes still clearer when Ezekiel's lay-out of the Temple is contrasted with that of Solomon. The Temple of Solomon had been a sort of chapel, attached to the royal palace, almost a part of it. In the future, there would be no palace. And there would be no king, or "lay head of the church." The prince, who is the leader of the civic society, is a layman, debarred, like his subjects, from all sacerdotal duties. His one privilege is the special munificence of the offerings prescribed for him. We have no information as to the plan of the Temple built at Jerusalem when the exiles

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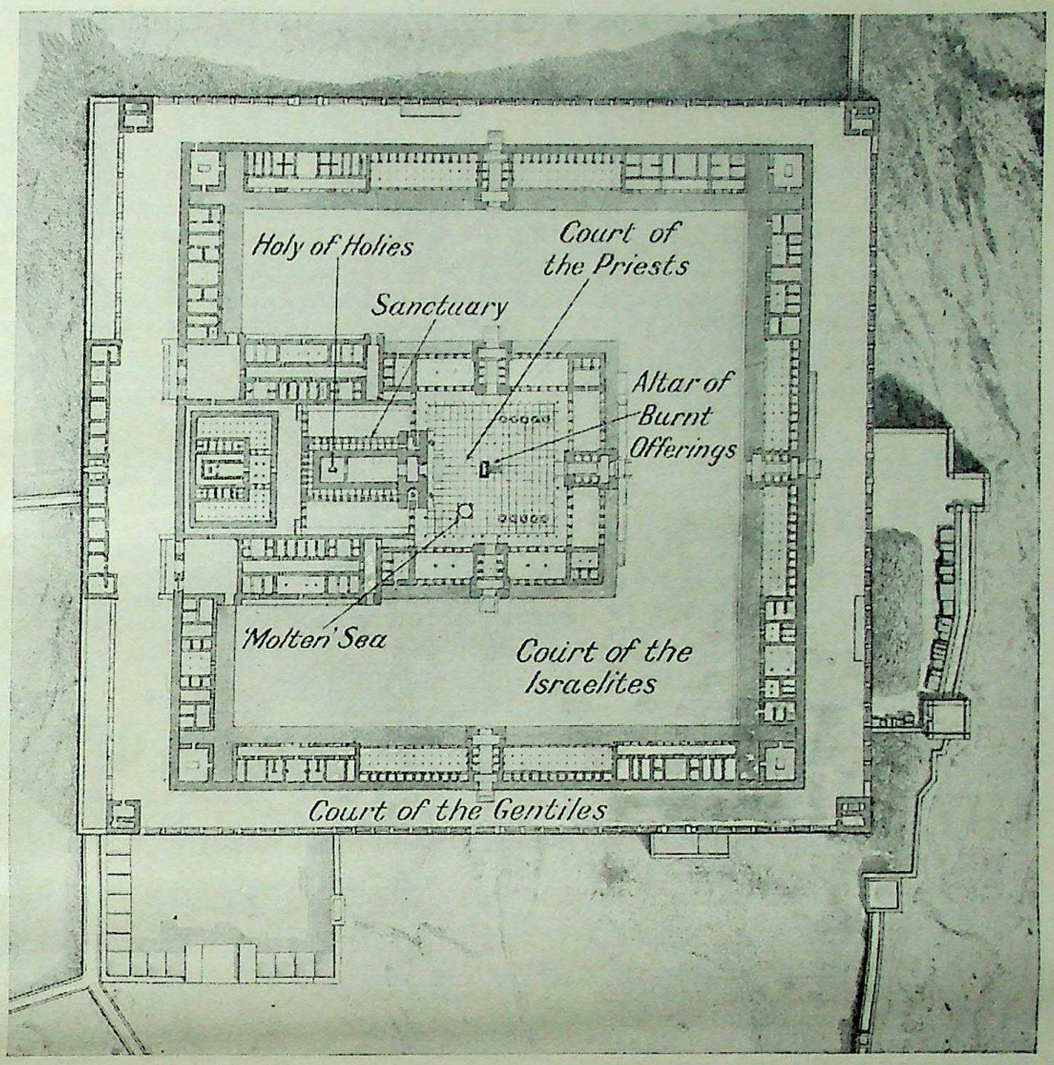
returned; but it is significant that Herod's Temple, of which we have very full knowledge, while it neglected the symmetry of plan on which Ezekiel laid such stress, reproduced its clear demarcation from all secular buildings.

Is Ezekiel's sketch of the Temple and its worship to be called a vision, like the visions of his earlier years? This is really a question for the psychologist. Whatever meaning we give to the term, Ezekiel's visionary experiences were not wholly detached from his ordinary waking life. Several of his trances appear to have been what we should now call telepathic. They drew their material, in part or whole, from his knowledge or belief; and in his description of the Temple of the future, we can clearly distinguish three factors: his knowledge of the actual Temple, his horror at its misuse, and his adaptation of the building as he knew it to nobler uses. If his imagination was carried on into the unconsciousness of a trance, he would only have experienced what other artists and poets have claimed. On the other hand, he would be in line with other prophets if, when an idea took definite shape and embodiment in his mind as complete and indubitable truth, he recognized and proclaimed it as the veritable revelation of Jehovah.



"SHOW THEM THE FORM OF THE HOUSE AND THE FASHION THEREOF."
After Ezekiel's vision of the structure of the Temple—a vision which came to him during the exile in Babylonia as the result of years of fervent desire and, probably, of consecrated planning for the restoration of remembered Zion—he was commanded to show "the pattern" to the people (Ezekiel xliii, 10, 11) "that they may be ashamed of their iniquities." The detailed survey recorded by the priestly Prophet has enabled an accurate ground plan to be made by a French architect of this vision-temple.

Plan by Ch. Chipiez

Something more, however, of the "visionary" must be allowed to Ezekiel. He takes the most startling liberties with geography. The Temple and its precincts could never have been built on the site of Jerusalem, with its deep surrounding valleys; nor could the river which flowed from beneath the altar have found its way down and uphill, as he suggests. He might indeed have been reading from a map, when he describes the frontiers, rather ambitiously wide, of the country; but the symmetrical distribution of the land between the various tribes entirely neglects the well-known and awkward features of the terrain of Palestine, and could never have been carried out. Here, Ezekiel's imagination breaks through geographical reality altogether and escapes.

This however is what the Hebrew imagination was prone to do. The same thing can be seen in the Book of Revelation (i, 12ff.). No comparison between the two books can be made here; but the Apocalypse should always be studied with Ezekiel's work open before the reader. Whatever be Ezekiel's relation, in his visions, to the world around him, the visions in the Apocalypse are full of the imagery already familiar in Ezekiel. This indeed is specially true of the description of the Holy City (Revelation xxi, xxii). The whole passage reads far more like a recollection of Ezekiel, supplemented by some impressive details, and marked also by some important omissions, than as an independent revelation. Thus it comes about, looking at the matter a little more widely, that Ezekiel stands in a special relation to the two great world faiths that have had their historic origin in Palestine. He has given to Judaism its fundamental ideas; its passionate sense of separation from the Gentile world; its dread of pollution, its enthusiasm for the law. In his insistence on the mercy of God, the necessity of a turning of the heart, the conception of life as one great sacrificial act of obedience, he has prepared the way for a faith in a pardoning God which leaps into life at the vision, not of a ruined city or a broken community, but of the cross of Christ.

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Oracles of Ezekiel the Seer

EZEKIEL is the third of the "major" prophets in the Old Testament. He differs from the other two, Isaiah and Jeremiah, in that all his prophecy was done in exile, from which he never returned. His Book, also, presents a greater unity than theirs, since it is much more personal, and no part of it is anonymous.

In his earlier chapters (i-xxiv) he combats the delusion of his fellow-exiles that they will soon be restored to Jerusalem: he then (xxv-xxxii) predicts the downfall of the surrounding nations; and finally (xxxiii ff.) after the news of the fall of Jerusalem reaches the exiles, he combats their despair by foretelling how the Temple would be rebuilt and its services restored—a consummation Ezekiel himself did not live to see.

A conspicuous feature of the Book of Ezekiel is the wonderful visions and the symbolical actions that the Prophet reports. The following extracts, taken from the Authorized Version, will give some impression of his outlook and utterances during the various stages of his prophethood.

EZEKIEL'S CALL
i, 1—6, 24—28; ii, 1—4

NOW it came to pass in the thirtieth year, in the fourth month, in the fifth day of the month, as I was among the captives by the river of Chebar, that the heavens were opened, and I saw visions of God. In the fifth day of the month, which was the fifth year of King Jehoiachin's captivity, the word of the LORD came expressly unto Ezekiel the priest, the son of Buzi, in the land of the Chaldeans by the river Chebar; and the hand of the LORD was there upon him.

And I looked, and, behold, a whirlwind came out of the north, a great cloud, and a fire infolding itself, and a brightness was about it, and out of the midst thereof as the colour of amber, out of the midst of the fire. Also out of the midst thereof came the likeness of four living creatures. And this was their appearance; they had the likeness of a man. And every one had four faces, and every one had four wings.

And when they went, I heard the noise of their wings, like the noise of great waters, as the voice of the Almighty, the voice of speech, as the noise of an host: when they stood, they let down their wings. And there was a voice from the firmament that was over their heads, when they stood, and had let down their wings.

And above the firmament that was over their heads was the likeness of a throne, as the appearance of a sapphire stone: and upon the likeness of the throne was the likeness as the appearance of a man above upon it. And I saw as the colour of amber, as the appearance of fire round about within it, from the appearance of his loins even upward, and from the appearance of his loins even downward, I saw as it were the appearance of fire, and it had brightness round about. As the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud in the day of rain, so was the appearance of the brightness round about. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the LORD. And when I saw it, I fell upon my face, and I heard a voice of one that spake.

And he said unto me, Son of man, stand upon thy feet, and I will speak unto thee. And the spirit entered into me when he spake unto me, and set me upon my feet, that I heard him that spake unto me. And he said with me, Son of man, I send thee to the children of Israel, to a rebellious nation that hath rebelled against me: they and their fathers have transgressed against me, even unto this very day. For they are impudent children and stiffhearted. I do send thee unto them; and thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD.

THE SWORD OF THE LORD
xxi, 1—7

AND the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Son of man, set thy face toward Jerusalem, and drop thy word toward the holy places, and prophesy against the land of Israel, and say to the land of Israel, Thus saith the LORD:

Behold, I am against thee, and will draw forth my sword out of his sheath, and will cut off from thee the righteous and the wicked. Seeing then that I shall cut off from thee the righteous and the wicked, therefore shall my sword go forth out of his sheath against all flesh from the south to the north: that all flesh may know that I the LORD have drawn forth my sword out of his sheath: it shall not return any more.

Sigh therefore, thou son of man, with the breaking of thy loins; and with bitterness sigh before their eyes. And it shall be, when they say unto thee, Wherefore sighest thou? that thou shalt answer, For the tidings; because it cometh: and every heart shall melt, and all hands shall be feeble, and every spirit shall faint, and all knees shall be weak as water: behold, it cometh, and shall be brought to pass, saith the Lord GOD.

THE GLORY OF ASSYRIA
xxxi, 3—9

BEHOLD, the Assyrian was a cedar in Lebanon with fair branches, and with a shadowing shroud, and of an high stature; and his top was among the thick boughs. The waters made him great, the deep set him up on high with her rivers running round about his plants, and sent out her little rivers unto all the trees of the field. Therefore his height was exalted above all the trees of the field, and his boughs were multiplied, and his branches became long because of the multitude of waters, when he shot forth. All the fowls of heaven made their nests in his boughs, and under his branches did all the beasts of the field bring forth their young, and under his shadow dwelt all great nations. Thus was he fair in his greatness, in the length of his branches: for his root was by great waters. The cedars in the garden of God could not hide him: the fir trees were not like his boughs, and the chesnut trees were not like his branches; nor any tree in the garden of God was like unto him in his beauty. I have made him fair by the multitude of his branches: so that all the trees of Eden, that were in the garden of God, envied him.

A COVENANT OF PEACE
xxxiv, 22—29

THEREFORE will I save my flock, and they shall no more be a prey; and I will judge between cattle and cattle. And I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even my servant David; he shall feed them, and he shall be their shepherd. And I the LORD will be their God, and my servant David a prince among them; I the LORD have spoken it. And I will make with them a covenant of peace, and will cause the evil beasts to cease out of the land: and they shall dwell safely in the wilderness, and sleep in the woods. And I will make them and the places round about my hill a blessing; and I will cause the shower to come down in his season; there shall be showers of blessing. And the tree of the field shall yield her fruit, and the earth shall yield her increase, and they shall be safe in their land, and shall know that I am the LORD, when I have broken the bands of their yoke, and delivered them out of the hand of those that served themselves of them. And they shall no more be a prey to the heathen, neither shall the beast of the land devour them; but they shall dwell safely, and none shall make them afraid. And I will raise up for them a plant of renown, and they shall be no more consumed with hunger in the land, neither bear the shame of the heathen any more.

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Ezekiel

II

The Land of the Book

The Visions of Ezekiel Related to the World of Fact

by REV. A. E. GOODMAN, M.A.

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THROUGHOUT the Book of Ezekiel is to be seen a constant intermingling of the natural and the supernatural. It is clear that, to the prophet, living as he was in the midst of the reality of human crisis, Divine intervention in human affairs was equally a reality. Hence it is not surprising that we find in Ezekiel those sudden transitions from the natural to the supernatural, from historical narrative to descriptions of visions, from the world of sense to the world of inspiration. So vivid is the perception of Divine Truth portrayed in the pages of this book that the reader may find some difficulty in distinguishing what is subjective from what is objective in the experiences of the prophet.

One wonders how much he saw of his own account, how much was due to the working of his imagination, and how much was revealed to him by God. The question belongs properly to the realm of religious psychology, and we cannot deal with it with any finality here. But it will be interesting to see what, if any, could have been the natural counterparts of the visions which are so strikingly described. By examining as far as we are able the environment in which the prophet lived we may gain some idea as to the working of his mind. We shall know of some of the things which he saw and heard day by day, and so shall be better able to appreciate the force of his utterances on his compatriots, and perhaps also to understand something of the way in which the Divine inspiration worked within him.

Since the reign of Josiah (639-608 B.C.) the history of Judah had been one of steady decline. This monarch had made a determined effort to unify his people both in the matter of politics and of religion. But the forces at work were too strong for him, and what measure of success attended his efforts was but temporary He met his death at the hands of Pharaoh Necho at Megiddo, and from that day the nation was little more than a pawn in the hands of either Egypt or Babylon. The religious policy which Josiah had so diligently pursued was not maintained by his successors. Jehoahaz, his son, reigned for three months only. Jehoiakim, the puppet of Necho, paid a regular tribute to his suzerain lord which he raised by taxation, and re-introduced not only the religious practices put down by Josiah but many other foreign rites also.

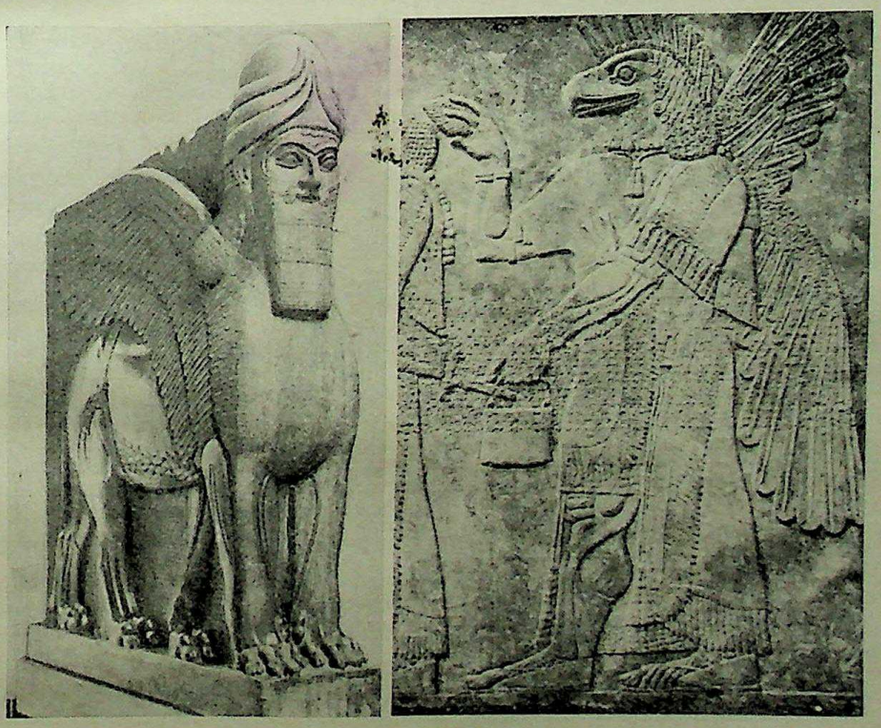
Utter Collapse of Judah's Religion

TO many, the superior strength of Egypt and Babylon bespoke the superiority of their gods, and the Temple of the Lord became once again a pantheon in which Tammuz, the sun, animal gods, etc., were adored together with the God of the Hebrews. The national religion broke down completely, as did the national moral. Intrigues were rife, morality was at a low ebb. It was the beginning of the end Jeremiah in vain tried to stem the tide, appealing for an acknowledgment of the reality of the situation and for a return to the true faith But it was of no avail. His warning passed unheeded. Egypt proved herself to be that " broken reed, whereon if a man lean, it will go through his hand and pierce it " (*see* Isaiah xxxvi, 6), while Babylon was irresistible.

In the year 605 B.C. Nebuchadnezzar routed the Egyptian forces at Carchemish. During the lull which followed this victory many confidently believed that the danger was passed and that Palestine would remain unmolested ; and Jeremiah stands out at this time as the one man convinced of the fools' paradise in which his countrymen were living. Within three years of the battle of Carchemish, Jehoiakim was forced to submit to Nebuchadnezzar and became his vassal. Three years later he rebelled, and Palestine was thereupon overrun by the Babylonian forces. The following year (597 B.C.) Jerusalem itself was invested, and Nebuchadnezzar deported some 8,000 of the principal citizens with their families to Babylon. Among these were the young king Jehoiakim who had reigned but three months, and the youthful priest Ezekiel Over what remained of the population Nebuchadnezzar appointed Zedekiah as a kind of petty king.

Two great events were destined to exercise a profound influence on the life of Ezekiel ; his call to the prophetic ministry in 592 B.C., and the final siege and capture of Jerusalem six years later.

Ezekiel came from a priestly family in Jerusalem. He was therefore well acquainted with the Temple of Solomon which had stood the ravages of time for nigh on four hundred years. He was conversant with the ritual which was observed there, the sacrificial offerings, the singing and the prayers. He knew also how heathen practices were



WINGED LIKE THE CREATURES OF EZEKIEL'S VISION. These sculptures are from the palace of Ashur-nasir-pal, king of Assyria, 884-859 B.C. Though carved more than 200 years before the time of Ezekiel's residence in Mesopotamia, they belong to the class of religious sculptures which were stereotyped. He would have been sufficiently familiar with emblematic huge-winged and human-faced stone lions and with the figures of priests wearing bird-headed masks and winged cloaks for such representations to influence his complex imagery and symbolism (Ezekiel i, 5-10).

British Museum

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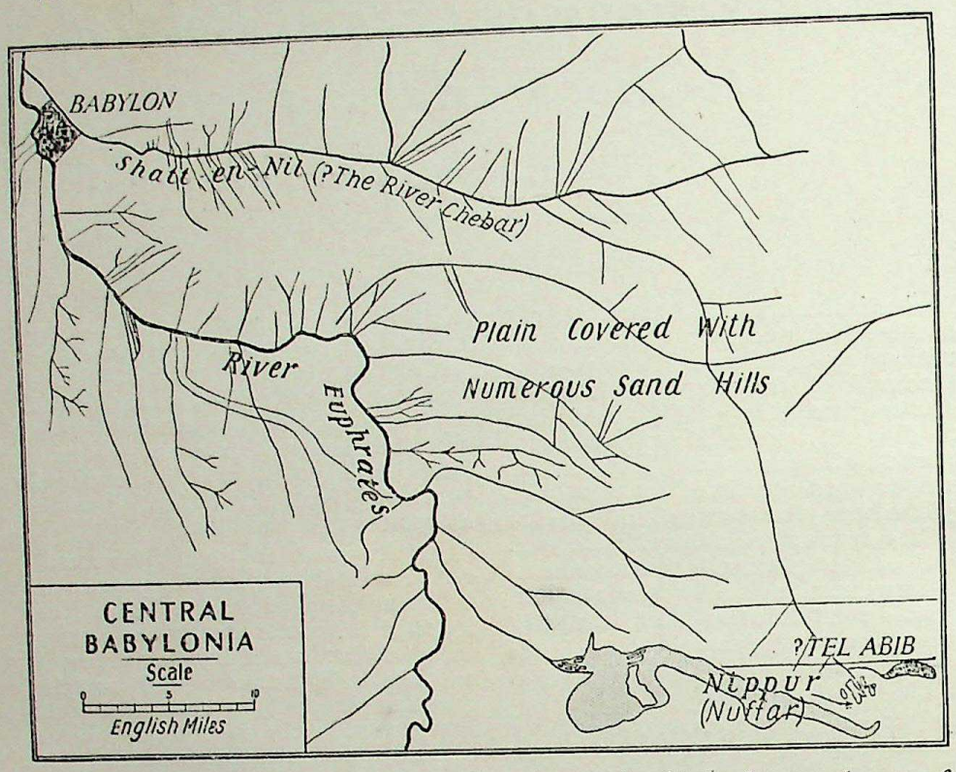

The Waters of Babylon included a complicated network of irrigation canals, one of which archaeologists believe to have been the river Chebar.

Prepared under the direction of the Author

continually encroaching upon Hebrew religion, how even the Temple itself was not free from foreign religious rites. He would have learnt how Manasseh had set up in the Temple the graven image of Asherah, and in the Temple courts altars to the sun and the stars, and how these and other objects of heathen worship were removed by Josiah. It would have been part of his education to know of the discovery of the Law-Book in the 18th year of Josiah (621 B.C.) and of the great religious reforms which followed.

That Ezekiel became an ardent supporter of the ideals which governed Josiah's reformation may be clearly seen from his writings, and it must have been with an ever-growing sense of shame, developing later into a righteous indignation, that he witnessed the sinking back of religion into the corruption from which Josiah had rescued it. He must have known Jeremiah, too, and have listened to this great prophet uttering his warnings in the Temple courts or other prominent places in the city. We are not told what age Ezekiel was when he was taken with the other exiles into Babylonia. But we may conjecture that he was as yet a young man, still in the process of forming his ideas, and no doubt very perplexed in mind as to the outcome of all he witnessed around him. At all events his call to the vocation of a prophet did not come to him until he had been in Babylonia for five years.

We should think of those taken away to Babylonia as exiles rather than captives. There is nothing to indicate that they became slaves. On the contrary, there is every reason to believe that they lived a life of comparative freedom, though kept to subservient trades and not allowed any part in public affairs, rather like the Jews in the medieval ghettos.

We must be all well acquainted with the Psalm (cxxxvii) which commences "By the rivers of Babylon there we sat down, yea, we wept." What a poignant picture this Psalm gives of the remorse, mingled with hatred for their enemies, of that exiled community separated from all that was near and dear to them. The city of Babylon was well over 500 miles from Jerusalem, and in between lay the great expanse of the Arabian desert. There was no prospect, so far as anyone could see, of ever returning to the native land which had meant so much to them.

Babylonia lay in and around the boundaries of the two great rivers, the Euphrates and the Tigris. Babylon itself lay on the eastern bank of the Euphrates. In the surrounding neighbourhood, particularly between the two rivers, was a complicated network of canals which brought water to the fields and made cultivation possible. Today the high banks of the canals are still to be seen, though they have long since become silted up and dry, and the land which was once fertile is now barren, except in the vicinity of the rivers themselves where there is a certain amount of vegetation and much swamp.

THE map given above shows the district to the south-east of Babylon. One of the largest of the irrigation canals, called by the Arabs the Shatt-en-Nil, commenced from the city itself and flowed in a south-easterly direction through Nippur, bringing water to the interior of the country, finally joining the Euphrates again below Ur. This canal was the largest of any in the district, being actually wider in some parts than the Euphrates itself.

During the excavations of the ruins of Nippur in 1903 a large number of clay tablets were found, inscribed with the ancient cuneiform writing of the Babylonians. They had belonged to the business archives of a great Babylonian firm, Murashû Sons, bankers and brokers, who lived in the time of Artaxerxes I (465-425 B.C.) and Darius II (424-404 B.C.). In these tablets is frequent mention of the *nār Kabari* which means literally "the great canal," the reference being clearly to the Shatt-en-Nil, which, as can be seen from the map, flowed through the centre of Nippur. There seems little doubt that this was the river Chebar spoken of by Ezekiel, and that it was by these waters that the children of Israel "sat down and wept."

The question arises as to the whereabouts of Tel-abib, for it was here that the exiled community were stationed. It would seem that it was somewhere near the Chebar, though not actually by it, for Ezekiel mentions that after his vision by the banks of the Chebar, he "came to them of the captivity at Tel-abib" (Ezekiel iii, 15). The Babylonians used to give the name *til-abûbi* to the large sandhills which, as today, lay scattered over the central plain of Babylonia. The Hebrew *tel-abib* means "mound of the ear of corn," but the word is most probably a Hebrew-sounding form of the Babylonian *til-abûbi*. That this is likely to be the case is borne out by the sandhills which abound in the vicinity of the Shatt-en-Nil. Moreover, there have been discovered within a radius of five to ten miles to the east and north of Nippur many traces of Jewish settlements, and in the clay tablets mentioned above are evidences of a Jewish settlement in the neighbourhood of Nippur with which the firm of Murashû Sons conducted business. One extensive sandhill in particular lies to the north of Nippur about a mile to the east of the Shatt-en-Nil, and this may well have been the Biblical Tel-abib.

Babylonian Elements in Ezekiel's Experience

EZEKIEL, like Isaiah and Jeremiah, narrates the circumstances of his call to the prophetic ministry. In the case of Isaiah and of Ezekiel the call was accompanied by a vision. The vision of Ezekiel has, more than any other in the Old Testament, gripped the imagination of artists and writers throughout the ages. One cannot help being struck, on the one hand by its terribleness and grandeur, and on the other by its depth and mysteriousness. What natural phenomenon, one may ask, could have given rise to the terrifying yet inspiring experience of Ezekiel? For the inspiration may have been just as God-sent even if the immediate causes were due to the forces of nature.

During the Euphrates Expedition sponsored by the British Government during the years 1835-7, a most astonishing catastrophe overtook the Tigris, one of the two steamers in which the party under the command of General Francis Chesney were

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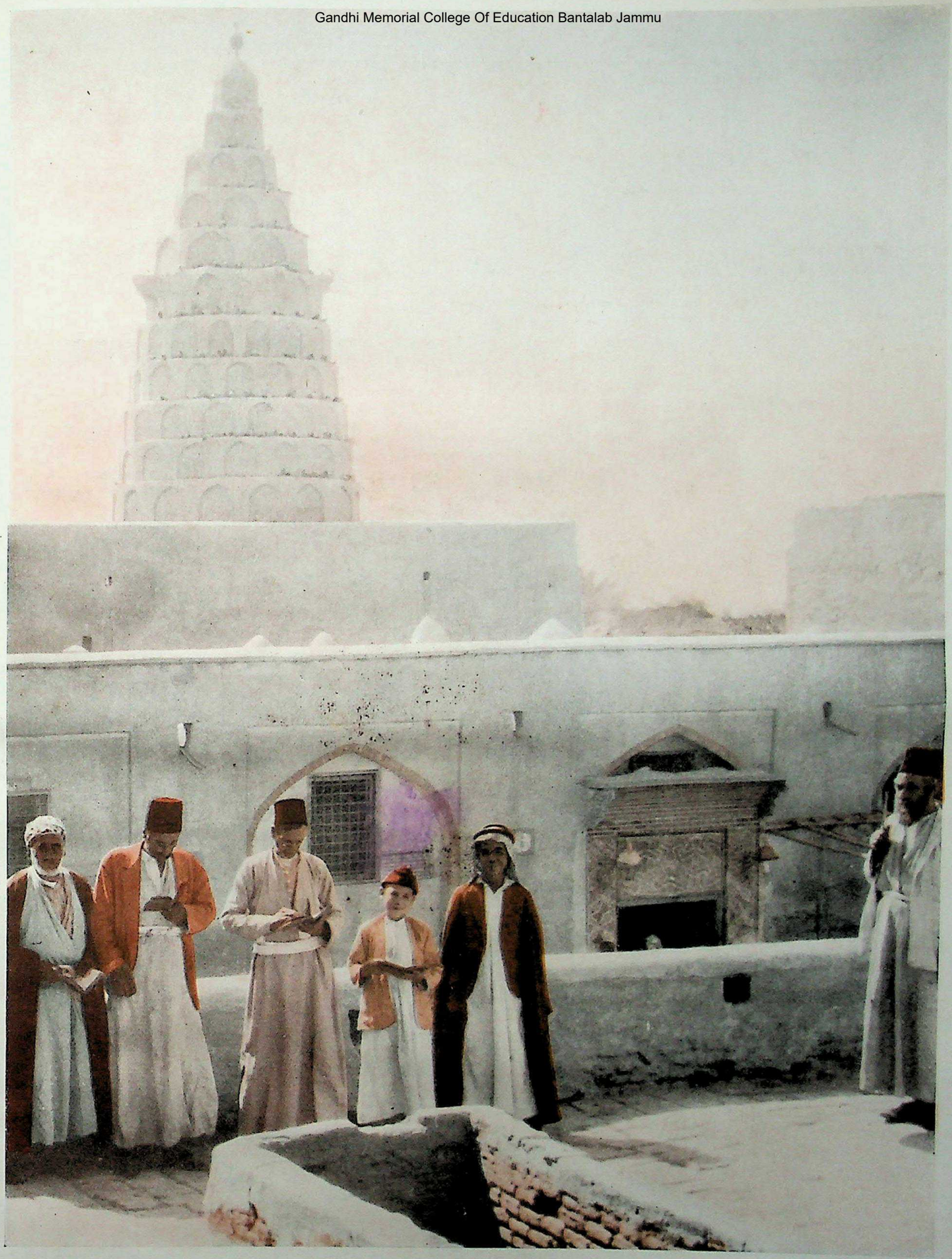

EZEKIEL'S BABYLONIAN TOMB VISITED BY JEWISH PILGRIMS

Near Birs Nimrud—ancient ruins of Borsippa, once identified as the site of the Tower of Babel—the traditional burial place of Ezekiel is shown at Kefil, a small Moslem town. The mausoleum was regarded as old in the 12th century; about it arose the legend that Jehoiachin, king of Judah, had it built when he was released from prison by Evil-merodach, king of Babylon, and kindly treated after thirty-seven years of captivity (Jeremiah lii, 31-34). Part of the spacious interior of the building was devoted to a library of Hebrew manuscripts in the Middle Ages. Great pilgrimages used to be organized to the spot at the time of the Feast of Tabernacles, and even now Jewish visitors pay homage at the tomb of the Prophet whom the Moslems also revere.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

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"DAMASCUS WAS THY MERCHANT IN THE MULTITUDE OF THE WARES"

Celebrated among the bazaars of the Orient are those of Damascus. The city since remote ages has been a mercantile centre—old when Ezekiel alluded to it as a mart for Tyrian wares (Ezekiel xxvii, 18). During recent unsettled times in Syria, tourists, eagerly seeking treasures in jewelry, metal-work, silks and embroideries, have perforce been few, but the bazaars remain a lively native market. They are arranged in avenues of small shops presenting a brilliant, kaleidoscopic effect of animated trade. Each section is devoted to some particular kind of merchandise. A street of florists and nurserymen is depicted above. Theirs is a prosperous business. Damascus gardens are renowned for beauty, and even city houses display a profusion of ornamental shrubs and flowers in the central courtyards off which the rooms open.

Photo Fleet Agency

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"HOW DOTH THE CITY SIT SOLITARY"

The street lamp reveals a Jewish rabbi hastening home from the synagogue along one of the arched and stepped streets of the oldest quarter in Jerusalem. Lonely scene and figure recall the words: "The ways of Zion do mourn, because none come to the solemn feasts: all her gates are desolate: her priests sigh" (Lamentations i, 4). But the desertion pictured is unusual. In the time of the Kings and Prophets Jerusalem was "full of stirs, a tumultuous city" (Isaiah xxii, 2) until destruction overtook it, and "full of stirs" it is today. Since the British mandate the streets have been more efficiently cleaned and lighted. Years ago the law required everyone who happened to be out after sunset to carry a lantern, and "the ways" were foul with garbage.

Photo: Alexander Zaitzeff, Jerusalem

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descending the river Euphrates. After having visited some of the archaeological ruins to the north, they were steaming southwards in the direction of Babylon. The day was fine, and there was no indication of any immediate change in the weather. Suddenly, without any warning, heavy clouds appeared and spread rapidly, accompanied by a rapid fall of the barometer; and, in General Chesney's words, "in the course of a few minutes, dense masses of black clouds, streaked with orange, red, and yellow appeared, coming up from the W.S.W., and approaching us with a fearful velocity." Charlewood, another member of the expedition, relates that "the clouds by this time were quite terrific. Below the darkest of them, there was a large collection of matter, of a dark crimson colour, which was rolling towards us at an awful rate." The whole affair lasted but a few minutes, and during that short time the Tigris was capsized and sunk, and many of her crew drowned. Afterwards, all was calm again as if nothing had happened, and it was clear that the whirlwind had travelled along a comparatively narrow path, for above and below the spot where the accident had occurred there was little sign of disorder.

One cannot help recalling Ezekiel's vision as one reads of this great hurricane, and one wonders whether he, too, witnessed a phenomenon such as this. We should also note some other elements in his vision which can be paralleled from Babylonian sources. In Babylonian religion there were four kinds of genii, and representations of them have been found on bas-reliefs. One had a man's body with an eagle's head, another the head and body of a man and eagle's feet, a third had a human head and the body of a bull, and a fourth a human head and the body of a lion. One finds also figures of winged beasts with men's heads, while at Zenjirli was discovered a god's chariot supported by two cherubim, which illustrates in a remarkable way the "firmament" of the vision, supported at each of its four corners by the living creatures. These all belonged to the astral worship of Babylonia in which the luminaries of the heavens were regarded as holding the fates of mankind in their hands. It is interesting to note that St. Jerome used the four creatures of Ezekiel's vision as emblems of the four Evangelists, and this interpretation gained great popularity among artists of later times. The man was assigned to St. Matthew, the lion to St. Mark, the ox to St. Luke, and the eagle to St. John.

And so we see in Ezekiel's vision many elements which might have been witnessed by anyone living in Babylonia at that time. Particularly would this have been true for one living in the neighbourhood of Nippur, with its great temple dedicated to the god En-lil, and there is room for speculation as to how far Ezekiel's experiences by the Chebar can be explained by the discoveries of travel and archaeology.

After his inaugural vision Ezekiel returned to his fellow exiles at Tel-abib. Here, after a period during which he "sat astonied," he began his work as a prophet. Among his first activities was the acted prophecy of the siege of Jerusalem. Here he took a clay tablet such as the Babylonians were accustomed to use, and scratched upon it with a stylus a plan of the city of Jerusalem. Many such architectural plans have been found in Babylonia, including one of the temple at Nippur—which, incidentally, was of considerable help to the archaeologists in the excavation of the ruins. When such a tablet had been inscribed it was dried in the kiln in much the same way in which pottery is baked today. The inscription was, of course, then permanent and unalterable. This method of preserving records had, therefore, a distinct advantage over ink and papyrus, and this was perhaps one of the reasons why writing on papyrus never became popular among the Babylonians.

Ezekiel relates that in the sixth year, in the sixth month, on the fifth day of the month (*i.e.*, August-September, 592-1 B.C.) he was carried in a trance to Jerusalem, and beheld what was taking place within the Temple. Whether he was remembering what he had seen there before being exiled, or whether further news of the state of the Jews in Jerusalem had arrived, we do not know. Nevertheless, the abuses he mentions had been practised there for some years past, though they no doubt became worse as time went on. Manasseh is [illegible] have encouraged foreign religious practices, and there is no doubt that the state of religion in Jerusalem at this time had sunk to a very low ebb. The Temple had become little more than a heathen temple.

Heathen Objects in the Temple

We may visualize Ezekiel as standing in his imagination on the north side of the inner court of the Temple by the gateway. It will be remembered that the pre-exilic Temple was surrounded by an inner as well as an outer court, the latter including also the royal palace. On the north and east sides were gates leading into each court, the outer and the inner gates being placed opposite each other, while on the south wall of the inner court there would have been a gate communicating with the royal buildings. Ezekiel saw before him the statue of an idol, "the image of jealousy which provoketh to jealousy." This may have been the Asherah formerly erected by Manasseh and removed by Josiah, or a statue of some Babylonian or Syrian god. Ezekiel now enters the gateway on the side of which was a large room, no doubt similar to the porter's lodge in a college. He forces his way into the room and discovers seventy elders burning incense before figures carved on the wall representing a variety of reptiles and animals. It is not quite certain whether these were Egyptian or Babylonian in origin, but it is interesting to note that within the Ishtar Gate at Babylon have been found two carvings such as these in bas-relief, one depicting a dragon and the other a bull.

Ezekiel then passes into the outer court where he witnesses yet another outrage—"behold there sat women weeping for Tammuz." The cult of Tammuz was exceedingly ancient, traces of it having been found as early as 3,000 B.C. It is one of the oldest forms of religious worship in the world. It corresponds to the worship of Adonis among the Phoenicians, and later among the Greeks; and appears also in a similar form in the Egyptian rites of Osiris and Isis.

Cult of Tammuz in Babylonia

TAMMUZ represented the cycle of the year, and was in a sense a personification of the summer and winter solstices. In particular he was regarded as the god of vegetation who departed yearly into the underworld at the time of the summer solstice, when the heat and drought cause plant life to wither and die, and reappeared at the time of the spring solstice when all began to grow once more. There was thus embodied in this cult the idea of death and resurrection. The name Tammuz meant in ancient Sumerian, "faithful son," and he was looked upon alternately as son, husband or brother of Mother Earth. It was held that when Tammuz died, the mother goddess Ishtar had to depart into the underworld to bring him back again. The dying of Tammuz was an occasion for public mourning in which special rites were performed and liturgies sung for the dying god. These would be accompanied by the sighing and weeping of the worshippers.

The following lines, translated by Professor S. H. Langdon, give a good idea of the kind of hymn which was sung in mourning for Tammuz in Ezekiel's day:

Him of the plains why have they slain?
The shepherd,
The wise one,
The man of sorrows why have they slain?
The Lady of the vine stalk with the lambs
and calves languishes.
The lord shepherd of the folds lives no
more,
The husband of the heavenly queen lives
no more,
The lord of the cattle stalls lives no more.

. . . . .

When he slumbers the sheep and lambs
slumber also,
When he slumbers the she-goats and kids
slumber also.

Such mourning would be accompanied with imitative rites depicting the death of the god, and wailing women would tear their hair and beat their breasts.

The fourth month in which the wailings took place was called Tammuz both by the Babylonians and the Jews. This corresponded to June-July in our calendar. The worship of Tammuz

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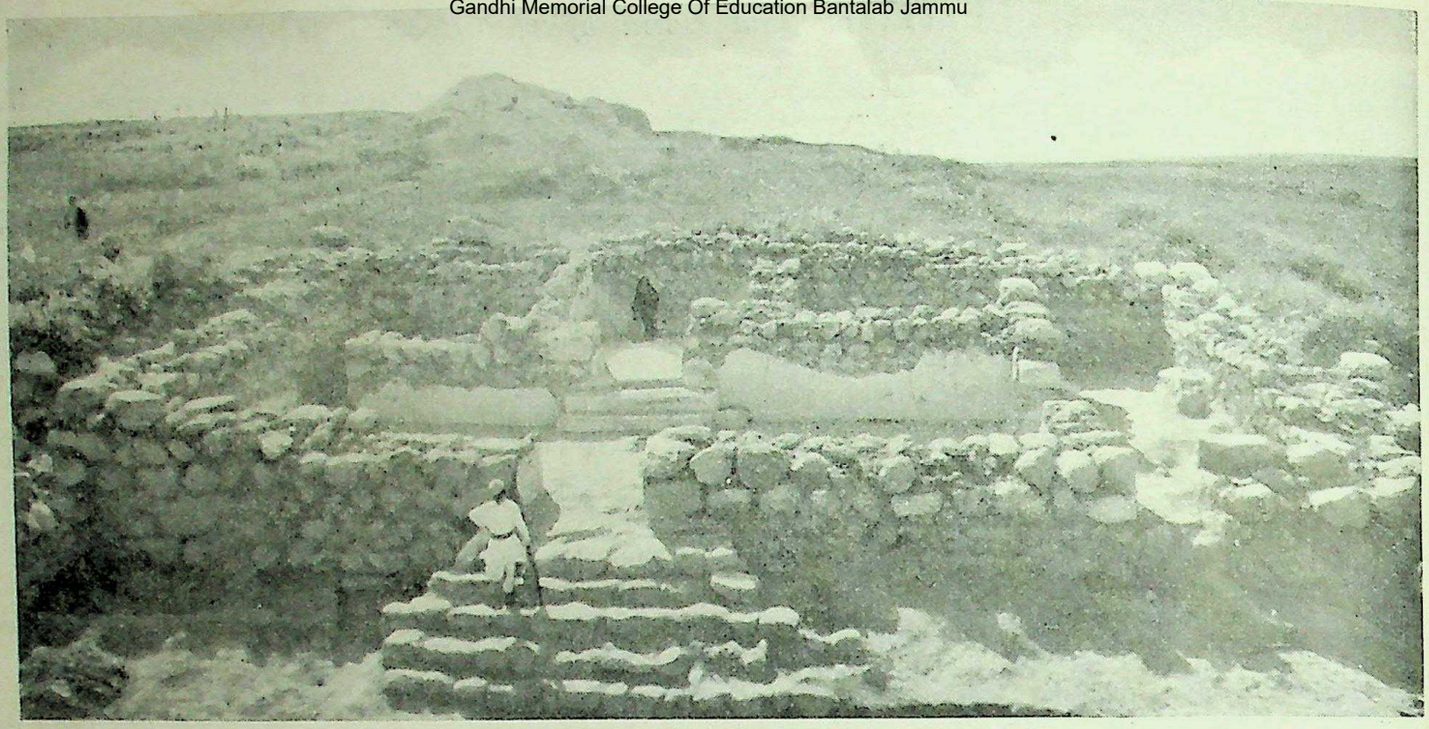

"THEY WORSHIPPED THE SUN TOWARDS THE EAST." During excavations at Lachish (Tell-Duweir) in 1934 and 1935, a Persian solar shrine was found, proving the existence of early Zoroastrianism in Palestine (Ezekiel viii, 16). Two steps lead from a court to rooms which retain partial coatings of lime plaster. On a higher level is the sanctuary—where the girl is seen in the photograph. The prominent position and orientation of the building show that it was dedicated to a solar cult. Sun worship, suppressed by Josiah, reappeared to be denounced in Ezekiel's vision of the Temple.

Photo, The Wellcome Archaeological Research Expedition

survived amongst the Syrians of Harran in Northern Mesopotamia up to the 14th century A.D., and traces of the cult are still to be found among the Yezidis of Kurdistan.

The sun worship which Ezekiel next describes had existed in Canaan from the earliest times, but the Assyrian form of the cult which was being observed here had been introduced into Israel, first by Ahaz, and then by Manasseh. By turning their backs on the Temple the worshippers signified their renunciation of the God of Israel.

From these and other hints in Ezekiel we get some idea of the corruption which overwhelmed Hebrew religion during the fateful years preceding the destruction of Jerusalem. Pharaoh Necho had died in 594, the fourth year of the exile and one year before Ezekiel's call. He was succeeded by Psammeticus II, who did not concern himself with foreign politics. Pharaoh Hophra succeeded him in 588, and it was to this monarch that Zedekiah looked for support against Babylon. In that year a concerted effort at rebellion was attempted, and Tyre also joined in with the revolt. However, Nebuchadnezzar wasted no time. He mustered a large army and took up his quarters at Riblah on the river Orontes, and proceeded to march forthwith against Jerusalem. The city was besieged for two and a half years, and though Pharaoh Hophra caused Nebuchadnezzar to raise the siege for a short period, nevertheless the city was finally forced to surrender in July, 586.

A wholesale slaughter of Jerusalem's principal citizens followed at Riblah; Zedekiah was blinded and carried prisoner to Babylon; and large numbers of the inhabitants of Judah were taken into exile. Gedaliah, the grandson of Josiah's minister, Shaphan, was appointed governor over Babylon's new province, and Israel's life as an independent nation came to an end.

The Book of Ezekiel contains bitter invectives against the Edomites, the Moabites, the Ammonites and the Philistines, all of whom contrived to gain some benefit for themselves from the destruction of their ancient enemies. Amongst these denunciatory passages is a collection of prophecies against Tyre, the Phoenician capital, and Egypt. From Herodotus, the famous Greek historian of the 5th century B.C., it would appear that Phoenicia was forced into the rebellion against Nebuchadnezzar by Pharaoh Hophra.

Nebuchadnezzar in Palestine

AT all events, about the year 585 Nebuchadnezzar once more traversed the land of Palestine with his armies and laid siege to the city of Tyre. The Jewish historian Josephus relates that this siege lasted for thirteen years and ended indecisively. The city was not actually overthrown, though a Babylonian official henceforward took up his residence there, exercising a certain jurisdiction. Some seventeen years later, in 568-7 we learn from a Babylonian inscription that Nebuchadnezzar marched against Egypt, but the inscription is unfortunately broken, and beyond the fact that he reached the Delta we do not know what transpired.

These authorities outside the Biblical accounts throw light on the otherwise difficult passage, Ezekiel xxix, 17-20. For in these verses Ezekiel says in effect that Nebuchadnezzar launched an unsuccessful campaign against Tyre, but that in compensation God would give him the spoils of Egypt. Ezekiel here modifies his view expressed in Chapters xxvi-xxviii that Tyre would be utterly destroyed.

The news of the fall of Jerusalem (xxxiii, 21) marked a turning point in Ezekiel's prophetical career. Up to that time he had been full of the righteous indignation of the Lord. Now the blow had fallen. The worst was known and what had happened was unalterable. We can see a change in Ezekiel's attitude towards his fellow-countrymen. The time for destruction had ended, the time for reconstruction was at hand.

If the order of the chapters at this point represents the true sequence of events it would seem that this second period in Ezekiel's ministry was inaugurated like the first by a vision. We can imagine Ezekiel wandering alone, deep in meditation somewhere in the extensive plain of Babylonia, perhaps to the north of Tel-abib.

Before him were no streams or irrigating canals, and all was barren and waste. Huge sandhills cast up by the winds surrounded him, giving the impression of a great barren valley. It was no doubt in such surroundings as these that he witnessed this great vision. It seemed to him, as he looked, that he could see a great battlefield strewn with the bones of the slain. Whether there actually lay there bones of dead animals which suggested this to him we do not know, but whatever the immediate causes of his experience may have been, he was brought to a great realization out of which he was able to give to his stricken countrymen a message of hope. Just as the Spirit of God had brought flesh and life to those dry bones, so would that same Spirit consolidate and enliven the Jewish people.

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The two chapters (xxxviii, xxxix) containing the prophecies against Gog and Magog seem strangely out of place at this point, and many scholars are unwilling to believe that they are the work of Ezekiel. Who were Gog and Magog? The Londoner will no doubt be reminded of the two wooden statues of mythical personages in the Guildhall. However, there can be little, if any, connexion between these and our present passage. For the legend attaching to the London "gods" is that they were the survivors of a race of giants, descended from the wicked daughters of the Roman emperor Diocletian!

A possible clue to the meaning of this difficult passage lies in the place names mentioned in the opening verses, *Meshech* and *Tubal*. There is reason to believe that both these countries lay to the east of Asia Minor. It seems possible, therefore, that the reference is to an invasion from the north by barbarians such as Jeremiah narrates in the opening chapters of his book. Gog represents the prince of this people, while Magog refers either to the people themselves or to their land. But whatever may be the immediate references in these two mysterious chapters, behind them lies the implication of a final assault upon Israel by the powers of heathendom. In Revelation xx the same theme is taken up to describe the final outbreak of hostility against the Church.

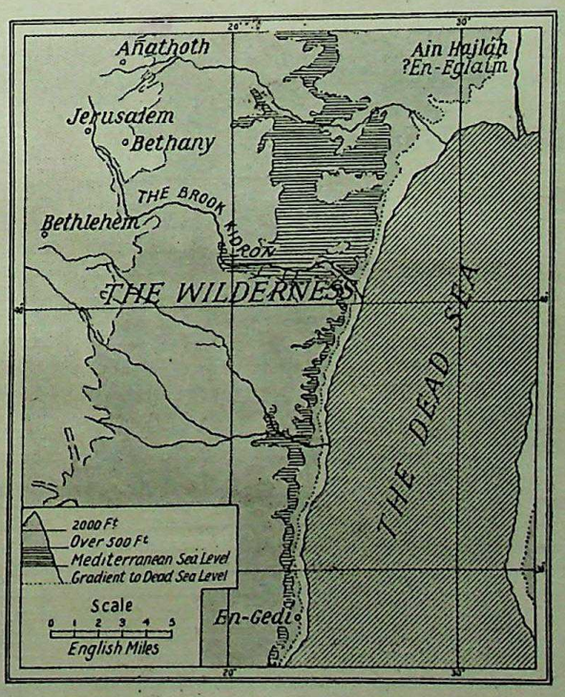
Ezekiel's plan for the restoration of the Jewish nation is centred upon the conception of a new and magnificent Temple rising up from the ruins of the old. The plans for this Temple Ezekiel worked out in great detail, and we can imagine him drawing scale plans upon the clay tablets such as the Babylonians used. Tablets of this kind have been found in Babylonia inscribed with plans of temple buildings, and reference has already been made to one containing a ground plan of the temple at Nippur.

One of the beliefs of astrology was that numbers and measurements had a mystical meaning, and that the contours of nature, whether of animate or inanimate objects, corresponded to the heavenly pattern. Hence it was necessary to seek guidance of the gods in the construction of temples or other buildings. Ezekiel appears to have been influenced by such astrological ideas. He, too, is represented as being shown by a heavenly guide the exact measurements of the Temple of Jehovah. In the guide's hand are a line of flax and a measuring-reed, both of which appear in Babylonian carvings, together with the tablet and stylus, as the distinctive tools of the architect.

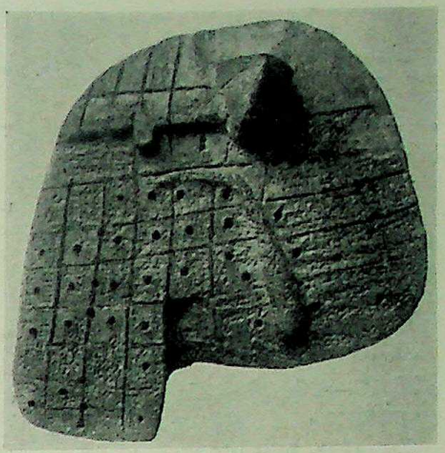
Ezekiel, no doubt, would have taken note of any superior features in the temple buildings he had seen in Babylonia, and in particular the great temple at Nippur. That some of these ideas were embodied in his plans seems extremely likely, for his proposed temple had many features reminiscent of Babylonian architecture. The Temple itself was to have been similar to that of Solomon, but the surrounding courts and walls had more in common with the fortress-like buildings of Babylonia.

The mention of Babylonian astrology recalls the queer practice of divining the future by examining the liver of a sacrificed animal. In Ezekiel xxi, 21, Nebuchadnezzar wishes to discover whether the fates have decreed that he should march against Ammon or against Jerusalem. In each hand he holds an arrow. Having consulted his Teraphim or household gods, and "looked in the liver," he turned to see which arrow was in his right hand. It was the arrow marked "Jerusalem." The liver was in primitive times regarded as the seat of life. When an animal was sacrificed, the animal's life was placed in complete accord with that of the god; hence its liver was considered to reflect the mind and will of the god.

The climax to the whole book is the description of the healing stream issuing from the threshold of the Temple. It is the last vision recorded, and some think that the book originally ended here. How did Ezekiel obtain his inspiration for this striking description of the source of blessing which the new Temple was to be for the whole country? It would seem that the prophet had in mind the valley of the Kidron. During the winter months water from the north of Jerusalem finds its way through this valley to the Dead Sea, but in summer it is dry. No evidences of the existence of a spring in the Temple mount itself have been found, though it is possible that such a spring may have existed but became obliterated by some movement in the land such as an earthquake shock.



Homeland of Ezekiel, showing the Kidron's flow from Jerusalem to the Dead Sea.



"HE LOOKED IN THE LIVER."
Ezekiel prophesying against Jerusalem foresees Nebuchadnezzar resorting to divination to decide whether he should march on the city or proceed to Ammon (Ezekiel xxi, 21). Babylonians believed omens were found in a sheep's liver, and this antique clay model of one is inscribed with a cuneiform key of oracles.

British Museum

The only spring which Jerusalem is known to have possessed was that to the south of the Temple, outside the city wall called by Biblical writers Gihon, and later known as the Virgin's Fountain (*see* illus., page 374) It was from this spring that the inhabitants of Jerusalem obtained part of their water supply, and Hezekiah built a conduit to convey its waters within the city to the pool of Siloam. In earlier times this spring would have emptied into the Kidron valley and flowed down towards the Dead Sea. One wonders whether Ezekiel had this spring in mind, and whether it suggested to him the mystical healing stream which he describes.

The torrent bed of the Kidron is some twenty miles in length. Commencing just north of Jerusalem it passes between the city and the Mount of Olives. Then, in an ever-winding course, it traverses the wilderness of Judea descending ever lower and lower until it passes below sea-level as it approaches the great Salt Sea. At this low altitude it is known as the Wady-en-Nar, "the fire wady," a name which aptly describes the turmoil and rushing of the stream at this point. Finally, it reaches a precipice above the Dead Sea, over which it cascades into salt-laden waters below.

Here plainly is the scene of Ezekiel's vision, and more than any other in the book it gives us an insight into that fertile imagination and deep personal faith which characterized the prophet. We will do well to recollect that the teaching embodied in this vision, like the other messages of Ezekiel, cannot be confined to his own land, his own people, or his own times, but has a significance for all mankind which throughout the ages has remained unchanged.

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Tales of Courage from Daniel

THOUGH the Biblical scholar may find much to puzzle him in the Book of Daniel, to the ordinary reader it is a straightforward narrative, full of swift and vigorous action and eminently readable. Here we give from the Revised Version of the Book the three episodes which, by their striking vividness and their message of encouragement to those steadfast in the Lord, have impressed themselves upon the minds of readers in all ages, and are amongst the most widely known and generally appreciated in the Old Testament.

THE BURNING FIERY FURNACE

iii, 19—20, 23—27

THEN was Nebuchadnezzar full of fury, and the form of his visage was changed against Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego: therefore he spake, and commanded that they should heat the furnace seven times more than it was wont to be heated. And he commanded certain mighty men that were in his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, and to cast them into the burning fiery furnace.

And these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, fell down bound into the midst of the burning fiery furnace. Then Nebuchadnezzar the king was astonied and rose up in haste: he spake and said unto his counsellors, Did not we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? They answered and said unto the king, True, O king. He answered and said, Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the aspect of the fourth is like a son of the gods.

Then Nebuchadnezzar came near to the mouth of the burning fiery furnace: he spake and said, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, ye servants of the Most High God, come forth, and come hither. Then Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego came forth out of the midst of the fire. And the satraps, the deputies, and the governors, and the king's counsellors, being gathered together, saw these men, that the fire had no power over their bodies, nor was the hair of their head singed, neither were their hosen changed, nor had the smell of the fire passed on them.

THE WRITING ON THE WALL

v, 1—6, 8, 13—17, 25—31

BELSHAZZAR the king made a great feast to a thousand of his lords, and drank wine before the thousand Belshazzar, whiles he tasted the wine, commanded to bring the golden and silver vessels which Nebuchadnezzar his father had taken out of the temple which was in Jerusalem; that the king and his lords, his wives and his concubines, might drink therein. Then they brought the golden vessels that were taken out of the temple of the house of God which was at Jerusalem; and the king and his lords, his wives and his concubines, drank in them. They drank wine, and praised the gods of gold, and of silver, of brass, of iron, of wood, and of stone.

In the same hour came forth the fingers of a man's hand, and wrote over against the candlestick upon the plaister of the wall of the king's palace: and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote. Then the king's countenance was changed in him, and his thoughts troubled him . . . . . and his knees smote one against another. . . . Then came in all the king's wise men: but they could not read the writing, nor make known to the king the interpretation.

Then was Daniel brought in before the king. The king spake and said unto Daniel, Art thou that Daniel, which art of the children of the captivity of Judah, whom the king my father brought out of Judah? I have heard of thee, that the spirit of the gods is in thee, and that light and understanding and excellent wisdom is found in thee. And now the wise men, the enchanters, have been brought in before me, that they should read this writing, and make known to me the interpretation thereof, but they could not show the interpretation of the thing. But I have heard of thee, that thou canst give interpretations, and dissolve doubts; now, if thou canst read the writing, and make known to me the interpretation thereof, thou shalt be clothed with purple, and have a chain of gold about thy neck, and shalt be the third ruler in the kingdom.

Then Daniel answered and said before the king, Let thy gifts be to thyself, and give thy rewards to another; nevertheless I will read the writing unto the king, and make known to him the interpretation.

And this is the writing that was inscribed, MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN. This is the interpretation of the thing: MENE; God hath numbered thy kingdom, and brought it to an end. TEKEL; thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting. PERES; thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians.

Then commanded Belshazzar, and they clothed Daniel with purple and put a chain of gold about his neck, and made proclamation concerning him, that he should be the third ruler in the kingdom. In that night Belshazzar the Chaldean king was slain. And Darius the Mede received the kingdom, being about threescore and two years old.

DANIEL IN THE LIONS' DEN

vi, 11—13, 16—23

THEN these men assembled together, and found Daniel making petition and supplication before his God. Then they came near and spake before the king concerning the king's interdict; Hast thou not signed an interdict, that every man that shall make petition unto any god or man within thirty days, save unto thee, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions? The king answered and said, The thing is true, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which altereth not. Then answered they and said before the king, That Daniel, which is of the children of the captivity of Judah, regardeth not thee, O king, nor the interdict that thou hast signed, but maketh his petition three times a day.

Then the king commanded, and they brought Daniel, and cast him into the den of lions. Now the king spake unto Daniel, Thy God whom thou servest continually, he will deliver thee.

And a stone was brought, and laid upon the mouth of the den; and the king sealed it with his own signet, and with the signet of his lords; that nothing might be changed concerning Daniel. Then the king went to his palace, and passed the night fasting: neither were instruments of music brought before him: and his sleep fled from him.

Then the king arose very early in the morning, and went in haste unto the den of lions. And when he came near unto the den to Daniel, he cried with a lamentable voice: the king spake and said to Daniel, O Daniel, servant of the living God, is thy God, whom thou servest continually, able to deliver thee from the lions?

Then said Daniel unto the king, O king, live for ever. My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths, and they have not hurt me: forasmuch as before him innocency was found in me; and also before thee, O king, have I done no hurt.

Then was the king exceedingly glad, and commanded that they should take Daniel up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no manner of hurt was found upon him, because he had trusted in his God.

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Daniel

I

The Book in Outline

Brave Hearts that Beat in the Conqueror's Court

by REV. J. D. JONES, C.H., D.D.

Former Minister of Richmond Hill Congregational Church, Bournemouth.

BEFORE we can begin to tell the story of the Book of Daniel we must first of all make up our minds as to what we believe the book to be. It purports, of course, to be written by Daniel, a Jew who was deported to Babylon in the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim, *i.e.*, about the year 605 or 606 B.C. On account of his wisdom and ability he came to occupy in Babylon a position of high eminence and power. This position he continued to enjoy under a succession of monarchs who occupied the Babylonian throne. Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar, Darius the Mede, and Cyrus are all mentioned as monarchs who held Daniel in high honour. His career therefore must have extended over all the years between 606 and 536 B.C.

Modern scholars, however, have come almost unanimously to the conclusion that the book could not have been written by Daniel himself. It was no unusual thing for Jewish writers to send forth their writings under the aegis of a great and honoured name. The Deuteronomic Law, for example, claims the authority of Moses. The Book of Ecclesiastes is issued under the name of Solomon. The great prophet of the Exile sent forth his prophecies in the name of the great pre-exilic prophet Isaiah. One of the most famous of late Apocalyptic books announces itself as the Book of Enoch. We should regard it as a grave literary offence if an unknown author issued a book of his as if it were the work of one of the literary giants—if some unknown novelist, for example, published a volume and put the name of Charles Dickens on the title page. But apparently the Jews had no such compunction. It was a common practice, and counted no offence, to send forth psalms and histories and prophecies under the sanction of some great and honoured name.

THAT is what seems to have happened with this Book of Daniel. It is almost certain that the book belongs to the period of Antiochus Epiphanes (175-163 B.C.), that Syrian king who was half genius and half madman, who by repression and persecution tried to stamp out the Jewish faith and to Hellenize the Jewish people. Everything about the book seems to assign it to that black period in the history of the Jewish people. The language in which the book is written belongs to a later age than that in which Daniel is supposed to have lived. But the final and conclusive proof is this, that in the visions which occupy the latter half of the book there are clear references to Alexander the Great, to the partition of his Empire, to the Seleucid kings who succeeded to the Syrian kingdom of which Palestine formed part, and to Antiochus Epiphanes himself and to the "abomination that maketh desolate," which was the pollution of the Temple by Antiochus and the erection of an idol-altar upon the altar of burnt offering.

NEBUCHADNEZZAR THE KING. Once an eye of a statue of the god Marduk and possibly the work of a Greek captive in Babylonia, this unique carving on an onyx, known as the cameo of Nebuchadnezzar, is surrounded by a cuneiform inscription: "To Marduk his lord, Nebuchadnezzar has given this for his life."

Museum, Florence

Penned in an Age of Persecution

AND if the objection is raised that these events are all referred to as still in the future and that the author in them is revealing himself as a prophet—in the sense of being a foreteller—the answer is that such a minute and detailed revelation of the future is without parallel in the whole of Scripture. Scriptural prophecy is a forthtelling rather than a foretelling, a declaration of God's will and the enunciation of great moral laws. But the details in these later chapters of the Book of Daniel seem to have no moral or spiritual import, and even the defenders of the authenticity of other parts of the book are disposed to admit that these later chapters belong to the time of Antiochus Epiphanes.

And, finally, the character of the book itself corresponds to that anxious and terrible time. The Book of Daniel belongs to that class of literature which is known as Apocalyptic. There is an element of Apocalypse in both Ezekiel and Zechariah, but in no book is it so developed as in Daniel. Apocalypses have been described as "tracts for bad times." Couched as they often were in strange language, and using often a weird symbolism, their object was to encourage people in times of persecution and distress to be loyal to their faith and steadfast in their allegiance to God. And they did this oftentimes by bidding their readers look forward to a future when evil should be overthrown and God's purposes should be realized.

We have a New Testament example of this kind of Apocalypse in the book with which it closes. Much of the symbolism we may not be able to understand—it is like a language to which we have lost the key.

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But the general purpose of the book is plain. It was written to Christians who were under the Cross. Rome had taken up the work of persecution. Things looked desperate and Christians were crying out "How long, O Lord, how long?" To these harassed folk John addressed his Apocalypse. It is a mighty exhortation to patience and steadfastness and courage. Looking ahead, this is what John sees—Babylon (*i.e.*, Rome) fallen, and the Holy City, new Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God. This Book of Daniel is addressed to people in like case. Antiochus was doing his utmost by harsh persecution and threats of death to compel the Jewish people to abjure their monotheistic faith and to sacrifice to the pagan deities of Greece. The author of this book by his story of the fidelity of Daniel and the three Hebrew children in the face of the den of lions and the fiery furnace sought to kindle in the hearts of his fellow-countrymen a like resolve to be faithful unto death.

THE fact that the book is attributed to Daniel seems to suggest that Daniel was already well known as one of the heroes of the Jewish faith. There may be confusions in the details of his history as recorded for us in this book, but the writer at any rate believes that Daniel was an historic person, and that the stories here related of him were stories handed down from father to son which had real historic happenings for their foundation.

The Book itself falls naturally and inevitably into two portions. The first portion (i-vi) deals with the personal history of Daniel. The second portion (vii-xii) gives us certain visions and revelations which were given to Daniel in the course of his career.

The story of the Book of Daniel opens with the deportation to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar in the reign of King Jehoiakim of a certain portion of the people of Judah. In that first deportation it was the élite of the people who were carried away captive. Amongst those who were thus deported to Babylon was Daniel. He was a youth or perhaps little more than a boy at the time, and he seems to have been of royal or at least noble descent.

Victorious monarchs in the ancient days liked to have at their court captive kings and nobles. They were the visible proofs of their prowess. In accordance with this custom, Nebuchadnezzar gave orders to Ashpenaz, his chief chamberlain, to pick out a certain number of Jewish youths conspicuous both for good looks and intellectual power and train them for positions in his court. The training—which was to include instruction both in the language and wisdom of the Chaldeans—was to extend over a period of three years. Amongst those whom Ashpenaz selected were Daniel and his three friends, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah. The first thing Ashpenaz did was to give them new names. Daniel he named Belteshazzar, Hananiah he named Shadrach, Mishael he named Meshach, and Azariah he named Abed-nego.

Part of the provision the king made for these youths destined for court service was that they were to be fed with food from the king's table. To Daniel and his companions the royal food was polluted food, and they begged to be excused from eating it. Ashpenaz was distressed by their refusal. He feared they would look less physically fit than their companions. Daniel asked him to make a ten days' experiment. While the others fed on the royal food he and his three friends would feed on pulse, *i.e.*, they would live on a vegetarian diet and drink nothing but water. Ashpenaz agreed to the experiment. To his amazement, at the end of the ten days "their countenances appeared fairer and they were fatter in flesh than all the youths which did eat of the king's meat" (R.V.). There was no question after that of trying to force upon them the royal food. But the incident was the first evidence of that courage which enabled Daniel and his friends to be faithful to God amid the temptations of a pagan court.

AT the end of three years Ashpenaz introduced them to the king. Nebuchadnezzar saw that not only in nobility of appearance but in wisdom and understanding they were head and shoulders above their fellows. So not only were their places at court assured, but Nebuchadnezzar formed such a high opinion of

THE BOOK OF DANIEL: A SYNOPSIS

Daniel's Career

	Chapter
Daniel and the King's Meat	i
Nebuchadnezzar's Dream of the Image and the Stone	ii, 1-15
Daniel Interprets the Dream, and is Made a Ruler	ii, 16-49
Three Young Men Cast Into the Burning Fiery Furnace	iii
Nebuchadnezzar's Dream of the Tree Cut Down, and Daniel's Interpretation	iv
The Writing on the Wall and Its Interpretation	v
Daniel in the Den of Lions	vi

The Revelations of Daniel

The Vision of the Four Great Beasts ...	vii
The Vision of the Ram and the He-Goat	viii
The Vision of the Time of Restoration	ix
The Vision of the Conflict between the Kings of the North and of the South	x-xi
The Vision of the Time of the End ...	xii

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their wisdom that he made a habit of consulting them, and found them "ten times better than all the magicians and enchanters that were in all his realm" (R.V.).

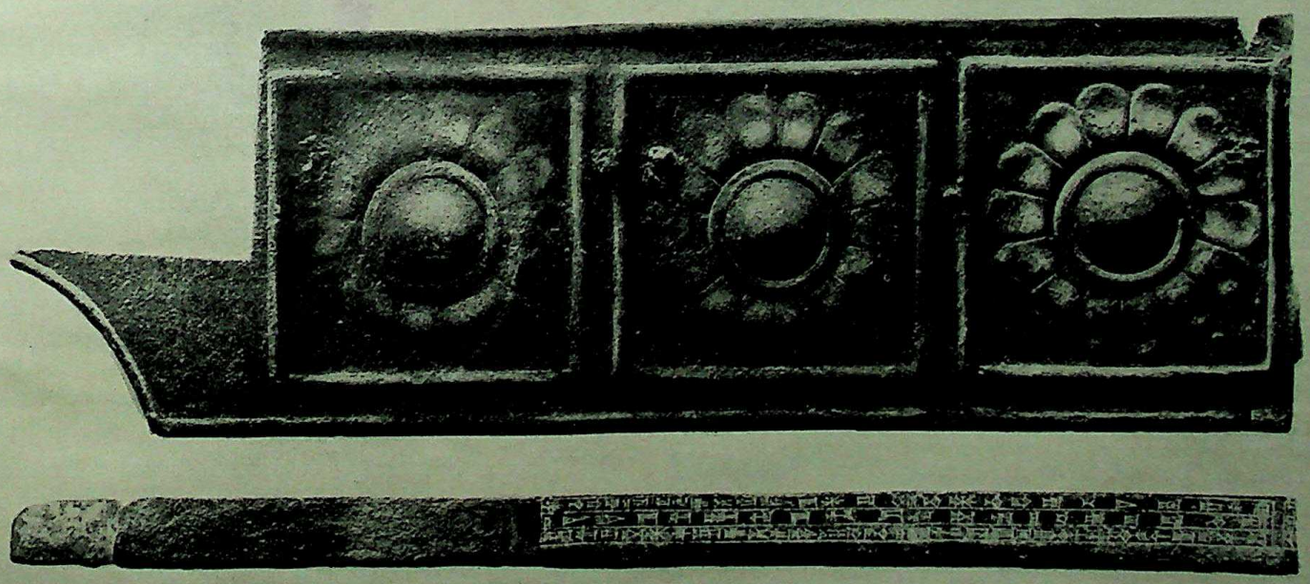
That "wisdom" of theirs was soon put to a searching test. One night Nebuchadnezzar dreamed a dream. He felt sure the dream had something to tell him. But in the morning when he awoke, though the dream continued to haunt him, he could not recall its details. In his difficulty he sent for the enchanters and sorcerers to see if they could help him. They assured him, if he would tell them his dream, they would do their best to interpret it. But it was the dream itself that the king wanted to recover. In that the magicians confessed themselves unable to help. The only beings who could help were the gods "whose dwelling is not with flesh." The failure of the magicians to recover his dream infuriated the king, and he gave orders that all the wise men of Babylon were to be destroyed.

Apparently, Daniel and his companions were included in this savage order. On hearing of it Daniel went to Arioch, the officer entrusted with the carrying out of the order, and asked why the king's decree was so urgent, and promised, if given time, to supply the king both with the dream and the interpretation. His request for delay was granted, whereupon he and his companions betook themselves to prayer. In answer to their prayers, God revealed to Daniel in a vision of the night what it was the king had dreamed about. He had dreamed about a great image whose head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, his legs of iron, and his feet part of iron and part of clay; and he had seen a stone strike the image on its clay feet and bring it, smashed and broken, to the ground, and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain that filled the earth. Having received this answer to his prayers, Daniel first of all gave thanks to God and then hurried off to Arioch and asked the attendants to be taken before the king.

When asked by the king if he could recover his dream for him Daniel told him what God had revealed to him. And as Daniel spoke of the great image with its feet of clay it all came back to Nebuchadnezzar. That was exactly what he had dreamed about! Then Daniel proceeded to give the interpretation. There was to be a succession of kingdoms each replacing the other. And the little stone which became a mountain and filled the earth was to be God's kingdom which should never be destroyed. As a result of all this Daniel came to high place and was made chief governor of the wise men of Babylon.

Daniel's Three Friends in the Fiery Furnace

THE next chapter (iii) has to do, not with Daniel but with his three friends. Despotic monarchs are apt to claim divine honours for themselves. There was, for example, in early Christian days, a cult of Caesar-worship, and Christian people could only purchase life by burning incense to Caesar. All of which has its parallel in the worship of the state which is the real religion of the totalitarian countries of today. Nebuchadnezzar, swollen with pride and the sense of power, set up a great image in the plain of Dura in Babylon. And he issued a decree that at a certain sign—the sound of the cornet—all were to fall down and worship the image, on pain, if they refused, of being cast into the midst of a burning, fiery furnace. The great mass of the people obeyed the king's decree without demur, but there were some who refused to worship the image.



INSCRIBED BY BABYLON'S TEMPLE-BUILDER. A bronze step, ornamented with finely-wrought rosettes, from the lower part of the staircase in the temple of Ezida at Borsippa (Birs-Nimrud) near Babylon, bears on its edge a building inscription of Nebuchadnezzar II. It has been translated: "Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, patron of (the temple) E-sagila and (the temple) Ezida, eldest son of Nabopolassar, king of Babylon, am I. For Nabu (Nebo), the exalted lord, who hath lengthened the days of my life, Ezida, his temple in Borsippa, anew have I built." This king, who figures so prominently in Hebrew history and the life of Daniel, erected and restored many temples in addition to palaces and fortifications. Specially dear to his heart were the E-sagila and Ezida, dedicated to the worship of Marduk (Merodach) and Nebo.

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TOMB OF CYRUS, KING OF PERSIA. This limestone monument in Pasargadae, capital of ancient Persia until the city was superseded by Persepolis, has been identified as the burial place of Cyrus the Great. The mighty conqueror of vast dominions, including Mesopotamia, met his death in 529 B.C. during a campaign against marauding nomads on the eastern borders of his empire. After he had become king in Babylon (539 B.C.) it is recorded (Daniel vi, 28) that during his reign "Daniel prospered," suggesting that Cyrus, famed for clemency and toleration, appreciated this wise counsellor experienced in the ways of Babylonians.

From Dieulafoy, "L'Art Antique en Perse"

Amongst these were the three companions of Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego, who by this time had become high officials in Babylon. News of their refusal was quickly carried to the king, and the three men were summoned to appear before him.

The king asked them if their refusal was deliberate. Then he offered them a second chance. If at the sound of the cornet they fell down and worshipped all would be well, but if again they refused the fiery furnace would be their doom. To which threat the three men returned the noble answer: "We have no need to answer thee in this matter." Their God, they went on to say, could, if it was His will, deliver them from the burning, fiery furnace; but even if such were not His will and if death was to be their portion, they would not worship the image which the king had set up. The rest of the story tells how the three men were first bound and then cast into the furnace. But when, later, Nebuchadnezzar looked into the furnace he saw *four* men loose and walking in the midst of the fire and they had no hurt, and the aspect of the fourth was like a son of the gods. Nebuchadnezzar, smitten with awe, bade Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego come forth from the furnace, and when they issued forth they were seen to be entirely unhurt; there was upon them not even the smell of the fire. The upshot of it all was that Nebuchadnezzar issued a decree that no one was to dare to speak anything amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego.

The next chapter (iv) tells the story of another dream of the king's. Nebuchadnezzar himself is represented as telling the story. He dreamed that he saw a tree which grew and grew until its height reached unto heaven, and the sight thereof to the end of the earth. Then in his dream he heard one of the holy ones order the tree to be cut down, but the stumps of its roots were still to be left in the earth. The king sent for Daniel to interpret the dream for him. At first Daniel stood silent, for his thoughts troubled him. It was not a dream that boded good for the king. However, when the king ordered him to tell him the dream's meaning Daniel did not shrink. Nebuchadnezzar himself was the great tree, for his kingdom filled the earth. But the tree was to be cut down, which meant that the king would be driven forth from the dwellings of men and would make his dwelling with the beasts of the field. But the roots of the tree would remain in the ground, which meant that after a certain time had passed—"seven times" is how the narrative puts it, which probably means "seven years"—his sanity would return and he would be restored to his kingdom. Daniel exhorted the king to break off his sins and so avert the doom which the dream threatened. But it was in vain. Nebuchadnezzar's pride had to be humbled, and so the doom fell upon him. For a season he was driven from men and did eat grass as oxen. After the "times" were fulfilled the king's understanding was restored—and he humbled himself before the King of heaven. (It is only right to add that there is no historic record of any such insanity overtaking Nebuchadnezzar. The inscriptions show him to have been a devout and religious man. The chapter is to be regarded as a moral tale about the punishment of pride and not as sober history).

Belshazzar Sees the Writing on the Wall

THE next chapter (v) tells the story of Belshazzar's feast. Belshazzar is spoken of by Daniel as the son of Nebuchadnezzar. Probably that is to be understood in the sense that he was a "successor" of Nebuchadnezzar. Historically, he does not seem to have been actually king, but to have been a kind of prince-regent, ruling in the name of his father. Belshazzar is represented as making a great feast for all the notables of Babylon. To grace the tables, he ordered the sacred vessels of the Jewish Temple to be brought "that the king and his lords and his wives

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and his concubines might drink therein." Suddenly, in the midst of the revelry, Belshazzar and his lords and wives were smitten with terror by the sight of a ghostly finger writing on the plaster of the king's palace the words "Mene, mene, tekel, upharsin."

'Weighed in the Balances and found wanting'

THE king shouted for the enchanters and promised a chain of gold and the third place in the kingdom to anyone who would tell him the meaning of these mystic words. The enchanters, however, confessed themselves baffled. Whereupon the queen suggested that Daniel should be sent for. She remembered how in Nebuchadnezzar's day he had succeeded where all the enchanters had failed, and she was sure he could tell the king what that terrifying writing meant. So Daniel was sent for. He told the king he wanted none of his rewards, but nevertheless he would interpret the writing for him. He began by reminding Belshazzar of the doom that had overtaken Nebuchadnezzar because of his pride. Belshazzar ought to have learned the lesson, but instead of humbling himself he had wantonly insulted God by praising the gods of silver and gold at the very time when he and his lords and his wives were drinking wine out of vessels consecrated to God's worship. Therefore doom was about to fall upon him and them. For the meaning of the menacing writing was this: "MENE—God hath numbered thy kingdom and brought it to an end; TEKEL—thou art weighed in the balances and art found wanting; PERES—thy kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and Persians" (R.V.). The story ends with the grim sentence, "In that night Belshazzar, the Chaldean king, was slain."

The next chapter (vi) tells a story of courage and fidelity on the part of Daniel very similar to that told about his three friends in Chapter iii. The incident is assigned to the reign of Darius the Mede, though there is obviously some historical confusion at this point, for it was not Darius but Cyrus who overthrew the Babylonian kingdom. Darius did not come to the throne till sixteen years later. Taking the story however exactly as it stands, we see Daniel as one of the three "presidents" of Darius' kingdom. And of these three Daniel was easily chief because an excellent spirit was in him. Indeed, the king had it in his mind to set him over the whole realm. The sight of a Jew occupying such a place and wielding such power stirred the other presidents and the satraps (governors of provinces) to furious jealousy and they plotted Daniel's downfall. They knew that it would be futile to bring any charge against him on the ground of misgovernment. "We shall not find any occasion against this Daniel" they said to one another, "except we find it against him concerning the law of his God." For in a nation of idol worshippers Daniel was a worshipper of the one living and true God.

In pursuance of their plot, the presidents and satraps persuaded the king to issue a decree that for thirty days no one was to pray to any god but to the king only, on pain of being cast into the den of lions. The proposal appealed to the king's vanity, and he signed the decree.

When Daniel knew the decree had been signed he made no alteration to his practice, but with his windows opened toward Jerusalem he kneeled upon his knees three times a day and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime. This was exactly what his foes hoped and expected he would do. They knew enough about the steadfastness of Daniel's character to know that no decree would make him bend the knee to anyone but to his God.

They hurried off with the news of Daniel's contumacy to the king. When the king heard of it, he was sore displeased. He was displeased with himself for lending himself to what he now saw to be a wicked plot; he was displeased with the presidents and satraps for the trick they played upon him. He set his heart on delivering Daniel and for a whole day sought some way of escape out of his horrible predicament. But the presidents and satraps held him to his word. They reminded him that no interdict or statute of the king could be changed. So with infinite reluctance he had to consent to the infliction of the penalty announced. Daniel was flung into the den of lions and a stone was put on the mouth of the den and sealed with the royal seal so that there might be no attempt at rescue.

Darius spent a sleepless night that night. Very early in the morning he rose and went with haste to

"INSTRUMENTS OF MUSICK BROUGHT BEFORE HIM." The Babylonians had a high appreciation of music, and large numbers of professional players were attached to royal palaces. Decrees and hours of prayer were heralded by "all kinds of musick"; kings were accompanied in state by court musicians, who also entertained them at home (Daniel iii, 5; vi, 18). This slab from Ashurbanipal's palace shows twelve-stringed harp, lyre, drum and drumsticks.

British Museum; photo. W. F. Mansell

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the den of lions. Arrived there, in a lamentable voice he asked whether Daniel's God had intervened to save him To his relief and joy he heard Daniel's voice announcing that he was unharmed, that his God had shut the lions' mouths, so that they should not hurt him. Thereupon the king was exceeding glad and ordered Daniel to be brought out of the den, and the men who had plotted his downfall to be flung to the lions instead. The effect of the deliverance upon Darius was to cause him to issue another decree in which he commanded his people to fear and tremble before the God of Daniel "for he is the living God: he delivereth and rescueth and he worketh signs and wonders in heaven and in earth."

With this story, the personal history of Daniel ends. There are inaccuracies in the narrative. Some of the incidents recorded may not be historical in the strict sense of that word. But the value—the religious value—of the book remains unaffected. No one can read the book without being taught lessons of sublime faith and of trust in the saving and redeeming power of God. And because it teaches these lessons, it was exactly the kind of book to encourage steadfastness and faith and courage in the hearts of the Jews who were being tempted to apostatize because of the ruthless and cruel persecutions of Antiochus Epiphanes.

The second portion of the book is chiefly occupied with the account of Daniel's visions. The visions thus recorded came to him at different periods in his life—two of them in the reign of King Belshazzar, two of them in the reign of King Darius and one in the reign of King Cyrus. These visions are couched in the strange, symbolic language characteristic of the Apocalypse. Scholars and commentators differ in their interpretation of details. But all modern commentators are agreed that the interpretation of them is to be sought in the actual events of history. The history with which these visions deal is the history of the rise and fall of successive kingdoms.

History the Key to Daniel's Visions

THE writer starts with the Babylonian; the Babylonian empire was broken up by Cyrus, who became the founder of the Persian empire; the Persian empire was the greatest empire in the world until Alexander the Great led his troops into Asia and shattered it. Alexander died while he was still a young man and the vast empire which by his military genius he had built up fell to pieces at once—his generals dividing it up between them. Syria, which included Palestine, fell to the Seleucid family, whose representative at the time this book was written was the Antiochus Epiphanes already referred to. To remember these facts is to have the key to the meaning of Daniel's visions. In Chapter vii, for example, the four beasts who arise one after the other are the four kingdoms already referred to; the ten horns are ten kings of Syria and the one that shall arise after them, who speaks against the Most High and who seeks to change the time and the law and who wears out the saints of the Most High (Chapter vii, 25) is the persecuting Antiochus. In the second vision, the ram represents the Persian kingdom and the he-goat from the West is again the conquering Alexander. The "little horn" is once again Antiochus.

Chapter xi is full of references to recent and contemporary history. There is a clear reference to Alexander in Chapter xi, 3, and an equally clear reference to the dismemberment of his empire in xi, 4, while xi, 5-21 are concerned with the relationships between the kings of Syria (the North) and the kings of Egypt (the South). From Chapter xi, 21 to the end the writer has Antiochus—his persecutions of the saints, his profanation of the Sanctuary—again in his mind. Indeed, as one writer says, "Antiochus and his persecution of the Jews and his defilement of the sanctuary seem ever present before the writer."

Fixing a Term to Evil's Power

AS has been already suggested, the book—from beginning to end—was meant to sustain the faith of the Jews in face of the pressure Antiochus was exercising upon them. The first part of the book does it by telling the heroic story of men who faced death rather than deny their faith. But not only by telling of their heroic courage but by telling, too, how God intervened to deliver them. A like fidelity in face of Antiochus' persecutions would bring a like deliverance. The visions have the same end in view. For while they are full of Antiochus and his evil deeds, they remind the oppressed and persecuted Jews tempted to cry out "How long?" of Another, the Ancient of Days, sitting upon His throne, and One like unto the Son of Man whose dominion was to be an everlasting dominion and whose kingdom—unlike these others—should never be destroyed. That was the comfort the writer of this book had to give the harassed people of God. The power of evil was temporary. We may not be able to say exactly what the writer means by the "weeks" to which he refers. We may not be able to understand exactly how to interpret "a time and times and half a time." But one thing is clear—they mean that there is a limit to the power of evil. With patience the Jews would see the end of persecution, and the fulfilment of God's promise in the messianic deliverance. And, secondly, God was on His throne and He was a God of judgement. Because God was on the throne, the final upshot of things was this, "the kingdom and the dominion and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High."

The call of the book is to patient endurance. "Blessed is he that waiteth." "Go thou thy way" is the message addressed to Daniel in the final sentence of the book "till the end be, for thou shalt rest and shalt stand in thy lot, at the end of the days" (R.V.). It is the appeal the writer of the book would address to his oppressed and persecuted fellow-believers. If they were faithful they too should stand in their lot at the end of the days. It is the Old Testament counterpart of that word of our Lord's, "He that endureth to the end, he shall be saved."

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Daniel

II

The Story of the Book

Tales that Nerved Resistance to a Persecutor's Power

by **REV. H. H. ROWLEY, M.A., D.D., B. Litt.**

Professor of Hebrew, University College of North Wales.

THE Book of Daniel has always had an extraordinary fascination for men, and its author has been regarded as one possessed of a unique gift of prophecy, since his interpreters in every age have found the conditions of their own day mirrored in his work. Yet this book does not stand amongst the Prophets in the Hebrew Canon of the Old Testament, but amongst the Hagiographa, or Writings.

Various reasons have been suggested to account for this. By Jewish writers it has been urged that it was because Daniel was a courtier rather than a prophet, or because his gift was not exercised in Palestine, or because his revelations were received in dreams, while Christian writers have thought it was because he was not a professional prophet, or have supposed that the present order of the Hebrew Canon is not the original order, and that this Book once stood amongst the Prophets. For this last suggestion there is no evidence whatever, while the others are manifestly examples of special pleading. If their reasoning were sound, it should also have led to the exclusion of Jonah, Ezekiel and Amos from the Prophets, since the gift of Jonah and of Ezekiel was exercised outside Palestine, and Amos disclaimed the idea that he was a professional prophet.

Modern writers distinguish between prophecy and apocalyptic, and place Daniel in the latter category. It is not to be supposed, however, that it is on this account that the book stands amongst the Hagiographa. For some apocalyptic writings are found amongst the Prophets. Thus, Isaiah xxiv-xxvii consists of an apocalyptic section, as also does Zechariah ix-xiv. These anonymous writings were attached to the writings of two prophets, and so incorporated in the prophetic canon, and it is quite improbable that the distinction we draw today between prophecy and apocalyptic was anciently observed. Indeed, the roots of apocalyptic are to be found in the authentic prophecies of the Hebrew prophets.

Apocalyptic and Prophecy Distinguished

THE distinction between the two types of writings may be briefly expressed thus: prophecy outlines the future as arising out of the present, whereas apocalyptic looks for a divine breaking into the present; the one begins from the present, and in the light of the divine principles perceived by the prophet sees its inevitable outcome, whereas the other begins from the divinely-ordered future of the writer's faith, and sees it not as issuing out of the present, but as established by a catastrophic supersession of the present order by one wholly new. While in the canonical prophets there is an apocalyptic element, in the Book of Daniel and in some other writings, apocryphal and pseudepigraphical, this became the dominant element, and to these books we give the name of apocalyptic. In the New Testament we have a notable example of the same type of literature in the Book of the Revelation.

The separation of the Book of Daniel from the prophetic books, however, is not due to this difference in character, but most probably to its late date. Little is known of the origin of the Canon, and it is probable that the idea of a fixed corpus of Scripture, to which no additions could be made, did not arise until a late date, and the Council of Jamnia, which met about A.D. 90, may have been the first body to pass any formal decision on the matter.

Daniel's Inclusion in the Hebrew Canon

NEVERTHELESS, the fact that at that date there was dispute on only one or two of the books of the Old Testament shows that the essential work had been done much earlier. For formal canonization was not the beginning of a process but its end, and it merely confirmed the position which the canonized works had already secured in the esteem of men. That for all practical purposes the Pentateuch had long been canonized is clear from the fact that the Samaritans recognized it equally with the Jews, so that its acceptance as sacred, whether confirmed by any formal decision or not, must go back behind the Samaritan schism. Probably the collections known as the Former and the Latter Prophets had also secured general recognition as sacred books before the end of the 3rd century B.C., so that while there was no absolute fixity of the text, and it was still possible for additions to be incorporated in the books, it was out of the question for a new work to be admitted to their number. To the miscellaneous collection of writings whose nucleus was the trio of poetical books, Psalms, Proverbs, and Job, other works could still be attached, and it is probably on this account that when the Book of Daniel secured recognition as a sacred work, it was placed in this group.

That Daniel dates from the 2nd century B.C. is now generally agreed. There are, indeed, still writers, whose learning may be readily acknowledged, who deny this and maintain that the work dates from the 6th century B.C., but the difficulties attaching to that view are insuperable. These will be outlined below, together with the reasons that lead most scholars to assign the work to the Maccabean age.

For the understanding of the conditions of the Maccabean age, it is necessary briefly to review the course of events from the death of Alexander the Great (323 B.C.). When Alexander died, his generals soon fell to quarrelling over the division of his empire. For there was no one amongst them who was able, either by the strength of his personality or by the force of his arms, to win the loyalty or submission of the rest. Each strove to secure for himself as large a portion of the empire as he could; and to this end they made the ever-changing alliances, and fought the repeated battles, that yielded the kaleidoscopic changes of the next few decades. Gradually, however, three principal kingdoms were formed, possessing roughly the European, the Asiatic and the African portions of Alexander's conquests. Only two of these concern the history of the Jews, viz., the Seleucid kingdom, founded by Seleucus Nicator, which embraced Asia Minor, Syria and Babylonia, and the Ptolemaic kingdom of Egypt, founded by Ptolemy Soter.

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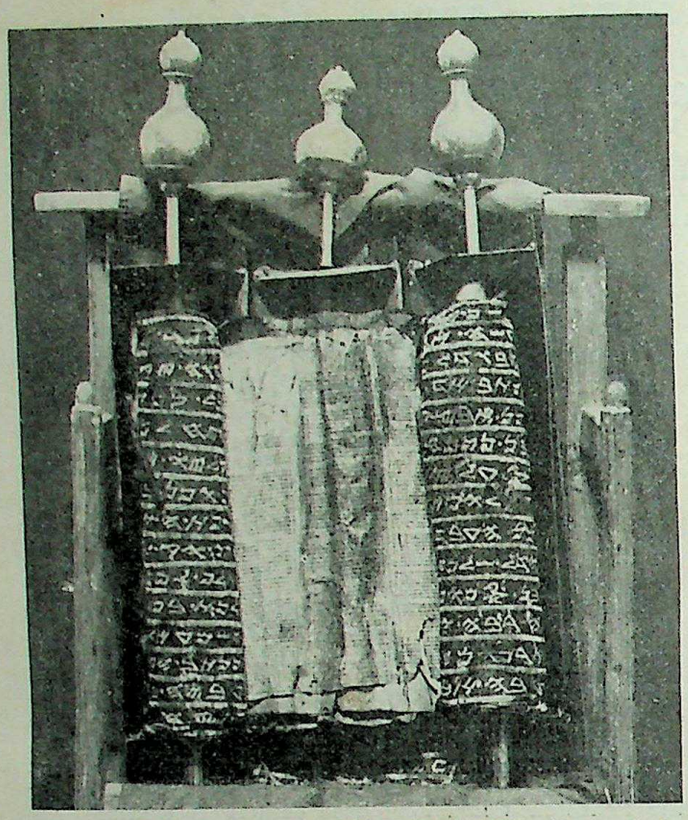

CELEBRATED SCROLL OF THE LAW. One of the oldest copies of the Pentateuch extant is that kept in a precious casket within the synagogue of the Samaritans at Nablus (*see* opposite page). The community accepts only the Pentateuch of the Old Testament preserved in the Samaritan characters, and asserts that this famous MS., rolled upon silver rollers, was written by Abishua, great-grandson of Aaron. The claim is not upheld by scholars.

Photo, American Colony in Jerusalem

It is of importance to remember, however, that while for practical purposes these may be treated as separate kingdoms, in theory they were still parts of the undivided empire of Alexander. The kingdoms of Ptolemy and Seleucus were not African or Asiatic, but Greek kingdoms, though neither had any territorial footing in Europe, and the administrative divisions of the empire were regarded as breaking its fundamental unity. For the empire of Alexander was more than a territorial conquest. It was the embodiment of an idea. That idea, symbolized in his own marriage with Roxana, an Iranian princess, was of a union of Greek and Oriental cultures, and it led to the foundation at strategic points throughout the empire of the Greek cities on which it long continued to depend. Both the Ptolemaic and the Seleucid kingdoms remained to the end the active agents of Greek culture, carrying on the mission Alexander had conceived.

Palestine, however, did not belong to the Asiatic portion of the empire, but to the African. For though after the battle of Ipsus (301 B.C.) it was assigned to Seleucus by the victors, it was immediately occupied by Ptolemy, to whom it had been promised by Seleucus, Lysimachus and Cassander, as one of the terms of the alliance that preceded that battle. Seleucus claimed that Ptolemy had deserted the alliance, and had therefore forfeited his title to this territory, but he contented himself with a formal protest. Nevertheless, he and his successors continued to hold that Palestine rightfully belonged to them, and to seek an opportunity to recover it.

Not for more than a century, however, were they successful in wresting it from the Ptolemies, who continued to rule it until the reign of Antiochus III (Magnus) over the Seleucid kingdom. Nor did success immediately attend the efforts of Antiochus even then. For his first attempt ended in the defeat of Raphia in 217 B.C., and it was not until twenty years later that he was able to dispossess the Ptolemies by his victory at Panion (198 B.C.). To many of the Jews the change was a welcome one. They had had a century of Ptolemaic rule, and had found it burdensome, and fondly imagined that the unproved rule of the Seleucids would be more easy. Yet within a few years the new yoke proved so intolerable that the Maccabean revolt broke out to throw it off.

The causes of that revolt did not lie wholly in the folly of Antiochus IV (Epiphanes), but partly in the conditions he inherited. For after his conquest of Palestine, Antiochus III engaged in his disastrous adventure in Asia Minor, which brought him into conflict with Rome. As the price of his defeat by the Roman legions at Magnesia, he was compelled to pay a large indemnity, and to send his son to Rome as a hostage. Thereafter he turned to the east, where his authority had sunk very low; but instead of effecting the restoration at which he aimed, he fell in battle in 187 B.C. His son, Seleucus IV, succeeded him, and during his reign he ordered his chief minister, Heliodorus, to seize the treasure of the Jerusalem Temple. That he did not actually rob the Temple is said to have been due to an apparition which checked him. Heliodorus later turned his hand against his master, whom he murdered in 175 B.C.

The young son of Seleucus was made the nominal king, but Heliodorus purposed to retain for himself the real control of the kingdom, and would doubtless have done so had not Antiochus, the brother of Seleucus IV, suddenly appeared to claim the throne for himself. That he was not the heir to the throne mattered little. For besides the child whom Heliodorus had used as the cloak of his ambitions, Seleucus had left another son, Demetrius, who was now a hostage at Rome, where he had replaced Antiochus. But neither Demetrius nor his brother were able to maintain the Seleucid authority against the upstart minister, and Antiochus therefore soon rallied all the loyal elements and overthrew Heliodorus. At first he seems to have reigned jointly with his little nephew, but soon he eliminated him, and passing over Demetrius, established himself firmly on the throne as Antiochus IV (Epiphanes).

Fuel for the Fires of Revolt

THAT by now there was amongst the Jews disaffection towards the Seleucid rule is not surprising. The ruinous wars of Antiochus III, involving the protracted payment of a heavy indemnity to Rome, necessitated a weight of taxation throughout his dominions sufficient to cool any enthusiasm for the transfer from the Ptolemies. Moreover, the attempt of Heliodorus to rob the Temple could not but alienate Jewish feeling. Add to this the consideration that Antiochus IV was not the true heir to the throne, and it is clear that the disaffected elements did not lack material with which to feed the flames of discontent.

Other factors were also at work. The policy of hellenization, begun by Alexander, and continued by both Ptolemies and Seleucids, had not left the Jews uninfluenced. In Alexandria there was a large Jewish colony, hellenized in speech and thought, and through the intercourse between this colony and Palestine, the Greek influence that the administration of the Ptolemies inevitably brought was largely reinforced. Hence, before Antiochus IV seized the throne, there was a strong party in Palestine welcoming and fostering Greek ideas and customs. Over against this was another party, known as the *Hasidim*, resisting Greek influence and believing that

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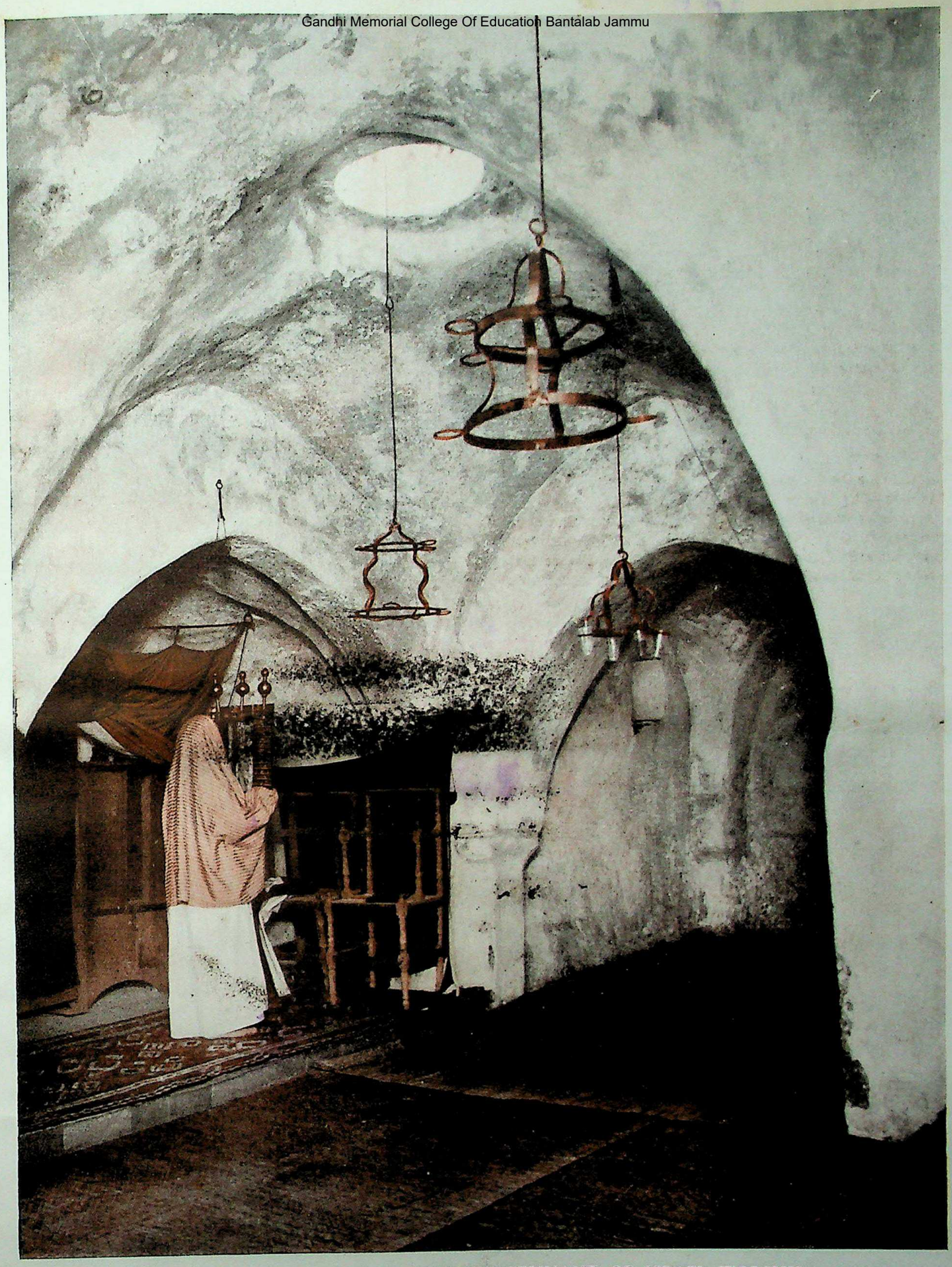

WHERE THE REJECTED REMNANT OF ISRAEL WORSHIP

In Nablus, or Shechem, is the only synagogue of that impoverished and dwindling people, the Samaritans. The interior of the plain building is whitewashed and cave-like. Kept in the recess behind curtains which strike the one decorative note, is the famed scroll of the Samaritan Pentateuch. The people are descendants of the remnant of the Northern Kingdom of Israel, recognized only as a foe by the Jews. Samaritan overtures appear to have been rejected. There is pathos in the record of Jeremiah xli, 5-7. Men came " from Shechem, from Shiloh and Samaria " bringing offerings for the House of the Lord at Jerusalem, not knowing of its destruction with the city, and most of them were slain by the fanatical Judean prince Ishmael. Later Samaritan help in rebuilding the Temple was refused by Zerubbabel.

Photo: American Colony in Jerusalem

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Arthur A. Dixon

"GOD GAVE THEM KNOWLEDGE AND SKILL IN ALL LEARNING"

In the first chapter of the Book of Daniel the writer relates how Nebuchadnezzar ordered that certain talented and good-looking boys among the Judean captives were to be trained with the noble Babylonian youths, so that they might "stand in the king's palace" and hold high positions at Court and in provincial administrations. "Now, among these were of the children of Judah, Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah." The three last are better known by the Babylonian names then bestowed on them, Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego. In Arthur A. Dixon's Biblical illustration, The Children of Judah, Daniel and his companions are seen in class, giving proof of their knowledge in "matters of wisdom and understanding" before the learned Chaldean teachers in the royal school.

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Gandhi Manor

Gustave Doré, 1833-1883

"CAST INTO THE MIDST OF A BURNING FIERY FURNACE"

Steadfast in their nonconformity, despite the warning of Nebuchadnezzar that if they did not worship with all Babylonia the great golden image set up on the plain of Dura they would be burnt alive, Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego replied to the king: "O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter. If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace; and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king" (Daniel iii, 16, 17). Infuriated, Nebuchadnezzar, ordering the great smelting furnace to be made seven times hotter than usual, had the three young Hebrews thrown into it. Gustave Doré, illustrating the scene in neo-classical style for the Doré Bible, thus depicts "these men upon whose bodies the fire had no power."

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Reconstruction drawing by J. F. Campbell

"IS NOT THIS GREAT BABYLON THAT I HAVE BUILT?"

Under Nebuchadnezzar II, notable amongst royal builders, Babylon reached the zenith of its glory as centre of a universal empire. Magnificent indeed was the dwelling-place of this "king of kings" who reigned from 605 to 562 B.C. Pulling down the royal abode of his father, Nabopolassar, he erected a new one on its site and then greatly enlarged it. His palace-area—shown in this reconstruction drawing from available data—was on both sides of the Euphrates, which was spanned by a fine bridge for traffic. Besides the State residence depicted in the foreground, it included the famous building of the Hanging Gardens, partially shown in the background on the right; and across the water, amid official quarters, the lofty temple of Marduk, with the staged tower of the E-temenanki, here seen on the left.

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"HE WALKED IN THE PALACE OF THE KINGDOM OF BABYLON"

The Hanging Gardens, one of the Seven Wonders of the ancient world, were situated in "the city of the king of Babylon's dwelling," that is, within the palace-area. Nebuchadnezzar connected separate groups of buildings to form one stupendous royal residence. The Hanging Gardens were designed to please his Median Queen. This reconstruction of them shows an ornamental edifice, its earth-filled terraces planted with masses of rare trees and flowers. From the lofty summit a fine view could be obtained of the city. It has been suggested that Nebuchadnezzar may have been walking here when he admired "the house of the kingdom" (Daniel iv, 30, 31) and "there fell a voice from heaven, saying: The kingdom is departed from thee."

Reconstruction from "Wonders of the Past"

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John S. Sargent, 1856-1925

"HEAR YE THE WORD OF THE LORD, YE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL"

In this and the facing page are reproduced, by permission of the Library Trustees, parts of the frieze of the Hebrew Prophets, the work of John Singer Sargent, the distinguished American painter, which decorates the Public Library in Boston, U.S.A. Two other sections are shown in pages 668, 669. Above are depicted Zephaniah, Joel, Obadiah and Hosea—except for the last in attitudes expressive of woe. Though the message of each Prophet differs, a religious acceptance dominates them all. Their predictions of calamities to befall Israel are delivered conditionally. They teach the effectual, fervent power of sincere repentance and reform to avert these evils which must inevitably be brought about unless the people turn again to the ways of righteousness.

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"THE GREAT DAY OF THE LORD IT IS NEAR, IT IS NEAR"

In the forefront of this group of the Prophets is a noble portrayal of Haggai, contemporary of Zechariah, seen on the right, with whom he is mentioned in Ezra vi, 14, as encouraging the returned exiles in Jerusalem to support Zerubbabel in the erection of the Temple: "And the elders of the Jews builded, and they prospered through the prophesying of Haggai the prophet and Zechariah." Between these two stands Malachi, also a post-exilic prophet, who predicted the coming of the Messiah, the Sun of Righteousness "with healing in his wings" (Malachi iv, 2). On the left is Micah, whose career was partly coincident with Isaiah's. Utterer of the prediction that the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem Ephratah, Micah was a patriotic reformer.

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"THEY HAD THEIR DOMINION TAKEN AWAY"

In the vision of the Four Beasts, imperial Babylon was symbolized by a lion whose dominion was removed (Daniel vii, 4, 12). Strangely enough, the massive stone "Lion of Mesopotamia" —here pictured amid now excavated ruins—was all that remained above ground for centuries as a monument of the glories of vanished Babylon; and, somewhat ironically, this monument is of foreign origin. It was probably a war trophy brought from Anatolian regions. The style of its carving is quite unlike the Assyrian; archaically simple yet majestic, it resembles the sculptures of the Hittites.

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it imperilled the true heritage of the Jew. For the understanding of the Maccabean struggle, it is essential to remember this inner cleavage amongst the Jews.

Already, before the accession of Antiochus IV, this cleavage had appeared, but in such a form that the personal rivalry of the opposing leaders was more apparent than the essential principles they represented. For prior to the transfer of Palestine to Seleucid rule, the wealthy house of Tobias, in the person of one Joseph, had contrived to secure from Ptolemy IV the tax-farming rights for Palestine. Although Joseph was the nephew of the High Priest, Onias, he belonged to the rival Tobiad house; and now that the religious and the financial affairs of the nation were controlled respectively by these rival houses, the rivalry between them became more intense. It was small wonder, therefore, that when Palestine passed to the Seleucids, the change was welcomed by the son of Onias, Onias III, who was now High Priest. So keen a supporter of the Seleucids did he prove himself that Seleucus IV defrayed the cost of the sacrifices. The house of Onias stood for the stricter observance of the practices of Judaism, whereas the wealthy and worldly house of Tobias favoured the hellenizing influences. There seemed, therefore, little likelihood of an outbreak of the stricter party against the Seleucids, such as occurred within a few years under Antiochus IV.

But the hellenizing party had no small footing amongst the priesthood, and since it was in no sense pro-Ptolemaic, but essentially concerned to further its own influence and power, it immediately began to exploit the new situation, and to outbid the orthodox party for the royal favour. It was one of the priestly enemies of Onias III who informed the royal authorities of the riches of the Temple treasures, and brought about Seleucus's order to despoil them. And when, as the result of the internal intrigues that followed, Onias repaired to the court to invoke the king's aid, the other side was headed by his own brother, Jason. The murder of Seleucus IV took place while Onias was on this mission, and Jason at once improved the occasion to occupy the High Priesthood, and later, when Antiochus IV had established himself on the throne, was able by the offer of a higher tribute to persuade the king to confirm him in the office.

"THE KING OF GRECIA." This sculptured portrayal of Alexander the Great (356-323 B.C.) suggests his dual nature, theorist and man of action. In Daniel's vision (viii, 5), the goat that came swiftly from the west and vanquished the Persian ram is held to have been the Grecian Empire and the "notable horn between his eyes" that was broken was Alexander, who entered Babylon after his sweeping Asiatic conquests to die there of fever the same year.

The Louvre, photo, Alinari

The hellenizing party was now well in the saddle at Jerusalem, and Jason threw himself heartily into its work. A deputation from Jerusalem waited on the king with the request that its citizens might be enrolled as citizens of Antioch, and that permission might be given for the establishment of a gymnasium in the city. No request could have been more welcome to Antiochus, who was eager to press forward with the work of hellenization. On the ground of some supposed similarity between his own features and the traditional pictures of Zeus, he pretended that he was the god incarnate, and so took the epithet of Epiphanes. It was therefore the religious aspect of hellenization in which he was particularly interested, as appeared in his later conflict with the Jews, and in his conversion of the Temple on Mount Gerizim into a temple of Zeus. But readily did he respond to the request to foster every product of the spirit of Hellenism, and Greek practices were rapidly promoted in Jerusalem.

The stricter party could not but be gravely scandalized by all this. The encroachment of Greek practices would alone have sufficed to arouse their horror, but the deposition of Onias, and the conversion of the High Priesthood into the instrument of this hated policy, intensified their feeling. Nor did things end there. Soon Jason was outbid by Menelaus, and the High Priesthood transferred to him, and when Onias rebuked Menelaus for converting the Temple vessels into the price of his advancement, Menelaus had him murdered.

It was but natural, therefore, that there should be considerable disaffection towards Antiochus amongst the Jews. The discontent aroused by burdensome taxation, and the religious opposition to all that was taking place, inevitably reinforced one another. For while the initiative in the hellenization had come from within, it had been undertaken with such enthusiasm to win the approval of Antiochus, who had degraded the very High Priesthood and made it the prize of the highest bidder. Hence the opposition to the hellenizing party, which was of necessity the ally and support of the Seleucid power, was bound to foster opposition to the Seleucid power itself.

Not yet, however, was there any thought of revolt. That only came when Antiochus, driven by the very momentum of events, plunged yet deeper into the policy on which he had embarked. For he cherished the ambition of adding Egypt to his dominions. Profiting by dissensions there, he interfered as the champion of Ptolemy Philometor against Ptolemy Euergetes, with the intention of himself controlling Egypt—in the name of Philometor so long as it should serve his purpose. But the two Ptolemies became reconciled, and Antiochus at once exposed the hollowness of his earlier pretensions by leading his army against them. Egypt had, however, appealed to Rome, and the Senate sent Popillius Laenas to dissuade Antiochus from his adventure. Drawing a ring around the king in the sand, the Roman demanded his answer to Rome's message ere he stepped beyond it, and the humiliated Antiochus, not daring to challenge the legions of Rome, agreed to withdraw from Egypt.

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Falling back on Jerusalem, he turned to vent his wrath upon the Jews. For he was fully aware of the extent of the disaffection towards himself amongst the people. During either his recent adventure in Egypt or his previous interference there, the deposed Jason had reappeared in Jerusalem, encouraged by a false report of the death of Antiochus, and had raised the standard of revolt. But Antiochus knew that the real strength of the opposition he had to face was religious. To make any concessions to the scruples of the orthodox party was out of the question, since it would be an abandonment of the hellenizing party on whom alone he could depend. Hence, to end the political menace of the disaffection he felt compelled to strike yet harder at its religious root.

ANTIOCHUS therefore determined to crush the religion of Judaism. He forbade all its special practices, including the observance of the Sabbath and the rite of circumcision, and terminated the morning and evening sacrifices of the Temple. The Temple itself was turned into a temple of Zeus, and swine's flesh was offered on the altar, that it might be desecrated for ever in the eyes of the Jews. An idol of Zeus, probably in the form of an image of Antiochus himself, was set up in the Temple, and a Syrian garrison was established in the city. Orders were issued for the destruction of all copies of the Scriptures, and everywhere the Jews were commanded to eat unclean foods and to sacrifice to idols, in token of their renunciation of the faith of their fathers. The penalty of resistance to these measures was death.

Many, indeed, suffered death rather than yield, while others denied their faith and obeyed the king's command.

"ONE OF HIS PRINCES." Seleucus Nicator was one of the Macedonian officers of Alexander. After the death of the "mighty king" the "realm of Grecia," as stated in Daniel xi, 4, was "divided toward the four winds of heaven; and not to his posterity." Alexander's empire was distributed among the leading Macedonian governors, or "princes," and eventually in 312 B.C. Seleucus made himself ruler of Babylon, and some years later of Syria and a great part of Asia Minor. He was assassinated in 280 B.C.

From Delbrück, "Antike Porträts"

But the smouldering resistance was soon to burst into open flame. When the king's officers came to Modein, an old priest named Mattathias not only refused to obey, but with his own hands slew an apostate Jew, who was willing to offer heathen sacrifice, and then turned and slew one of the king's own officers. Raising the standard of revolt, he fled to the hills with his sons, and summoned all who prized the faith of their fathers to join him.

Soon his own place as the leader of the revolt was taken by his son Judas, who was called the Maccabee, and under his leadership the rebels won victory after victory over the king's forces. It was clear that the rebellion, which had at first been treated as a mere local outbreak, was a serious challenge, and, since Antiochus was himself engaged in a campaign in the east, Lysias, who was acting as governor in Syria, led a large army against Judas. But again Judas was victorious, and as the fruit of his victory recovered possession of Jerusalem, with the exception of the citadel where was the Syrian garrison. Immediately the work of the cleansing of the Temple was undertaken, and a new altar built, and on December 25, 164 B.C., just three years after the first idol sacrifice had been offered in the sacred precincts, the new altar was consecrated and the proper service restored.

Vehicle of Hope for the Oppressed

IT was during this time, after the outbreak of the rebellion but before the actual re-dedication of the Temple, that the Book of Daniel was completed. It is probable that the stories in the first half of the book were issued one by one, and that later they were collected together to form one book. They were issued with a practical purpose, to encourage the faithful in their resistance to the oppressor.

During recent years many scholars have favoured the idea that the first part of Daniel is by a different author from the second, and that it is an older work which was re-issued, perhaps with some modifications, by the author of the second part. To this view we shall return below, but here it makes little practical difference. For whether the Maccabean writer is responsible for the stories, or took them over from an older literary work, he issued them to be the vehicle of a message to his suffering fellow-countrymen. In either case they are not his free creation. For even if they are his own composition, he based them on older traditional stories, and on such historical knowledge as was open to him.

Of the appropriateness of the message of the stories to the Maccabean crisis there can be no question. Antiochus sought to compel the Jews to eat unclean foods, and the story in the first chapter is an encouragement to disobey such an order, even though it issue from a king. Antiochus set up an idol in the Temple, and commanded that sacrifices should be offered to idols both there and elsewhere, and the third chapter is a promise of deliverance for all who resist such a command. Antiochus, whose overweening pride led him to think of himself as a god incarnate, but who was dubbed by his people a madman (Epimanes), was doubtless in the mind of the author when he issued the fourth chapter, with its story of the humiliation of the proud Nebuchadnezzar, and the derangement of his mind. Antiochus profaned and removed the Temple vessels, and the fifth chapter brought an implicit promise that divine vengeance would fall upon him. The officers of the king entered with zest into the work of persecution, and the sixth chapter brought its promise that they too should suffer for their wickedness, and encouraged the faithful to maintain

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the private worship of God, and to believe that He could deliver from every peril.

The second chapter, like all the visions of the second part of the book, is connected with the Maccabean age by the climax to which it looks. Nebuchadnezzar's vision culminated in the blow of a stone upon the mingled iron and clay of the feet of the image, entailing the destruction of the image and the expansion of the stone into a mountain.

That the kingdom of Alexander was a divided kingdom, and that Seleucid iron and Ptolemaic clay did not really cleave to one another, despite the intermarriage between the two houses, was abundantly clear in the days of Antiochus Epiphanes, and the spontaneous and unpremeditated outbreak of the Maccabean rebellion, commencing in the sudden uprush of divinely-inspired emotion, could well be represented by the stone cut without hands, which the author believed to be destined to inaugurate the kingdom of God in the world.

That the Book of Daniel dates from the 2nd century B.C. has so far been assumed, on no more evidence than that of its position in the Hebrew Canon and the appropriateness of the stories to the Maccabean situation. But could not an author who lived in the 6th century B.C. have been the vehicle in the hands of the Holy Spirit of a message to the men of the 2nd century, or even of the yet later days that successive interpreters have found reflected in the prophecies? This question is often asked by the defenders of the 6th-century date of the book, who not infrequently suggest that the case for the 2nd-century date rests on little more than unwillingness to recognize the power of God. Happily it rests on no such unscientific and *a priori* denial, but on a variety of more solid considerations. And foremost amongst these is the strange fact that whereas the Book of Daniel displays the most exact knowledge of the events of the century preceding the Maccabean revolt, its acquaintance with the events of the 6th century B.C. is quite inexact.

"THE KING OF THE SOUTH." After the death of Alexander the sovereignty of Egypt went to his general Ptolemy. The latter abdicated in favour of his son Ptolemy II, Philadelphus, who is represented on this bas-relief with Arsinoe, his sister-queen, in the conventional style of Egyptian royal sculptures. Though Greeks, they conformed to all the Pharaonic customs. Ptolemy II gave his daughter Berenice in marriage to Antiochus II, grandson of Seleucus, king of Syria. This alliance of the two royal houses is referred to in Daniel xi, 6: "the king's daughter of the south shall come to the king of the north to make an agreement." The Ptolemaic dynasty lasted until 30 B.C.

British Museum

Historical Accuracy of the Record

SO exact is the knowledge of the events of the Greek period revealed in Chapter xi that Jerome triumphantly pointed to it as the proof of the amazing miracle of its inspiration, and modern historians are still compelled to acknowledge the accuracy down to the year 164 B.C. But when that accuracy is found combined with inaccuracy in the narratives of the days when Daniel is supposed to have lived, and of the events in which he is said to have taken a leading part, its evidential value is changed. For the same Spirit can hardly be supposed to have revealed to a 6th-century author the distant future, and at the same time to have confused his mind as to the immediate past in which he had played a distinguished part.

There is, indeed, some sound historical knowledge of the 6th century lying behind the book, for the author was a man who had used the sources that were open to him. But books were scarce, and facilities for historical research were few. And if, as has been suggested above, these stories were written for an immediately practical end and not as an historical treatise, the author would be more concerned to make them the vehicle of his message than to make them historically inerrant. When Judaism was engaged in a life-and-death struggle, and issues of so great moment were at stake, a mere antiquarian interest in the 6th century would have been but a frivolity. Nor could any supporter of the Maccabean heroes have found any quiet spot where he could have pursued his researches. To such an author, therefore, the errors concerning the 6th century are no reproach: while the knowledge he displays, though it is sometimes misunderstood and misapplied, testifies that he was a man who had some acquaintance with such historical sources as were available in Palestine in that age.

It is often pointed out that this book ascribes to Nebuchadnezzar pride in his building achievements in Babylon, and it is a singular fact that the inscriptions of Nebuchadnezzar, turned up by the modern excavator and deciphered by modern scholars, are almost wholly building inscriptions. Under his hand Babylon became one of the wonders of the ancient world, so that he

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might well ask, "Is not this great Babylon, which I have built?" Equally interesting is it to note that whereas the very name of Belshazzar was unknown from secular sources until the 19th century, we now have considerable knowledge of him from contemporary Babylonian sources. We know that he was a real person, and that for some years he exercised rule in Babylon.

UNFORTUNATELY, however, Belshazzar was not king, as the Book of Daniel represents. He was but the regent, administering the state during his father Nabonidus's absence in Têmâ. It is sometimes supposed that he was associated with his father on the throne, but the fact that the contemporary sources explicitly tell us that during the years of his father's absence the New Year Festival in Babylon was suspended is fatal to the supposition. It is also significant that whereas the Book of Daniel dates events by the years of Belshazzar's supposed reign, in no contemporary document is he so much as mentioned for such a purpose, every contract tablet being dated by the year of Nabonidus alone.

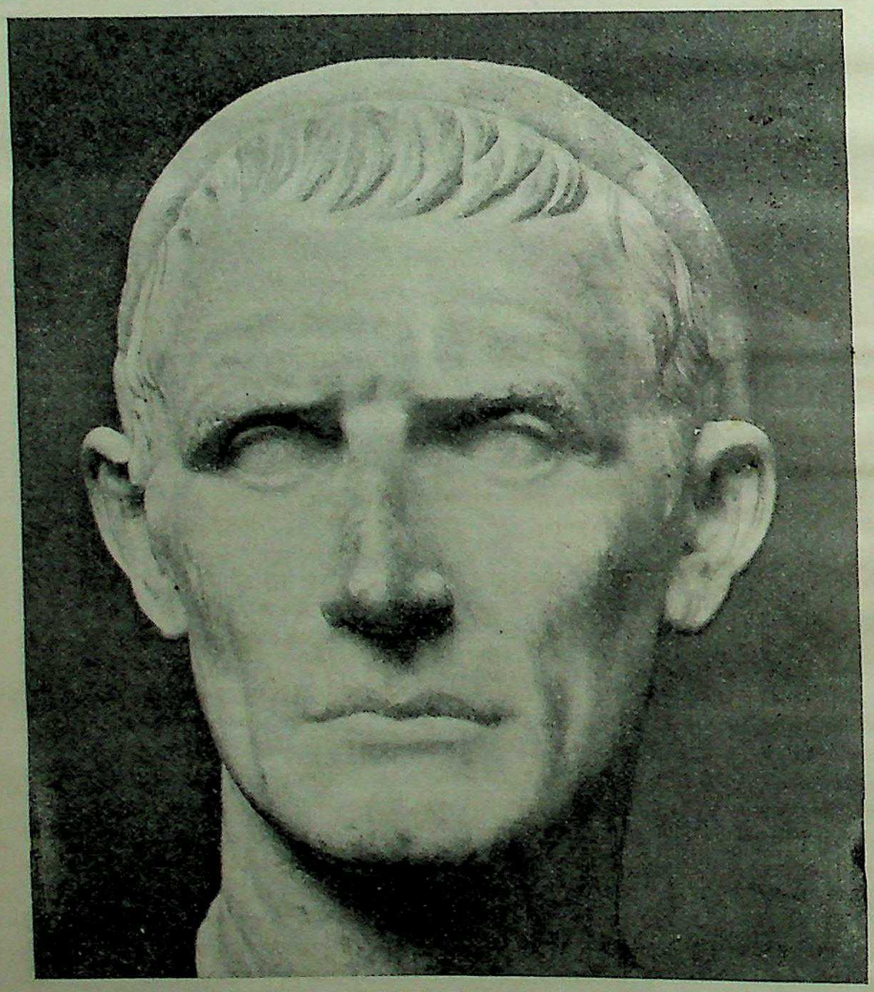
Yet again, Belshazzar was not the son of Nebuchadnezzar, as the reader of Daniel would suppose. It is sometimes thought that he may have been the grandson of Nebuchadnezzar through his mother, but since our only independent information is that Nabonidus was unrelated to the house of Nebuchadnezzar at the time of his accession, this is highly improbable. For though it is indeed likely that Nabonidus married a daughter of Nebuchadnezzar after his accession, in order thereby to strengthen his position, Belshazzar cannot have been the offspring of that union, since he was serving in a military post quite early in his father's reign. Though Belshazzar was an historical person, then, the account of him found in the Book of Daniel is marked by abundant evidences that it did not come from the pen of a contemporary.

Nor can the events of Daniel v be found any place in history. For when the Babylonian empire fell before the advance of Cyrus, the Persian forces gained a great victory at Opis, as the result of which Sippar fell into their hands, and two days later the gates of Babylon were opened to Gobryas, one of Cyrus's generals, without a blow. That no great army, commanded by a thousand lords, was in occupation is quite certain.

Cyrus himself did not enter Babylon for four months, and since an obscure line in the text of the inscription that records these events has by some been understood to state that Belshazzar died a week after Cyrus entered the city, it has been suggested by some writers that Belshazzar had continued to hold a part of the city until then. For this suggestion there is no shred of evidence. For there is no indication that Belshazzar died in Babylon, if he is the person referred to in the inscription, and the statement that the city had been handed over four months earlier without a blow is quite inconsistent with the supposition that a part of it had continued in strong military occupation by Belshazzar during these months. And that the inscription is to be trusted is proved by the preservation of contract tablets, which show that the peaceful transfer of property continued during these months in which two rival armies are supposed to have been in the city.

Moreover, we have explicit testimony that the great Babylonian temple of Marduk, E-sagila, was in the hands of the Persians from the time of their first entry, so that it would have been impossible for Belshazzar to have sent for the Jerusalem vessels, which Nebuchadnezzar is said to have placed there. Finally, Belshazzar's promise to make the man who could read the writing on the wall "third ruler" in a kingdom which had already been reduced to the exiguous dimensions of a portion of a single city, would be reduced to a sorry joke.

Even more difficult is the question of Darius the Mede. For the Book of Daniel represents this person as having ruled between Belshazzar and Cyrus. We know from unimpeachable contemporary sources that Cyrus immediately followed Nabonidus, and that in the month in which Cyrus entered Babylon contracts ceased to be dated by the years of Nabonidus, and began to be dated by the reign of Cyrus. There is therefore no room for an intervening king. Various attempts have been made to obviate the difficulty, of which the favourite with recent writers is that Gobryas is to be identified with Darius the Mede. Evidence in support of such an identification is wholly wanting, and we have no reason to suppose that Gobryas ever bore the title of king, or



"THE KING OF THE NORTH." Descendant of Seleucus, Antiochus III, generally known as the Great (223-187 B.C.), wrested Palestine from Egypt (198 B.C.), and added it to the Syrian and other Asiatic dominions of his empire. He is referred to as "the king of the north" in Daniel xi, 10-19, the title being used generally throughout this chapter to denote monarchs of the Seleucid dynasty. The power of Antiochus III was crippled by the Romans at the battle of Magnesia (190 B.C.) when he was defeated by Lucius Cornelius Scipio—the commander or "prince" alluded to in verse 18—and he was assassinated, three years later, at Elymais.

The Louvre; photo, W. F. Mansell

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that he was a Mede. But fatal not only to this proposed identification of Darius the Mede, but also to every other, is the consideration that whereas only one who was subordinate to Cyrus can possibly be thought of, the Book of Daniel does not represent Darius as a minor potentate, but as an imperial monarch controlling far-ranging dominions. Moreover, in dating events by the years of this Darius, the Book of Daniel is in demonstrable disagreement with contemporary Babylonian practice.

The author of the Book of Daniel seems to have confused the fall of Babylon to Cyrus in 538 B.C. with the fall to Darius Hystaspis in 520 B.C. But his error does not consist merely in transposing the reigns of Darius Hystaspis and Cyrus, for Darius the Mede cannot be identified with Darius Hystaspis. He seems to have had a good deal of historical knowledge, but there were gaps in it. Had he been writing a modern historical work, he would have merited criticism. But he was writing stories. Nor was he doing this merely as a literary exercise, though his literary skill was that of a master. He was doing it with the fire and fervour of an evangelist, for it was his contribution to the cause of his people.

Defining the Date of the Book

WHEN once it is recognized that the historical inaccuracies concerning the 6th century B.C., of which there are several lesser ones in addition to those noted above, show that the author did not live in that age, the minute and exact knowledge of the period preceding the Maccabean revolt assumes a new evidential value. For it becomes evidence of the age in which the author lived. And when we find that his knowledge, as displayed in Chapter xi, is exact down to the reign of Antiochus Epiphanes, but that his expectation of the end of Antiochus was falsified by the event, we are able to define the date of the completion of the work with great precision in the year 164 B.C.

Nor is this the only indication of the period from which the book comes. For the climax of all the prophecies it contains is found to connect with the Maccabean age, showing that it was just here that the centre of all the author's interest lay. It has already been said that the vision of Chapter ii has its climax in that age. The four world empires of this vision were the Babylonian, the Median, the Persian and the Greek, and the last of these was a divided kingdom, divided between Ptolemies and Seleucids. That historically the Median empire did not stand between the Babylonian and the Persian, but was contemporary with the Babylonian, and was swallowed up by Cyrus before his conquest of Babylon, is no objection to this view, since it so well accords with the author's unhistorical introduction of Darius the Mede between the Babylonian and the Persian monarchies.

The four empires of Chapter vii are doubtless the same, and the Little Horn of the fourth beast, that spake words against the Most High and that harried the saints, is Antiochus Epiphanes. And just as in Chapter ii the stone of the Maccabean revolt is believed to inaugurate the everlasting divine kingdom, so in Chapter vii, the destruction of the Little Horn is expected to usher in the enduring Kingdom of God that shall be administered by His saints.

In Chapter viii we are plainly told that the vision concerns the Medo-Persian and the Greek empires, and again the interest culminates in a Little Horn, who shall magnify himself and destroy the holy people, who shall desecrate the sanctuary and interrupt the sacrifices, until he is finally broken without hand. And here again Antiochus Epiphanes is plainly portrayed.

"THEN SHALL STAND UP IN HIS ESTATE." Son and successor of Antiochus the Great, Seleucus IV (top) reigned ingloriously (187-175 B.C.) and was "destroyed, neither in anger nor in battle" (Daniel xi, 20) but murdered as the result of a ministerial conspiracy. Antiochus IV, Epiphanes (below), brilliant but decadent, then came to the throne, and in trying to crush Judaism in Palestine and establish Hellenism, brought about the Maccabean revolt.

From J. Ward, "Greek Coins" (John Murray)

In Chapter ix the chronology of the seventy weeks is very obscure, but that the culmination lies in the Maccabean age is in no doubt. For once more the climax is reached with the interruption of the sacrifices for "half a week," or three and a half years, and the promised outpouring of wrath on the head of the enemy. The broad indication of the period of the suspension of sacrifices as three and a half years well accords with the more specific two thousand three hundred evenings and mornings, *i.e.*, two thousand three hundred failures to offer the specified daily sacrifices, which should be offered twice daily, and hence eleven hundred and fifty days, of Chapter viii. Moreover, the close similarity between the expressions rendered in the R.V. "the transgression that maketh desolate" in viii, 13, "(upon the wing of) abominations (shall come) one that maketh desolate" in ix, 27, and "the abomination that maketh desolate" in xi, 31 and xii, 11, suggests that in all these cases the reference is the same, and Chapter viii locates it unequivocally in the days of Antiochus Epiphanes.

'The Abomination that Maketh Desolate'

IT has already been said that Chapter xi recounts the history of the Greek period to the time of Antiochus Epiphanes, whose offence is described as the profaning of the sanctuary and the interruption of the sacrifices, with the setting up of the abomination of desolation. That the phrase "the abomination that maketh desolate" here refers to the idol set up over the altar by Antiochus Epiphanes is suggested by the use in I. Maccabees i, 54 of the similar term "abomination of desolation" to describe that altar. That the idol was an idol of Zeus is shown by the fact that the Temple was turned into a temple of Zeus Olympios, for whom the Hebrew name would be *Ba'al Shamaim*, or "Lord of Heaven." It was

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by a distortion of this name that the phrase rendered "abomination that maketh desolate" arose. In some other places in the Old Testament we find the contemptuous substitution of another word for *Ba'al* and similarly here the author substitutes *shiqquç*, or "abomination," for "lord." For *shamaim* he substituted *meshomem*, with a *double entendre*, for the verbal root here used has association with the ideas of "desolation" and of "madness," and since the idol of Zeus was doubtless in the form of an image of Antiochus, who was called the Madman, there is here a neat allusion to him.

The links between all of these chapters are therefore close. They all point to a time of oppression, and describe the oppressor in similar terms, and they all look for divine vengeance to fall upon him. They all suppose that in these events is the climax of all history, beyond which the author does not look, except to hail the establishment of the eternal Kingdom of God. Not only, therefore, does the Maccabean age provide a period when the stories would bring a message of encouragement. It is the centre of interest throughout the visions, and the age when their promise of imminent deliverance and the ushering in of the golden age would bring timely hope.

Details Inconsistent with the Traditional Date

MOREOVER, the orthography of the royal names proves the book to be later than the 6th century. Thus, whereas for the name Darius we find the correct spelling of the time of Darius Hystaspis, with which the author was familiar through the writings of the contemporary prophets, Haggai and Zechariah, for Artaxerxes and for Xerxes we have not the spelling of the contemporary inscriptions, but that found in the later Book of Ezra. Similarly for the great Babylonian monarch, instead of the correct Nebuchadrezzar, found in the writings of the contemporary Jeremiah and Ezekiel, we find the incorrect Nebuchadnezzar, which is found regularly in the later books of the Old Testament, and only occasionally, probably by corruption of the text, in Jeremiah and Ezekiel.

To these examples may be added some other anachronisms. The title "king of kings" given to Nebuchadnezzar in ii, 37 is one that was borne by the Persian monarchs, and not by Nebuchadnezzar, while the reference in x, 1 to the third year of "Cyrus king of Persia" points to a time after the collapse of the Persian empire. While the empire lasted it was sufficient to refer to its sovereigns as "the king," but after it had been superseded by the Greek empire, its kings were distinguished in this way.

Further, the use of the term "Chaldeans" dates from a time subsequent to the fall of the Babylonian empire. For the empire established by Nabopolassar and his son Nebuchadnezzar was ruled by a Chaldean dynasty, and while it lasted the term "Chaldean" retained its proper racial meaning, or was used more generally of a citizen of the Babylonian kingdom. In this sense only is it found in the Old Testament outside the Book of Daniel. But here side by side with this we find another usage, in which the term stands for a member of a class of students of the occult. Its earliest use in this sense is found in the writings of Herodotus, but later it became frequent with Greek and Latin authors, from whom we learn that it denoted a member of a priestly class, learned in occult and magic arts. The Babylonian priests were famous for their astronomical knowledge and their astrological practices, and long after the fall of the Babylonian empire they continued to be so famous. And since by now the proper ethnic use of the term had fallen into rare use, since the Chaldean race no longer played any notable part on the stage of human affairs, the term became appropriated in foreign use to this priestly class. Hence the use of the term in the Book of Daniel is definitely not Babylonian, but foreign, and it did not arise until after the fall of the Babylonian empire.

Similarly, the use of Persian official titles for the officers of Nebuchadnezzar in Chapter iii plainly reveals a later hand. For one who had himself occupied a high position at the court of that king could hardly have been responsible for them. Nor could he have made the mistake of supposing that the name Belteshazzar was compounded of a divine name (iv, 8) for the divine name *Bel* is not one of its elements; and even had it been, Nebuchadnezzar is scarcely likely to have described it as "according to the name of my god." For Nebuchadnezzar was definitely hostile to the worship of Bel, and repudiated the use of the name for the Babylonian god Marduk.

Again, linguistic considerations support the conclusions we have so far reached. For the canonical Book of Daniel (leaving aside the apocryphal additions found in the Greek Bible) is written in two languages, Hebrew and Aramaic, and in both cases the particular style and usage points to a late age. Almost the whole of the Old Testament was written in Hebrew, but about four chapters of Ezra and six chapters of Daniel stand in Aramaic. For the moment we may ignore the question as to whether either the Hebrew part of Daniel or the Aramaic part is a translation from the other language. It is here sufficient to observe that the Hebrew is late and poor, and is quite inferior to that written, say, by Deutero-Isaiah in Babylonia in the 6th century B.C., while the Aramaic is definitely different in orthography and grammar from Babylonian Aramaic of that age.

Under the Persian empire Aramaic was widely used for commerce and administration, and we have a large variety of texts from widely separated areas written in that language. We are therefore able to trace the development of the language in some important respects in which it underwent change.

Of particular importance is a collection of Aramaic papyri, found at Elephantine in Upper Egypt, and coming from an ancient Jewish colony there. Many of these papyri are precisely dated in the 5th century B.C., and by the careful study of the usages found in them it becomes quite certain that the Aramaic of Daniel and Ezra belongs to a later stage of the history of the language. Moreover, a comparison of the Aramaic parts of Daniel and of Ezra points to the strong probability that the Aramaic of Daniel is somewhat later than that of Ezra. Clearly, therefore, the Aramaic of Daniel must be placed considerably later than the end of the 5th century B.C.

Foreign Words in Daniel's Vocabulary

NEITHER the Hebrew nor the Aramaic, then, is consistent with the traditional 6th century date, whereas neither provides any embarrassment to the 2nd century date. The study of the foreign elements in the vocabulary of the book enables us to go somewhat farther. For there are a number of Persian words and a few Greek words. The number of Persian words would seem to imply a longer period of Persian influence than a 6th century date would allow, but even more significant are the Greek words. The assured Graecisms are no more than three in number, and their fewness might at first sight suggest that no long period of Greek influence could have elapsed. But when it is remembered that the Maccabean struggle

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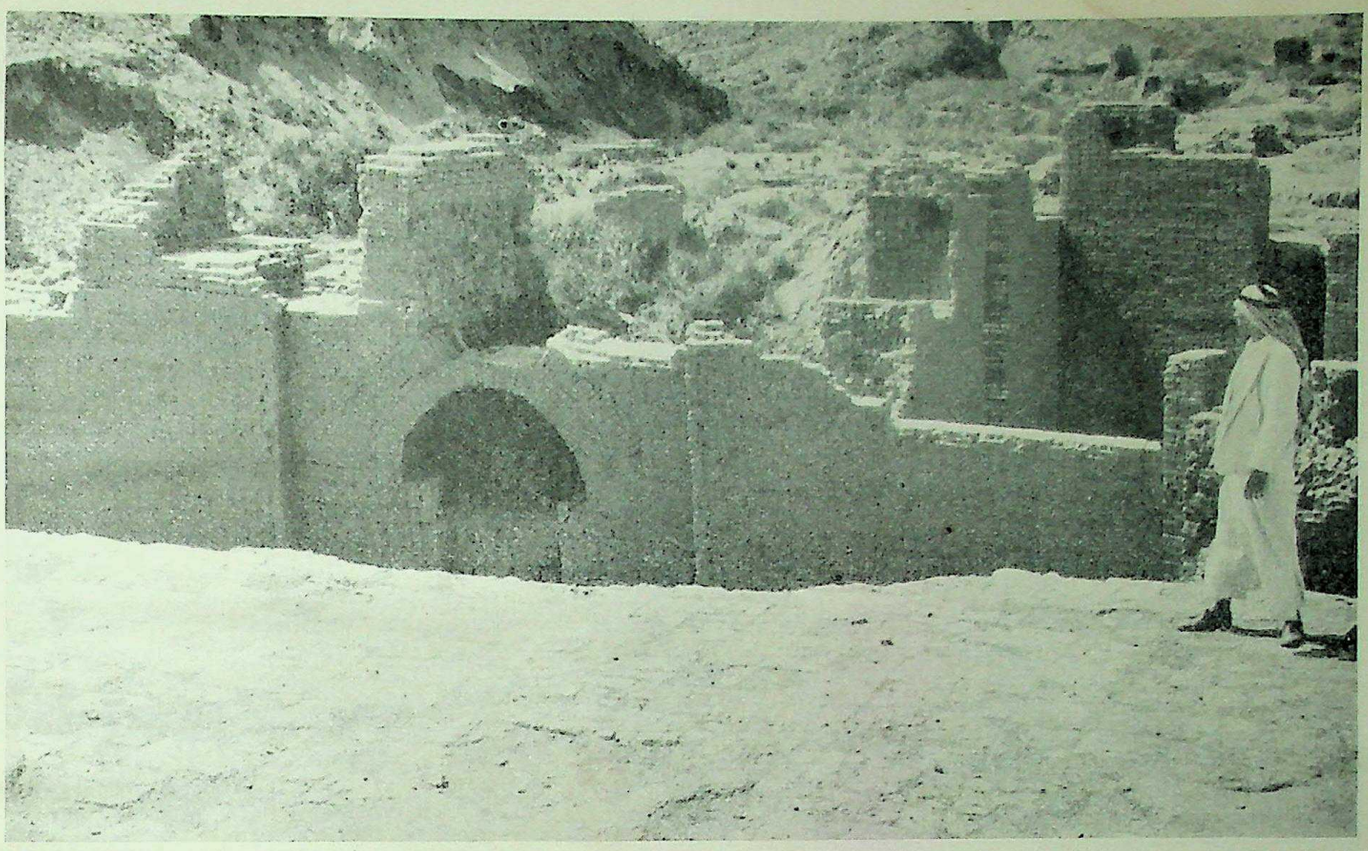

BABYLON'S MOST FAMOUS THOROUGHFARE. The Via Sacra or Processional Way of Nebuchadnezzar from the citadel, past the residential palace, to the Temple of Marduk, was flagged with breccia and "mountain" stone. Parts of this paving are well preserved, as seen in the photograph. He elevated the road built by his father, Nabopolassar, and raised the Ishtar Gate and other edifices in conformity with it. Along this pavement the more favoured "of the children of the captivity of Judah" (Daniel vi, 13) selected to "stand in the king's palace" would frequently have passed as they went about their duties in the royal area. The section of wall pictured here with its arch below the Way is Nabopolassar's.

Photo. American Colony in Jerusalem

was directed against the encroachment of Greek ideas and practices, it is not surprising that in the period of that struggle our author should have avoided the use of many Greek words. That he should have used any at all is astonishing, until we consider the associations of those we find. For these three words are all the names of musical instruments, and they occur in Chapter iii in the story of the idol which Nebuchadnezzar is said to have set up. It has been already observed that what was probably in the author's mind was the idol which Antiochus set up in the Temple, or before the altars which he established throughout the land, and on which men were bidden to sacrifice. And his use of three Greek terms for musical instruments was probably deliberate and pointed, giving to his readers by their subtle allusions a clue to the real purpose of the story. For Antiochus Epiphanes was fond of music at his feasts, and one of these three Greek terms found in Daniel, rendered "dulcimer" in the Revised Version, first appears in Greek literature as the name of a musical instrument in this age, where it is found in the pages of Polybius in a narrative about Antiochus. In all probability, therefore, the list of musical instruments, including these three Greek terms, was a scornful allusion to Antiochus. In any case, it is a singular fact that the appearance of one of them in Greek literature as the name of a musical instrument belongs to the very age in which, on other grounds, we have seen reason to place this book.

Though there is widespread agreement amongst scholars on all the positions so far outlined, there are several problems attaching to Daniel on which there is less agreement. And of these the first is as to whether the book is by a single author or not.

During recent years there has been a steady tendency amongst scholars to divide the book between at least two authors, the stories being assigned to the one and the visions to the other. The stories are held to be older than the visions, and to have been taken over by the author of the visions when he added his own work to them. Stated thus in general terms the view looks attractive, for the most casual reader will detect a difference between the artless stories of the earlier chapters and the elaborate details of the later chapters, culminating in Chapter xi.

Difficulty begins to arise, however, when we attempt to draw the line of division between the two parts. Some of those who deny the unity of the book draw it at the end of the sixth chapter, and some at the end of the seventh chapter, while yet others assign Chapter vii to a third hand between the other two. For Chapter vii is closely associated with Chapter ii in its message and outlook, yet also associated with the later chapters of the book in its form, as a vision given to Daniel, and also in its powerful interest in the impious attack of Antiochus on the law and the ritual of the Temple. Moreover, since the Aramaic part of the book extends from ii, 4 b to vii, 28, Chapter vii is associated by its language with the earlier part of the book.

Those writers who attach Chapter vii to the earlier chapters believe that it is not now in its original form, but that the verses that point unmistakably to Antiochus Epiphanes have been added to it; and most of those who divide the book amongst two or more authors are compelled to eliminate from Chapter ii the elements that locate the climax of the vision in the Maccabean age. It is therefore agreed that in their present form Chapters ii and vii, no less than Chapters viii-xii, belong to the Maccabean age. But there is no agreement as to whether Chapter vii is in its original form, and no agreement amongst those who dissect Chapters ii and vii as to when the original chapters can have been issued, or

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what vital message they can have conveyed, or to what situation their message can have had any special relevance. When it is agreed that in their present form these chapters have relevance to the Maccabean crisis, and brought a powerful message of hope, it seems gratuitous to presuppose another author, or authors, of vague date and of equally vague message.

It is the same with the rest of the stories of the first part of the book. Read in the light of the Maccabean struggle, they carry a clear message of encouragement, and it is recognized that if the Maccabean author attached his own work to them, it was because he perceived their suitability for this purpose. Yet if their origin is loosed from that age, we are left without the slightest indication as to when they were written, or with what purpose they were issued. The Maccabean author would have been fortunate indeed to find a corpus of stories more relevant to his purpose than to any their creator can be supposed to have entertained, and to find narratives of two visions which vaguely announced that a good time was coming, and which, by a few deft touches, he could turn into a timely message of hope, more vital and stimulating than anything of which their author thought, and directly related to the critical situation of the hour. The grounds on which the proposed division rests, therefore, do not appear convincing, and the view creates more problems than it solves.

Another problem is that of supplying the reason for the bilingual character of the book. To some writers it seems probable that the whole book was written in Hebrew, but that part of it was lost and its place supplied by the relevant part of an Aramaic translation, which had already been prepared for popular circulation. It is suggested that the destruction of sacred books, ordered by Antiochus Epiphanes, may have been responsible for the loss. But this involves a twofold difficulty. From a literary point of view the Aramaic is superior to the Hebrew, and it is necessary to assume a translator more skilled than the author. Moreover, since the later chapters were written after Jerusalem had once more come into the hands of the orthodox party, it is unlikely that the presumed loss took place after this, while had it taken place before this, the author could have repaired the loss from the Aramaic version.

The 'Why' of the Book's Bilingual Character

TO other writers it seems more likely that the Aramaic is original, and that the Hebrew translation of the beginning and the end of the work was undertaken to facilitate its inclusion in the Canon. Had any such purpose inspired the translation, and had the Aramaic form been felt to be a barrier, the whole would surely have been translated.

To yet others the bilingual character appears to be due to the diversity of authorship, though the present linguistic division of the book may not correspond exactly with the division of authorship. One form of this view has suggested that the author of Chapters vii–xii himself translated the beginning of the book from Aramaic into Hebrew, and Chapter vii from Hebrew into Aramaic, in order to knit the two parts of the work together. Reasons have been given above for doubting the view that we have the work of more than one author.

For yet another view the present writer is responsible. It is that the bilingual character grew out of the history of the book. The author probably issued the stories of the first part, one by one, in Aramaic, the vernacular speech, during the struggle with Hellenism. By the brilliance of their narration and the relevance of their message to the situation of the hour they achieved an immediate success, and passed from mouth to mouth. Then the author developed the message of Chapter ii in another vision, which he issued in the name of Daniel, in order to connect it with the already popular stories he had told about Daniel. This, too, was written in Aramaic.

But the fact that the writers who divide the book between two authors cannot agree as to which of them, if either, wrote this chapter is a sufficient indication that it is of a transitional character, and that in it we are already passing over from the artless stories of the first part to the more involved visions of the second part. And when the author went on to write these more detailed and involved visions, he recognized that they were no longer suitable for popular repetition, and hence he substituted for the vernacular Aramaic the more learned Hebrew, of which he was a less skilled master. Finally he gathered his stories and his visions together in a bilingual work, and for this purpose rewrote the beginning of the first story to make it serve as an introduction to the whole, and since it was to introduce a bilingual work, which was therefore addressed to readers who understood Hebrew as well as Aramaic, it could be in the language of the later sections.

Daniel's Figure in Hebrew Story

YET another problem, on which some light has recently been cast, is that of the identification of the prototype of the stories. We read in Ezekiel xiv, 14, 20; xxviii, 3, of a Daniel who was apparently renowned for wisdom and righteousness. To these texts many writers have turned for confirmation of the existence and reputation of Daniel in the age of Nebuchadnezzar, in whose reign the ministry of Ezekiel was exercised. But it has long been felt to be surprising that at a time when Daniel could not have been a young man, his older contemporary classed him with Noah and Job in an oracle addressed to Tyre. For the context would suggest that the Daniel of Ezekiel belonged to the remote past.

We now know that this was indeed so. For amongst the Ras Shamra tablets of the 14th century B.C., recently found in North Syria, have been found some containing a legend of Daniel, or Dan'el. It is of interest to find that the name is spelt on these tablets as in the Book of Ezekiel, and not as in the Book of Daniel, and there can be little doubt that they explain Ezekiel's references.

This, however, still leaves unexplained the use of the name in the Book of Daniel. For the author of this book clearly had in mind no thought of a figure of primeval times, or he would not have located him in the exilic age. Possibly there were floating stories of the wisdom of Daniel, of great antiquity but not associated with any specific historical context, and in the absence of any knowledge as to the age when he was supposed to have lived, our author used material from these stories, and combined it with material from traditional stories about Nebuchadnezzar and his successors. That he should have located him in this age, if all idea as to when he was supposed to have lived was lost, need occasion no surprise. For the only references to him in the Old Testament occur in the writings of an exilic prophet, and the name seems to have been borne by more than one Jew in the post-exilic period (Ezra viii, 2, Nehemiah x, 6). Perhaps an even stronger reason was provided by the author's desire to use material concerning

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"BUILT BY THE MIGHT OF MY POWER." These impressive ruins of the principal citadel of Babylon erected by Nebuchadnezzar are of brickwork so hard that excavated masses of it are preserved unriven. With the main exceptions of the Hanging Gardens, the masonry of which was of hewn stone, and an outer wall of huge limestone blocks to protect his beloved Babylon from possible invasion on the north, Nebuchadnezzar used brick, plain and glazed, for the splendid building operations which remodelled the city, far-famed centre of civilization in the days of Hammurabi and Abraham.

Photo, Donald McLeish

Nebuchadnezzar as well as material concerning Daniel, because it lent itself to his purpose. In any case a further anachronism in such a work as this is of little moment.

On the view to which we have been led the prophetic range of the Maccabean author was limited to the immediate future into which he looked. He seen in the speedy outpouring of wrath on the oppressor, and the establishment of the abiding kingdom, but he offered no prophecy of events far removed from his own day. This, of course, has not been the traditional view of the prophecy, and there are still not wanting those to whom the view that the author mistakenly expected the end of the present world order in his own day is anathema.

Some Excursions in Prophetic Interpretation

IT is a curious fact that many of those who have followed the traditional view of the book have been possessed of precisely the spirit and outlook that they would reprobate in the author. For it has been the fate of this book to be continually re-interpreted by writers who have found the conditions of their own day reflected in the climax of the prophecies, and who have therefore believed that they were about to behold the consummation. Nor have two thousand years of disappointments blunted the keenness of such hopes. Each successive interpreter realizes that his predecessors were in error in reading the events of their own day into the prophecies, and proceeds to read in the events of his own day, quite blind to the fact that time is destined to prove his interpretation as illusory as those of his predecessors.

In the case of no book of the Old Testament is a study of the history of interpretation more instructive than here, and while it is impossible to unfold the bewildering variety of views that have been proposed, a rapid survey of the interpretations of two matters of perennial interest may expose the fallacy of the method. For a method which has unfailingly proved a snare for so many centuries can scarcely be a sound one.

The first of these two matters is the identification of the four kingdoms of Chapters ii and vii, and of the Little Horn. When the Seleucid kingdom passed away, to be followed by the Roman empire instead of the enduring Kingdom of God, interpreters brought down the consummation and made the Roman empire to be the fourth kingdom, instead of finding it in the Greek.

At first the ten horns of the fourth beast of Chapter vii were thought to be the first ten Caesars, but when the end tarried, it was supposed that ten was a round number, standing for an indefinite number of Caesars. But with the passage of time the Roman empire decayed and disintegrated, and still the end tarried; and reinterpretation then supposed that the ten horns and the ten toes of the image of Chapter ii stood for ten kingdoms that should arise out of the Roman. But innumerable have been the identifications of the ten kingdoms, for each interpreter's selection has been governed by the circumstances of his own day and his own interests.

A century ago a writer collected twenty-nine different selections that had been proposed, and the total number of kingdoms that had been assigned a place among the ten reached sixty-five. To keep the consummation still in the future without resorting to so disappointing a view, others declined to admit that the Roman empire had passed away, but saw it still continued in Charlemagne's Holy Roman empire. Nor did the final demise of that empire more than a century ago destroy this idea, for its

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upholders found new ways of maintaining the fiction that the Roman empire still continues.

Meanwhile the rise of the Turkish power had brought a new factor on the scene, and both Jewish and Christian interpreters had felt constrained to introduce it into the prophecies. To some the Turkish power appeared to be the fourth empire, and the ten horns were then identified with ten Arab kingdoms, while to others the Turkish power appeared to be one of the legs of the image of Chapter ii, or one of the elements of the feet, or even the Little Horn of the fourth beast of Chapter vii.

Following the Reformation it was inevitable that this method of interpretation should produce fresh schemes. Already prior to the Reformation, the Little Horn had been identified with the Papacy, and this soon became a popular idea amongst Protestants. Indeed, it has continued to flourish down to our own day, and to provide an alternative method of prolonging the life of the fourth beast, so as to keep the great consummation steadily moving on.

It is impossible here to expose all the difficulties that surround each of these views. One, however, may be mentioned. The stone cut without hands, that smote the feet of the image and brought it to the ground, has been commonly identified with the Virgin Birth of Christ. But since the collapse of world kingdoms is continually pushed into the future by the prolongation of the fourth kingdom, it would seem that the image is falling in far more leisurely fashion than the prophecy clearly indicates.

For some the way out of these extravagances lay in greater extravagance. Instead of defining the ten horns in terms of contemporary conditions, they referred them to ten kingdoms which should yet be established. While the Roman empire stood, this seemed possible, but with the passing of that empire the link between the fourth empire and these awaited kingdoms vanished. Hence it has been supposed that there are great gaps in the prophecy, and most of those who have followed this line have imagined that they were living near the end of the gap that yawned before the consummation. But whatever gap may be supposed to exist between the Roman empire and the ten future horns, it is a plain defiance of the vision it is supposed to interpret, in which the horns are not separated from the fourth beast, whose destruction is connected with the exploits of the Little Horn that should follow the ten.

Launching out into yet greater extravagance, there have been some who have rejected the Roman view of the fourth kingdom. They have observed that Christ's advent did not destroy the Roman empire, while that empire is no longer here to be destroyed in any future catastrophe. Hence they have supposed that the Roman empire was the third kingdom, and that an enormous gap separated that from the fourth, which is yet to be established. The stone cut without hands had to be re-interpreted, and the ten horns, as well as the Little Horn, thrust into the still distant future.

Varying Views of the Enduring Kingdom

IN addition to all of these views, there have been others of quite different character. Some have followed the opposite way of limiting the range of the vision to four kings who were contemporary with the hero of the book in the 6th century B.C., or have boldly maintained that the prophecies have been fulfilled, and that the consummation is past, and the enduring kingdom long since established. That kingdom has been identified with the empire of the Hapsburgs, or with the British Empire, or with the spiritual reign of Christ in His Church.

All this bewildering variety of suggestion rests on the common supposition that somehow the prophecy must be forced into accord with known history. In truth it is quite impossible to force these visions into such accord, and the complete failure of this canon of interpretation would alone justify the effort to find a more reasonable approach to the book.

What is the Meaning of the Seventy Weeks?

IT is precisely the same with the other question of the interpretation of the Seventy Weeks of Chapter ix, at which we may look more briefly. Here most interpreters have sought to make the end of the period coincide with the Birth of Christ, the Crucifixion, or the fall of Jerusalem. Some, however, have carried it down to a time still future in their own day. Hence, a century ago, the writer already referred to was able to record twenty-three different interpretations, in which the beginning of the period ranged from 1589 B.C. to 356 B.C., and the end from 163 B.C. to A.D. 1841. Indeed, even so early a commentator as Jerome recorded nine schemes.

Most interpreters have worked back from the point where they have located the end of the period, and have then sought some event or events to identify with the points of the period specified in the vision. Some have found breaks, and have leaped over the years that embarrassed their theory, or have varied the length of the weeks to suit their convenience, or have made two of the specified divisions of the period concurrent. Common to all these views is the persuasion that the prophecy must be brought into exact accord with history, since it is held to be a supernatural prediction, and the clear recognition that it will not fit exactly, unless violence be done to history.

It has been above stated that the most probable view is that the final half week, or three and a half years, is the period of the suspension of the Temple sacrifices in addressed to Antiochus Epiphanes. Half a week before the Daniel of the cutting off of an anointed one, by We now probably is meant the murder of Onias III. the Ras Shaw at the other end, it is probable that since [illegible] is a re-interpretation of Jeremiah's prophecy of seventy years of subjection to Babylon, its starting point is at the beginning of the Exile. For this more than one point may be suggested, but since the first seven weeks, or forty-nine years, bring us to "the anointed one, the prince," it is often held that the reckoning is from the fall of Jerusalem in 586 B.C. to the Edict of Cyrus in 537 B.C.

So far as the end of this section is concerned, this is probably correct, and for the description of Cyrus as "the anointed one" we may compare Isaiah xlv, 1, where the same word is applied to him. So far as the beginning is concerned, however, there is less certainty. The precision of the reckoning is not specially in its favour, for we have already seen that the author's knowledge of the 6th century B.C. was not precise, and the reckoning may just as well have been an inexact one from the beginning of the Babylonian suzerainty, or from the first captivity in 597 B.C. But from 537 B.C. to the murder of Onias III in 171 B.C. we have less than the requisite 434 years, or sixty-two weeks (62 × 7). But whereas on the view that we have here a supernatural prediction the least error provides a serious problem, on the view of the work to which we have been led, such a discrepancy provides no difficulty whatever.

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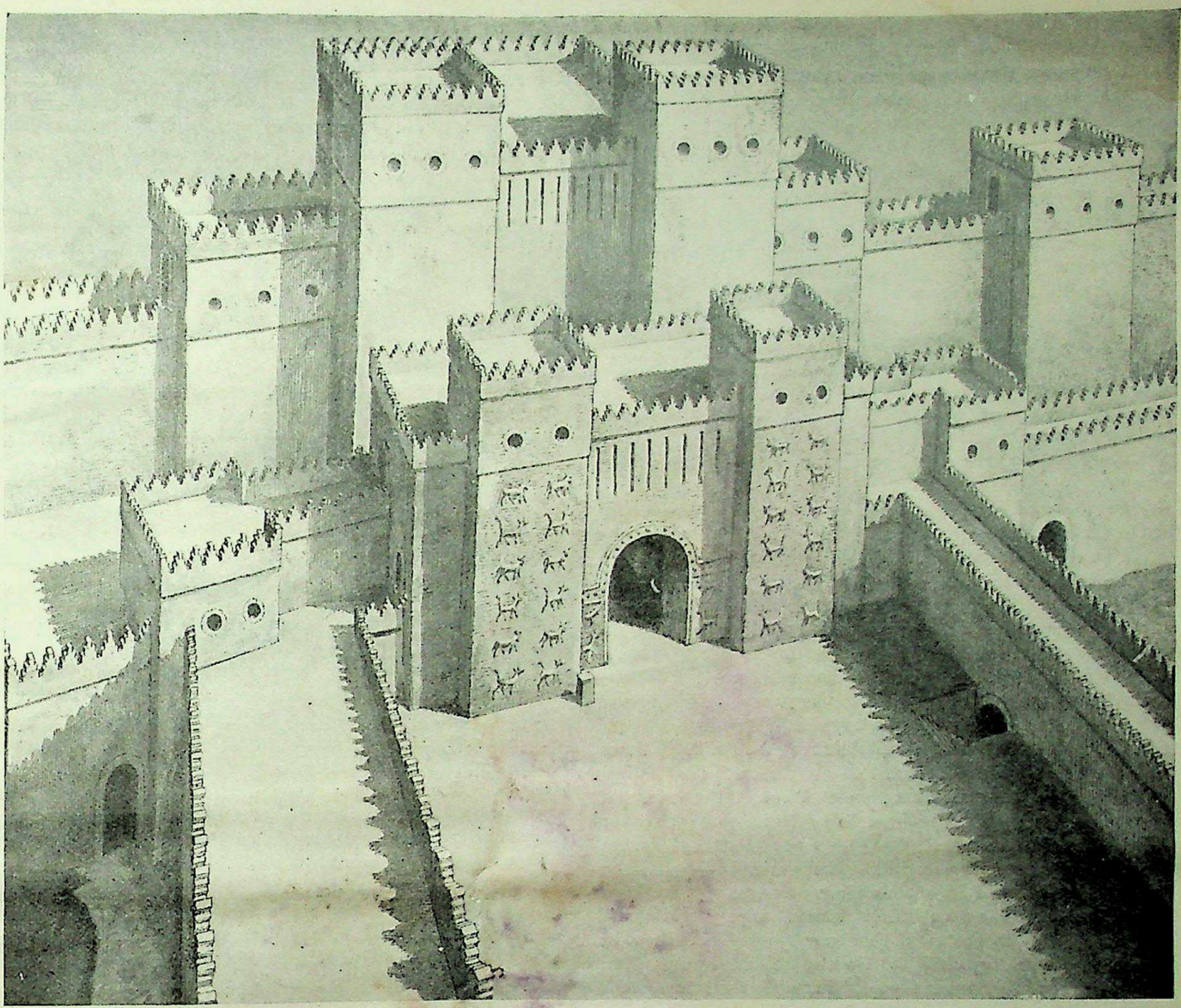

AS IN THE DAYS OF JUDAH'S CAP[illegible] [illegible] enamelled relief, flat enamel and brick relief adorned the mural Ishtar Gate on Babylon's Processional Way [illegible] face of its double gateway, set between wing-like extensions reconstruction as it appeared in all the brave[illegible] the walls of the southern or principal citadel. The towers when rebuilt by Nebuchadnezzar and decorated [illegible] flanking the two archways were connected by walls to form one ples of glyptic art. Alternate rows of bulls [illegible] impressive block of building. (*See also* pages 73 and 473).

From Koldewey's [illegible] G. Hinrich'sche Buchhandlung, Leipzig)

[illegible] he offer[illegible] in [illegible] own day. [illegible] view [illegible]

Where so many errors of historical fact abound, an additional error is not serious. For it would require no small labour for one living in 164 B.C. to calculate the length of the period from the beginning of the Babylonian period, or from the fall of Jerusalem. It is a simple matter for us to subtract 164 from 586, but since only under the Seleucids was there a fixed and continuous era, for the time prior to Seleucus I it could be arrived at only by adding together the lengths of all the reigns.

There are few people today who could, without reference to history books or to a fixed era, but solely by adding the lengths of reigns, calculate accurately the length of the period from the establishment of the Tudors to the present day, despite the fact that amongst us history is taught as an exact science. It is possible, indeed, as one scholar has suggested, that the author knew that Onias III was the twelfth High Priest from the fall of Jerusalem, and by the round reckoning of forty years to a generation, which we find elsewhere in the Old Testament, he reached the figure of 480 years, and that this was sufficiently close to the 483 years of the sixty-nine weeks (69 × 7) from the beginning of the period to the murder of Onias to justify his reckoning.

To some writers, who have rejected the view of Daniel here taken, it has seemed that it converts the book into a mere fraud, narrating history in the form of a supposedly ancient prophecy. It has also seemed that it involves the denial of the inspiration of the work. But in truth it does neither.

Had the author's purpose been to deceive, his work would indeed have been a fraud. But it is of the essence of this view that his purpose was to hearten men for the struggle then in progress. For we may rightly distinguish between the fundamental purpose of the work, and the form into which it was cast. Thus, when Nathan invents the story of the widow's ewe lamb, he does not earn our condemnation, because the fictitious story was merely the form he chose to bring home to David a courageous and timely rebuke. That David actually believed the story, and was intended to believe the story, is manifest, yet the real purpose of Nathan was not deception but moral instruction. Had he invented the same story to secure money from David, he would have merited stern condemnation.

In the same way, had the author of Daniel invented his stories and his visions with no higher purpose than to deceive, his work would be unworthy to be preserved.

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But if he wrote them to enshrine a rich and timely message to men, we do well to honour him. Had he written the minute and detailed Chapter xi with no other thought than to lead men to think it had been written centuries before, it would have deserved the description of fraud. But we have already seen that both here and elsewhere the vital point of his interest lay in the immediate future, when he looked for complete divine deliverance, and the establishment of the Kingdom of God.

If indeed the stories were issued one by one during the crisis, and achieved an immediate success, there is little likelihood that his contemporaries were deceived into thinking that they were anything but the recent creation they actually were, and we have noted more than one allusion to the present, which should exonerate the author from any charge of seeking to deceive. And if the stories were known to be recent creations, none would suppose the visions had been written long before.

Moreover, what the author was really trying to say was not so much that some individual had anciently seen into the future, as that all history, down to its minutest details, was under God's control, and despite all the follies and wickednesses of men, He would achieve His purpose. He had known beforehand all that would happen, and though He allowed oppression to stalk through the land, its days were numbered, and in the fullness of time He would sweep it away. This was a religious message, calling men to quiet confidence in God, and to the faith that the impious arrogance of Epiphanes was powerless against Him.

That divine inspiration operates through the organ[illegible] human personality is manifest to every intelligent reader of the Old Testament. The messages of the prophets were born of their own individual experience, and the very literary style in which they were expressed bore the stamp of their own individuality. Again and again they voiced expectations that were not fulfilled, and Jeremiah roundly charges God with deceiving him. Clearly there is a human element in revelation, and hence the possibility of error. The recognition of historical errors in the Book of Daniel does not, therefore, imply any denial of its inspiration, but a recognition that precious message was entrusted to a fallible, though consecrated, man.

Divine Inspiration of the Book's Teaching

THE content of inspiration is spiritual. It concerns the revelation of the being and will of God, and of the fundamental duty of man. The supernatural disclosure of the distant future, or of the past, would be a wonderful, but in no sense a spiritual, performance, whereas inspiration is ever a spiritual achievement. The penetrating insight into divine truth, the sensitiveness to the call of God—these are the gift of God. But the form in which the message is presented to men is the contribution of the messenger, and since he is errant and imperfect, that form may exhibit error and imperfection.

It is therefore possible for us to recognize the historical errors and anachronisms of the Book of Daniel, to recognize too the error of the expectations he cherished, without at the same time ceasing to recognize that his book enshrines a true message from God to men.

What, then, are some elements of that message? That there are simple, yet profound, messages infusing the stories and the visions is abundantly clear from what has gone before. They proclaim that every force which exalts itself against God is doomed to humiliation and destruction. The pride of Nebuchadnezzar is humbled, and the impious folly of Belshazzar brings swift retribution, the envious plots of Darius's courtiers recoil upon themselves, and the blasphemous insolence of Antiochus Epiphanes cannot escape divine wrath. They proclaim that the course of the ages is under the hand of God, and that the final consummation of history will be a world in which His will shall be ever done. They summon men to humble and unflinching obedience to God, and to unfailing trust in Him, and offer the assurance that His resources never fail. The burning fiery furnace and the den of lions are powerless against Him, for if He wills He can deliver His own from them. Higher, indeed, than the encouragement to the confident claim to deliverance do these stories rise. For in the superb "But if not" of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego (iii, 18), men are offered the example of those whose loyalty to God could not be broken, even though He should not deliver them. And in Maccabean days there were many who rose to the noble height of such loyalty.

Daniel's Contributions to Jewish Theology

BESIDES such simple and enduring lessons, related to the situation of the hour, and enjoined in the vivid and effective chapters of this book, the work offers some important contribution to the development of Jewish theology. In the first place we may note its contribution [illegible] of the doctrine of angels ("angel-[illegible] While in earlier Old Testament literature [illegible] references to angels as the messengers of God, [illegible] of their functions, and the [illegible] names.

It is true that elsewhere in the Old Testament we meet with Satan, with a defined function, but in this case it is the conversion of a title into a proper name. For he [illegible] first as "the Satan" or "the Adversary," and only later is the article dropped. But in Daniel we have [illegible] the former is said to be [illegible] parent that a hierarchy [illegible] thought of. It is probable that Jewish [illegible] been influenced, during the Persian period [illegible] and the origin of the [illegible] may be sought there. But [illegible] Book of Daniel is unique in the Old Testament [illegible] and prepares the way for the fuller [illegible] the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha, [illegible]

[illegible] Kingdom of God was of much [illegible] importance. It is true that the author conceived [illegible] kingdom as exercised in a political state, administered [illegible] the Jewish saints, but the conception of an enduring order of society, in which the will of God should be perfectly done set a noble ideal before men; and the fuller spiritualization of the conception in the teaching of Jesus found its preparation in the Book of Daniel.

Nor must we omit to notice that this book also contributed the term "Son of Man," so familiar to readers of the New Testament. Already, in Ezekiel, we find frequent use of the term "son of man" for the prophet himself, but there the term merely means "man," and in Aramaic it became the regular expression for "man." But in the Gospels, beside this use of the term we also find it used as a Messianic title for our Lord, and this use undoubtedly derives its origin from the Book of Daniel.

There has, however, been some development. For where we find the expression in Daniel (vii, 13) it does not denote a Messianic person, but is an eschatological

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"WHAT TIME YE HEAR THE SOUND OF THE DULCIMER"—OR BAGPIPE

In the margin of the Revised Version an alternative rendering for the word dulcimer used in Daniel iii, 5, is "bagpipe," and some scholars consider this more correctly describes the [illegible] in the orchestra of "all kinds of musick" which called the [illegible] by the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up. [illegible] Biblical times probably resembled the primitive one player [illegible] belongs to a dark-skinned, semi-nomadic tribe inhabiting [illegible] Valley. The inflated goat-skin is fitted with a reed mouth-piece [illegible] holes enabling a variety of notes to be produced.

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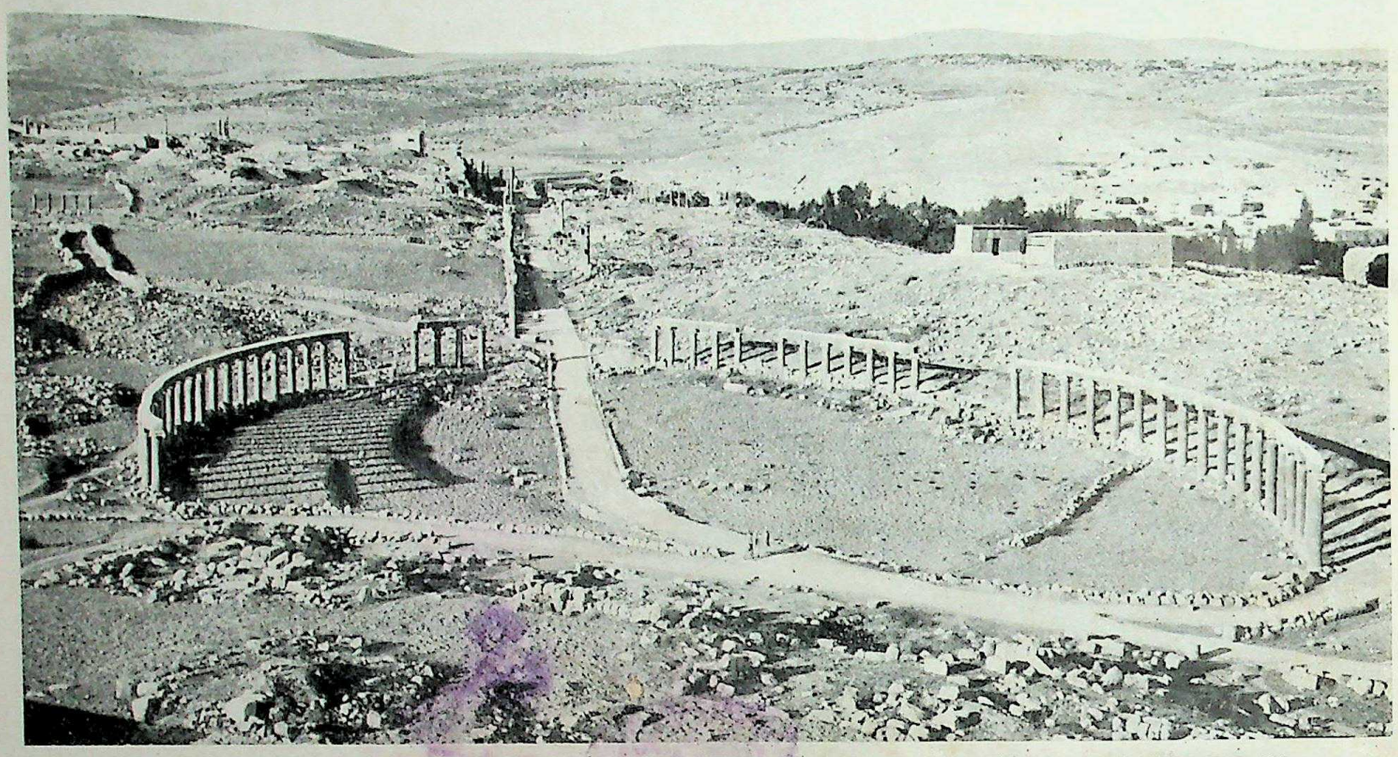

HERE HELLENISM RADIATED EAST OF JORDAN. The modern Circassian village of Jerash in Transjordania, peopled by Moslem refugees from the Caucasus after the Russian conquest in the sixties of last century, occupies about one half of the site of ancient Gerasa, city of the Decapolis. The other half is glorious with remains of Hellenic beauty. The Roman name of the city was Antioch on the Chrysorroas, a name which suggests it was founded by a Seleucid king. Certainly it was one of the notable centres of Hellenism in Palestine. In the foreground of the photograph is the market-place [illegible]rum with 56 of its 100 Ionic columns standing. From it [illegible] Street of Columns to the north-east gateway.

Photo, American Colo[illegible] in Jeru[illegible]

figure whereby the Kingdom of God, exercised through His saints, is indicated. This is made clear both by what precedes and by what follows in the chapter. For just as the four beasts denote four empires, and not f[illegible] individuals, so the fifth and enduring kingdom is appropriately represented by a single figure. But its t[illegible]essed t[illegible] difference in origin and character is expressed in [illegible]e Daniel [illegible] contrast between the figure of a "son of man" [illegible] comes on the clouds of heaven and the four beasts th[illegible] arise from below out of the great sea. That this "son of man," equally with the four beasts, stands for a kingdom and not a person, is made plain in the sequel, where the dominion is given not to an individual, but to the saints.

In subsequent thought, however, this conception was combined with elements of the quite different conception of the Messianic deliverer, expected of the prophets, and yielded the idea of one who should come on the clouds of heaven to establish and govern the coming kingdom.

Finally, the Book of Daniel offered an important contribution to the development of thought on the future life. For here first in the Old Testament is there any definite and specific announcement that righteous and wicked shall arise for everlasting honour or dishonour. Of the preparations for this doctrine in the older literature we need not here speak, but it is of importance to observe that the author's teaching sprang out of the situation of the hour, and was in some important respects different from the doctrine that has secured acceptance in the Christian Church.

Our author had proclaimed that God was able to deliver those who trusted in Him, and that He would lead the cause of His servants to triumph in the establishment of the eternal kingdom. But the undeniable fact was that whereas the cause advanced to its triumph, many of the individuals were not delivered, but suffered death for their loyalty. It was unthinkable that they whose faith and endurance had contributed to bring in the king[illegible] l be denied a share in it, and since the [illegible] the s[illegible] xpected to be a kingdom upon earth, [illegible] Antio[illegible] up those who had given their lives to share [illegible] d the [illegible] glories. On the other hand, swift des[illegible] too little a penalty for those of the [illegible] had perished in the conflict, and hence the author looked for their resurrection to endure a destruction that should never be completed. It was not a general resurrection of the dead to judgement that he awaited, but only the resurrection of "many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth," and it was a resurrection expected in the immediate future, and to life on earth. Yet this teaching marked a stage in the development to the richer thought that has become our inheritance.

We now probabl[illegible] been [illegible] Ras Sha[illegible] a[illegible] oppressors w[illegible]

No Cryptic Chart but True Word of God

INSTEAD, therefore, of the cryptic chart of the ages that so many have found in this book, a chart which instead of revealing the future so effectually concealed it that all who have tried to read it have been led into manifest error and disappointment, it is a true Word of God to men. Through it the Spirit of God, so far from presenting men with a puzzle that should baffle their utmost ingenuity to solve it, led men forward and upward, and called them to the life of purest consecration to the service of God. Addressed primarily to those who lived in the days of the Maccabean struggle, it is nevertheless addressed also to the men of every generation, for the call to unquestioning obedience and [illegible] limited to an age.

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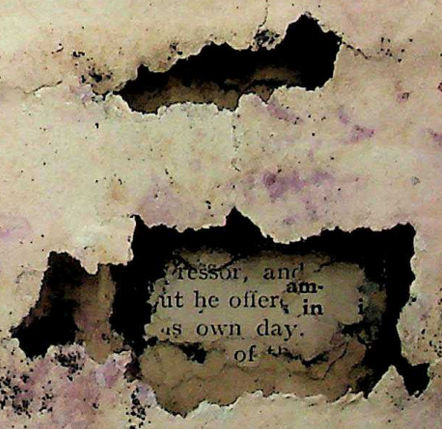

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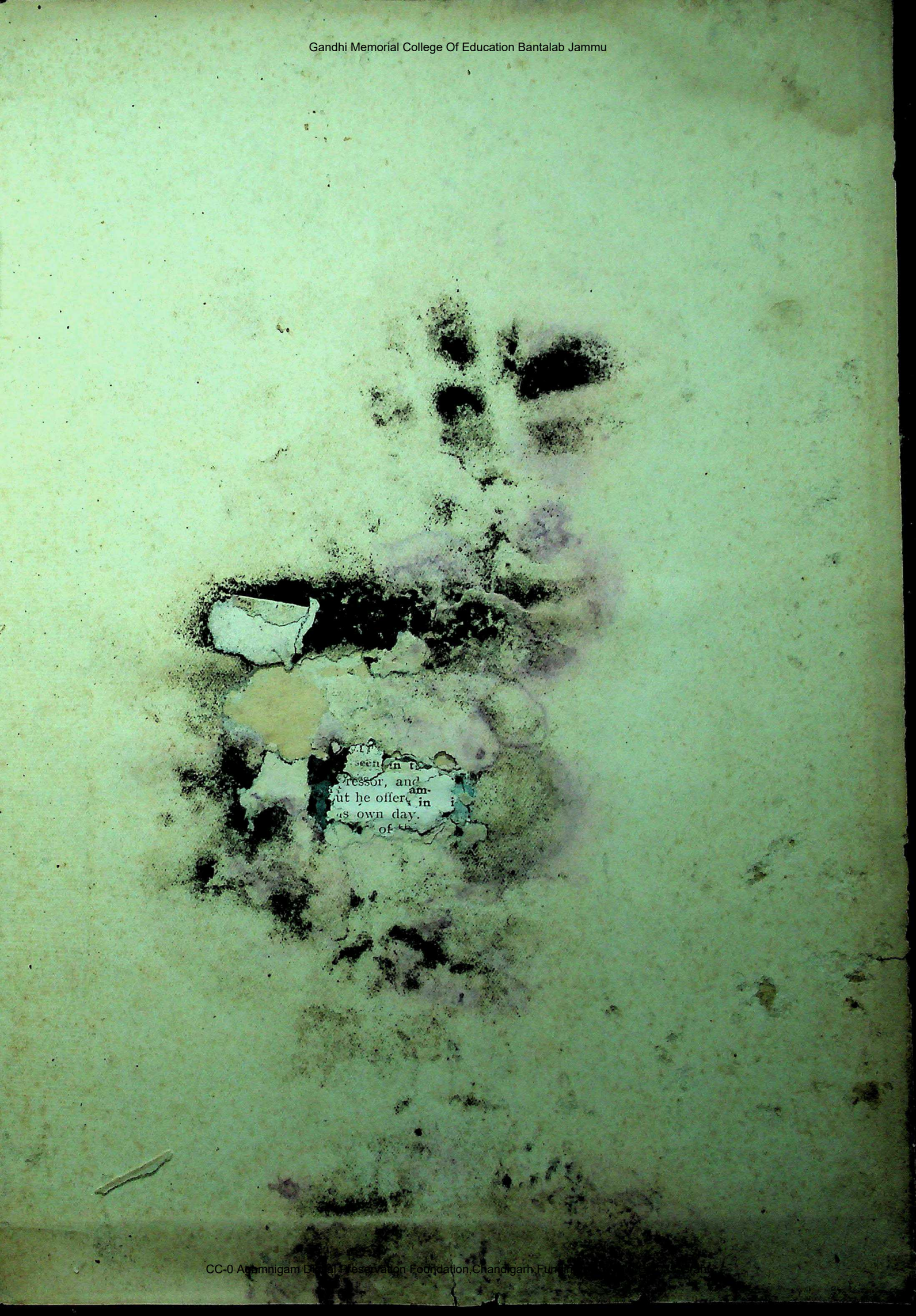

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